

Recreating on Dominica

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Like the US games are played in tournament style based on skill level. There is a level that is only for schools. They have districts in which they play in and the champion of a certain district will go and play champions of other districts and finally the two undefeated teams will collide and a champion will be presented. The next level is the National Association level, which is for older people who wish to play sports on their own time. Like a softball league. There is a wide variety of athletes who come from different parts of the island to play on a team. These teams may also play other teams from other islands. The last level is like semi-pro, it's called the National League and is the best the island has to offer. These individuals travel to other islands to play other respective semi-pro teams.

Unlike the US school sports do not carry as much weight with regard to education. "There is only a few physical education teachers on the island." (Appendix 1, question 3). More emphasis is place on scholastic benefits not sports. This has caused a decline in the amount of people participating in the National Association level. However, the paid public officials, help the school system whenever possible, though they are they only for prestige purposes only not interaction. "There is basically no mass involvement in the school sports programs on the island." (Appendix 1, question 3).

To be able to fund some of the activities on the island, the government gives a stipend of money to the program director each year. With that money he has to allocate enough funds to be able to hold tournaments, buy needed equipment and promote the benefits of recreation to the island. Because the funds are so limited, they have to go and look for sponsorships for individual teams. Some of the sponsorships include, beer and

Sports around the world is prevalent, there is direct involvement by everyone.

Whether it is watching the news, reading a paper or talking in the streets, people are aware of the surrounding sporting teams. Even in the remote island of Dominica sports will be played wherever there is open piece of land, a net, or a basketball hoop.

8. What form of sports medicine do you have?

In the past all treatments were free, now you must get documents stating that your injury was sports related.

9. How big is sports retail?

Not big, economics of the island are not good enough. Governmental funding is not good enough to suite out all teams.

10. Has there ever been any professional athlete leave the island?

A triple jumper won a bronze metal at the last Olympics for our team.

Appendix 1

Interview with Oswald Sawarin, Sports Coordinator. Sports Division, Ministry of education, sports and youth affairs.

1. What is the main recreational activity on the island?

Cricket is the most abundant, but football (soccer) is gaining. Basketball must be recognized as an up and coming sport. Secondary schools help with soccer, plus there is better organization skills for soccer. Cricket is losing ground because the cost is so high. TV is the main influence for basketball, people like it because it is high scoring and cheap to play.

2. Is there any type of community recreational activities?

There are three levels of tournament play:

- a. schools: districts and annual programs
- b. National Association: for older people with better skills
- c. National League: for highly advanced players

3. Do the local schools have any influence on community activities?

The paid governmental employees do not play a major role. They are just there to be seen. There are few physical education teachers on the island, which causes some problems with the betterment of athletes. There is basically no mass involvement on the island. Parents want their children to get an education not to have play time.

4. Is there any type of island tournaments between villages?

Yes, everything is set up in the tournament style that we talked of before.

5. Do the locals partake in the fishing tournaments?

Fishing is based more around the private sector and tourism.

6. Are there any problems with governing sports on the island?

No, not really.

7. Does the use of sports bring any form of tourism?

Mostly fishing.

liquor vendors, cigarette companies, hotels, banks etc. With the use of funding from the private sector, certain tournaments can be played, like an extra cricket tournament a year.

In the past all medical treatment on the island was free, but new laws were passed that enabled the hospital to be able to charge for certain treatments. These treatments do not include any sports related injury. Therefore if you are injured while playing a sport you must have legal documents stating that the injury was caused by some form of sports related accident. There is no doctor on the island that specializes in sports medicine.

Unlike the US sports retail is not as great of an economic influence. Many of the locals can not afford to buy a jersey that has their favorite player on it or a pair of expensive shoes. Also, the government cannot afford to equip each team with the appropriate attire that is needed for their respected sport. There are duty free shops that receive the equipment with no tax associated with it, then they raise the price to increase their profit margin, and this causes an independent businessman to become obsolete in the sports retail business. On top of all that, the cost of equipment is too much for most people on the island to afford. For example a cricket paddle cost around \$120 US dollars.

There have been some good athletes leave the island but none more recognized as a triple jumper who won the bronze metal at the last summer games in Atlanta. He was on the Dominica Olympic Team, which was recently involved in their first Olympic games. A council has been developed to increase awareness and involvement for the Dominica Olympic Team, though turnout is limited.

Even though Dominica is deemed the Nature Island, there lots of local inhabitants that enjoy partaking in community recreational activities that are both beneficial and social. The sports may be different than what we traditionally view as recreation but the attitude of the locals have are very similar. Though sports are not pushed in schools as much as they are in the States they are very much a part of everyday life in Dominica.

When people think of sports in the Caribbean the first thing that pops into their mind in cricket. This sport has erupted into a nation wide phenomenon and taken on a meaning all its own. The locals are highly interest in this sport, just like we are in football. It is played in sandlots across the island, watched on TV, read in the paper and talked about in the streets. But this sport is loosing ground with the younger generation by the worthy adversaries of football (soccer) and basketball. Football is more widely viewed around the world and promoted on international news than cricket. Basketball is the new up and coming sport that will soon take over the entire island. "People like it because it is high scoring and cheap to play." (Appendix 1, question 1).

Economics plays a major role in the how the public recreates. For instance, in a game of cricket after each match you need to purchase a new ball. There is lots of equipment to purchase and you need lots of flat ground to play on. Whereas, football all you need is a ball that can be used over and over again, two nets and smaller piece of flat land. Basketball is the cheapest form of the three, once again you need a reusable ball, one goal and an extremely smaller piece of land. For these reasons, football and especially basketball are gaining ground on cricket.