

October 13, 2002

Dr. John Reeves  
Director, Physical Education and Athletics  
436 Marcellus Hartley Dodge Physical Fitness Center  
Columbia University  
New York, New York 10027

Dear Dr. Reeves:

As you most certainly know, Columbia athletes dedicate a great deal of time, energy, and passion to performing well in their respective sports. They represent us to both the Ivy League and national athletic communities, as well as contribute to the academic and extracurricular community while here as students. Despite this, their hard work often goes unappreciated, with sparsely attended athletic competitions and a general lack of enthusiasm for Columbia athletics.

In the defense of Columbia students who do not regularly attend sporting events, they face a variety of obstacles precluding them from attending. Many of the competitions take place at Baker Stadium, which is around five miles north of the Morningside Heights campus. Students must either take the subway, a taxi, or a shuttle bus, the latter provided for only certain events at certain times, in order to attend these events. Aside from our physical distance from Baker Stadium, students face the additional deterrent of having to pay an entrance fee. Students who choose to attend several events in a given year are advised to purchase a Lion's Pride Sticker; aside from the fee for this sticker, students must take the time to either visit the Dodge Fitness Center prior to an event or stand on an additional line prior to an athletic event in order to purchase one. While these may seem like minor issues to true sports enthusiasts, they both serve as obstacles to an undergraduate student body that has traditionally shown less interest in athletics than its counterparts in peer institutions.

Columbia Athletics can take a major step towards improving support for its Varsity Athletes by allowing all undergraduate students free admission to all athletic competitions by simply showing their Columbia Card. Columbia is one of the few Ivy League schools that charges students for its sporting events; in fact, Cornell University<sup>1</sup>, Yale University<sup>2</sup>, and the University of Pennsylvania<sup>3</sup> all advertise free admission to all athletic competitions for all students on their respective athletics websites. If Columbia were to do the same for its students, we are confident that attendance at athletic competitions would improve. With improved attendance, student athletes would feel more appreciated and the overall "school spirit" of our fine institution would subsequently improve.

On behalf of our respective student governments, we strongly encourage you to consider our request. We are willing to do whatever we can, as students ourselves, to help promote Varsity athletics here at Columbia University. Please do not hesitate to call upon us for guidance or support.

Respectfully Submitted,

Katie Daily, GS '03  
General Studies Student Council President

JaMel M. Nelson, SEAS '03  
Engineering Student Council President

Michael J. Novielli, CC '03  
Columbia College Student Body President

Laila Shetty, BC '03  
Student Government Association President

<sup>1</sup><http://cornellbigred.ocsn.com/tickets/corn-tickets.html> , <sup>2</sup><http://www.yale.edu/athletics>

<sup>3</sup><http://pennathletics.ocsn.com/tickets/penn-tickets.html>