



*Reprinted from 2014* - I enjoy watching college football, but are the Football Bowl games worth the cost?

The following local Universities have dropped Men's Track and Field in the past few years: Ball State, Bowling Green, Marshall, Ohio University, Toledo, Western Michigan and West Virginia. Also the University of Cincinnati quit funding Men's Track and Field scholarships. Numerous other universities have dropped or are talking about dropping Men's Track and Field.

Some say they are dropping Men's Track and Field for Title IX reasons others say it is to cut their athletic budget. Yet, I contain that track and field should be one of the sports Universities should sponsor as it is Nationally the second most popular sport at the high school level based on participation numbers and is number one for girls.

If you plan to give money to a college or university I hope you will consider donating to the track and field program.

In 2007 I went to the final Ohio University Men's Track and Field meet on the Athens campus. Men's Indoor and Outdoor Track and Field was being dropped the following year. This was supposed to be a money saving issue. But according to some of the research I've read it saved less than \$20,000 in travel as they still sponsor Men's Cross Country with scholarships and they have the same number of coaches for both the men's and women's cross country teams and women's track and field team.

While I was talking to a friend who is an administrator at Ohio University a football booster who overheard our conversation asked me if I thought it was a bad idea that OU was dropping Men's track and I stated it was.

I went on to tell the booster that no Mid American Conference football program makes money – after paying for scholarships, coach's salary, travel, equipment, upkeep of the football field, etc. I also went on to talk about football programs losing money going to bowl games. He said he didn't believe me. I told him he didn't have to believe me but if he would spend some time looking up the facts instead of listening just to the football coach at the booster meetings he could find all of the information I shared. He wasn't happy with that response.

Just the other day I had a similar conversation with a person I didn't know sitting by me at a local restaurant/bar. The person who I didn't know didn't believe me when I was talking with a friend that most teams lose money going to a bowl game. I said he didn't have to believe me he could easily find this information out by doing a little research with google. He also seemed to be upset with this information.

Here is what I posted on LetsRun in 2007 about Ohio University dropping Men's Track and Field [http://www.letsrun.com/forum/flat\\_read.php?thread=1738248](http://www.letsrun.com/forum/flat_read.php?thread=1738248)

First: - There are 728 boys' high school track and field teams in Ohio according to the Ohio High School Athletic Association. Of the twelve boys Championships the OHSAA sponsors, track and field has the third most schools sponsoring a team. Only basketball and baseball have more high schools represented in OHSAA than track and field. With the popularity of high school track and field one wonders why this sport is being cut.

Second - Track & Field is one of the oldest sports at Ohio University. Its fine tradition started

in the early 1900's.

Third - Track and Field teams are very diverse and provide unique opportunities for minority students. A few years ago an African American trustee at a "State University" spoke out loudly about not dropping track and field, as it was one of the main sports that had a large number of African-Americans and minority students on the team. He pointed out how this school's overall African-American and minority student population was low. He stressed to his fellow trustees that it would be a bad policy to reduce the opportunity for minorities. This university kept track and field. Perhaps Ohio University's trustee's need to be reminded of this by all the important African-American politicians and business people in Ohio.

Fourth - What good distance runner will be attracted to a school that only offers cross country. Just look at the programs in the first paragraph. None of the have a respectable men's cross country program. This is the primary reason that Wright State, finally seeing the light, has added men's track.

Five - Limited by the NCAA to only a few scholarships for men in T&F anyway, compared to women's T&F and other male sports, most of these athletes pay (tuition, etc) to be on the team. So relatively little money is saved as coaching staffs are largely shared between the men's and women's programs.

Six - Track & Field is the oldest sport known to mankind. There are more countries participating in track and field in the Olympics than any other Olympic sport.

Seven – Running is a lifetime sport and we need to do more to get/keep people in Ohio and the U.S.A. fit and healthy.

Read more: [http://www.letsrun.com/forum/flat\\_read.php?thread=1738248#ixzz1gGR5NCJi](http://www.letsrun.com/forum/flat_read.php?thread=1738248#ixzz1gGR5NCJi)

Also, Nationally - Boys track and field has the second highest number of students participating only behind football.

More - [http://www.letsrun.com/forum/flat\\_read.php?thread=1737324&page=6](http://www.letsrun.com/forum/flat_read.php?thread=1737324&page=6)

Here is a little history and some rambling on about college football bowl games.

The Rose Bowl started in 1901, in 1934 the Sugar and Orange Bowl started. In 1960 there was 8 bowl games, 11 in 1970, 15 in 1980, 19 in 1990, 25 in 2000 and this year there will be 35 bowl games. It use to be a big deal for to make a bowl games but with 70 of the 120 Division I Football Bowl Subdivision. Has the luster been lost? This year 13 teams with a 6-6 record will be playing in a bowl game including Marshall and The Ohio State University.

Check out all of the Bowl games this year and the payouts -

[http://www.collegefootballpoll.com/bowl\\_games\\_bowl\\_schedule.html](http://www.collegefootballpoll.com/bowl_games_bowl_schedule.html)

According to the 12-11-01 article in [http://www.crainscleveland.com/article/20111121/BLOG\\_S04/111129980](http://www.crainscleveland.com/article/20111121/BLOG_S04/111129980)

The Mid-American Conference, where football is a money-losing venture.

From - <http://www.nationalfootballpost.com/College-footballs-bowl-problem.html>

College football's ever-expanding bowl system is best described as a labyrinth of money. It's a system that helps put six-figure bonuses in the pockets of coaches and administrators. It's a system that funnels millions of dollars to the bowls in the form of naming rights' fees, ticket sales, and television contracts. And it's a system that pays the CEOs of the sport's most powerful bowl games salaries of \$500,000 or more.

So why do many think the system is broken? The reason is simple: Schools are losing money — a lot of money — by going to these bowl games. The “allowances” permitted by their parent conferences typically are dwarfed by the expenses brought about by transporting, housing, and feeding a party that can sometimes stretch more than 900 people deep. The difference is absorbed by athletic department budgets, many of which require state funding to remain afloat.

And it's not just the East Carolinas and Syracuses of the world that find themselves financially burdened by the bowl system. Behemoths such as Ohio State, Auburn, and Virginia Tech have all been buried in recent years by bowl deficits, some topping a million dollars.

Big Ten powerhouse Ohio State upset Oregon in the 2010 Rose Bowl, but lost \$80,000 on the trip. Virginia Tech incurred a \$2.2 million loss on its trip to the 2009 Orange Bowl, and when invited back to Miami this season, the Hokies again came out in the red — this time by \$1.6 million. Even the 2010 national champion, Auburn, spent nearly \$3 million on their trip to Glendale, Ariz., losing \$614,106 in the process, according to documents released by the school.

From - [http://articles.courant.com/2011-03-02/news/hc-uconn-fiesta-bowl-loss-20110302\\_1\\_advance-tickets-fiesta-bowl-stubhub](http://articles.courant.com/2011-03-02/news/hc-uconn-fiesta-bowl-loss-20110302_1_advance-tickets-fiesta-bowl-stubhub)

The ticket policy of major bowls puts teams in a tough situation, even those with long histories. Ohio State lost \$1 million for the 2009 Fiesta Bowl, according to the Cleveland Plain Dealer. Virginia Tech lost \$1.77 million when it went to the 2009 Orange Bowl, according to the Virginian Pilot of Norfolk.

The information below is from <http://www.azcentral.com/news/bcs>

The Republic separately obtained records from individual public universities that played in BCS bowls for the past six years to determine, on an individual basis, how many schools lost money. Records dating beyond six years were incomplete. The Republic's analysis showed that 41 percent of public universities playing in BCS games reported losses.

In the 2011 Orange Bowl - Virginia Tech's athletic department reported a \$421,046 loss. The

cost to play in the Orange Bowl, largely based on terms set by the Bowl Championship Series, outstripped the amount of bowl money the team received.

Virginia Tech would have lost even more money had the Atlantic Coast Conference not spent nearly \$1.2 million to help. The team, required to buy a block of tickets as a condition of being in the bowl, was unable to resell all of them before game time; the school's conference bought out 9,500 remaining seats.

Virginia Tech would have lost \$1.3 million in 2008, \$2.2 million in 2009 and \$1.6 million in 2011 had the ACC not stepped in and subsidized a portion of those losses. Even with the ACC subsidies, Virginia Tech lost money all three years.

The University of Connecticut. When the Big East Conference champion played in the 2011 Fiesta Bowl, it received a \$2.5 million conference expense allowance. But the team couldn't resell 14,729 of the 17,500 tickets the Fiesta Bowl required it to purchase.

The Huskies' bowl expenses quickly piled up: \$2.9 million from unsold tickets, \$1.1 million for travel and housing, and \$210,000 in assorted other costs. The final tally was a net loss of approximately \$1.7 million.

Rutgers's received \$400,000 for its participation in the St. Petersburg Bowl in 2009, according to college sports' governing body, the National Collegiate Athletic Association. It cost the Scarlet Knights \$1.14 million to attend, according to Rutgers financial records.

Rutgers is an example of a school that spent its way to national prominence, playing in five straight bowl games, while mired in debt.

The Scarlet Knights' athletic department received almost half its \$58.5 million in revenue in 2008-09 from state subsidies and student fees, with \$17.9 million coming from the university and \$7.8 million in student fees. The school cut six sports teams to reduce expenses in 2007. None of its programs were profitable in the fiscal year ended 2009, according to the school.

The Mid-American Conference had negotiated an agreement with the Little Caesars Pizza Bowl where their school's payout was based solely on how many tickets it could sell, Ohio University Associate Athletic Director Dan Hauser said in an interview.

The Athens, Ohio, school received 10,000 tickets valued at \$450,000. It sold 2,181 tickets, generating \$98,150, for a game in Detroit about 278 miles north, at 1 p.m. the day after Christmas.

Since its expenses were \$164,464, the school lost \$66,314 playing in the game, according to university records. (This figure does not count the money spent to house and feed the team during their Christmas break).

From [http://www.dispatch.com/content/stories/sports/2007/05/03/ou\\_track.ART\\_ART\\_05-03-07\\_C1\\_JV6IUI9.html](http://www.dispatch.com/content/stories/sports/2007/05/03/ou_track.ART_ART_05-03-07_C1_JV6IUI9.html)

Critics point out the Ohio football team lost \$181,000 playing in the GMAC Bowl against Southern Mississippi. (This figure does not count the money spent to house and feed the team during their Christmas break).

From [http://money.cnn.com/2006/01/04/commentary/column\\_sportsbiz/sportsbiz](http://money.cnn.com/2006/01/04/commentary/column_sportsbiz/sportsbiz)

Take the Mid-American Conference's University of Akron Zips, which played in the Motor City Bowl. The appropriately named Zips are anti-Longhorns. The school's football program was the only one among this year's bowl participants to take in less than \$1 million in revenue last year and its \$2.9 million reported loss was just a hair smaller than that reported by the University of Central Florida.

From <http://thebiglead.com/index.php/2011/05/23/why-do-college-football-teams-play-in-so-many-unprofitable-bowl-games-ask-espn/>

Oklahoma ate \$2.2 million, second highest figure in the country, playing in the Fiesta Bowl. Ohio State sold out its Sugar Bowl allotment, by opening it to the general public, including Arkansas fans. Auburn ate \$781,825 in unsold tickets for the freaking BCS title game.

An NCAA report released in August 2009 for fiscal year 2008-09 said 14 athletic departments of the 120 schools in college football's bowl subdivision had an operating profit, down from 25 in 2006-07 and 2007-08.

From - [http://www.smartmoney.com/spend/column/10\\_things](http://www.smartmoney.com/spend/column/10_things)

Last year, 42% of the teams in the top-tier Football Bowl Subdivision (formerly Division 1A), lost money, according to a NCAA report prepared by Fulks. How much did they lose? A whopping \$2.9 million, on average.

You can also google or yahoo anything about sports, football and find numerous additional articles.

A few more articles which might be of interest-

[http://www.cleveland.com/datacentral/index.ssf/2011/10/most\\_ohio\\_schools\\_depend\\_on\\_st.html](http://www.cleveland.com/datacentral/index.ssf/2011/10/most_ohio_schools_depend_on_st.html)

<http://www.insidehighered.com/news/2010/05/20/ohio>

<http://losangeles.sbnation.com/2010/11/9/1804754/bcs-bowl-bids-how-college-football-teams-lose-money-in-the-current>

[http://www.letsrun.com/forum/flat\\_read.php?thread=1738248](http://www.letsrun.com/forum/flat_read.php?thread=1738248)

I hope you enjoy the Bowl season.

But - Let's Work to Keep Track and Field Alive!