

We Want Weepboop

The Rise of the MSU Esports Student Association

By Adam Austad

Terrence Peugh, a senior media and information major, pointed to the cameras on either side of the screen where the two students would hold their gaze during the broadcast. He motioned to the prompters and walked the students through the process of using them. A cohesive system of leaders, once gamers, stepped up and ran the show—literally. Peugh's fingers rolled from a three, into a two, then a one, and two gamers became casters for the very first time.

The nine-hour MSU Esports Student Association Kick-Off LAN event was held on Jan. 20, with over 70 attendees and four tournaments. LAN stands for local area network, meaning players competed together, in the same room, as opposed to playing in isolated locations. The entire event was streamed on Twitch, a live streaming video platform, and the students hardly missed a beat.

“Like every other club, you just want to find people who share the same common interests as you,” said Alexis Ly, a civil engineering junior who joined the Overwatch team last year, which was a team-based multiplayer online first-person shooter video game. “Getting together is really different from going online and playing with friends across dorms or across campus. Being in one single location and playing in person is a lot more interactive. There's a lot more hype.”

The Esports Student Association provided students not only with a place to get out of their dark dorm rooms, but also an outlet to practice their passions in professional environments. They helped players in the community turn their personal interests into future careers. Created from scratch, the club did just as well as clubs funded by their universities. Through sponsors, competitions and prizes, MSU's Esports Student Association drew inspiration from giant tournaments such as the League of Legends North American Championship held at Madison Square Garden.

“I love how we do a lot without the resources other schools have. If you want to look for a career in esports you can get the experience here for free,” said Kyle Kilponen, chemical engineering senior and vice president of the League of Legends Club, whose members played an intense real-time strategy game with many roles and positions. “It's crazy what we all can do when we all come together as a community. I think the cool part about it is that it's all student-driven. Everyone's here because they want to be here and they want to promote esports.”

Sydney Shea, senior advertising management major and public relations manager for MSU's Esports Student Association, started playing League of Legends her freshman year after her friend mentioned a combative multiplayer online game she might be interested in.

“I think [the Esports Student Association] stands out because it brings out this huge community that’s asleep to everyone else. As if it doesn’t exist; it’s just some people playing video games,” said Shea. “Having each game have its own club and then have an esports club help with all of the clubs really shows people that it’s a huge community.”

As the comments scrolled down the Twitch chat, the Twitch manager watched attentively to make sure there were no hiccups. Casters stood on stage and camera directors waited on deck for the next game. Someone in the chat was saying, “We want Weepboop!” Others echoed the cry, and in minutes the famous Weepboop, a player known by his gamertag, was in the newschair, mic’d up and ready to go. There was no doubt these students loved every minute of it.

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Extra

Not only do we play games but there’s a ton of gamer charities. I participated in Extra Life, a 24-hour stream where you stream yourself playing the game, people donate money to you and it goes to places like Sparrow Hospital. There’s a lot of people doing really great stuff out there with it so I think it’s super important that we’re here.

Adam,

I think you did a good job capturing the importance of this story and the club and what it means to them. I would definitely make sure you’re being more concise, though. Obviously, we want to give the story a good flow with imagery and descriptive words, but all the graphs are pretty long which makes them harder to follow. Our comments will help you make it easier to read, but maybe read it over yourself and see if there’s anything you can trim down to be more concise! Also, please make sure everything you’re writing is in your own words!! Good story, and very descriptive. Thanks!!

Sydney

Great job! I love this story because I’m a part of it but it is also just a good presentation of the club and esports in general for those who don’t know about it.

-Logan