

Garrett Holmes,
Founder,
The Canadian Student-Athlete Association.

October 19, 2020

Mr. Dick White,
Interim Chief Executive Officer,
USports,
45 Vogell Road #701,
Richmond Hill, Ontario.
L4B 3P6

Mr. White,

RE: October 15, 2020 USports decision that it cannot offer 2021 winter national championships (basketball, hockey, swimming, track and field, volleyball, and wrestling).

As the COVID-19 crisis continues to have a dramatic impact on the lives of all Canadians, the Canadian Student-Athlete Association would like to commend USports for its continued commitment to providing student-athletes with exceptional experiences to achieve their full academic and athletic potential, and to recognize that in this difficult environment USports has been faced with making difficult decisions.

To that end, the Canadian Student-Athlete Association agrees that student-athlete safety should be the top priority and as such supports the decision by USports to not offer 2021 winter national championships.

While the Canadian Student-Athlete Association supports this decision, it notes that “The determination to not offer the championships comes with the unanimous support of its (USports) Board of Directors and the four university sports conferences”, but does not mention any input or support from student-athletes.

In the “new reality” of sports in a COVID-19 environment we have seen a first wave of decisions made that are dramatically impacting the lives, careers, and futures of student-athletes. Unfortunately, as we have also seen, those decisions have been made with little or no input from student-athletes, as existing models/processes/systems simply do not include any mechanism for student-athlete input.

Whether one agrees with the decisions that have already been made or not, more important decisions are going to be made in the future, and that is why there is a need for the Canadian Student-Athlete Association. Student-Athletes need an independent voice at the table in decisions which impact their lives, careers, and futures. The Canadian Student-Athlete Association is that voice.

The Canadian Student-Athlete Association urges USports, in future decisions, to acknowledge the need for Student-Athletes to have an independent voice at the table, and to engage the Canadian Student-Athlete Association to provide that voice.

The Canadian Student-Athlete Association thanks USports for the opportunity to provide our comments and perspective.

Stay safe.

Regards,

Garrett Holmes,

Chair,

The Canadian Student-Athlete Association.

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