

2020 OLYMPICS INSPIRES MADISON CENTRAL ATHLETES

**Anna Kimbrell
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The 2020 Summer Olympics took place in Tokyo, Japan from July 23rd to August 8th. During this time athletes from all across the world came together to show off their incredible talent and take home a gold medal for their country. The total number of athletes at this year's Summer Olympics was 11,656. These athletes spend years developing the scrupulous skills needed for their sport. This opportunity only happens every four years and being selected to be on an Olympic team can change the course of a person's life forever. The USA team is known world-wide and consists of multiple gold winning medalists, such as Caeleb Dressel (swim), Katie Ledecky (swim), and Allyson Felix (track and field). These talented men and women influence younger generations to become future Olympians. Madison Central is a very competitive school with athletes who train to achieve success for our school. Some of our

sports that the Olympics cover are tennis, swim, and track & field. These sports bring in fervor and support for our country.

In tennis, 17-year-old Coco Gauff was supposed to play for the U.S. women's singles but unfortunately, she tested positive for Covid-19 and was not able to compete. Gauff would have been the youngest athlete to play tennis at an Olympic level since 2000 (NBC News). This is very inspiring to many young athletes with her skill. Allie Kelly (12), a player on the Madison Central's tennis team, says, "I really wished Coco Gauff had gotten to play," because "it's impressive to be competing at that level at such a young age." Track and Field brought in a total of twenty-six medals, seven being gold. Allyson Felix won her 11th Olympic medal in this year's Olympics. This was her fifth Olympic game and her seventh Olympic gold medal. Colin Brannon (10), who is on the track and cross country teams, was "glad that [Allyson

Felix] was able to have such a successful performance at the Olympics." The men's team brought home gold in the 4x400 relay, and Athing Mu took home the gold for the women's 800-meter. Mu, who is only 19 years old, is the first U.S. woman in 53 years to win the 800-meter (Time Magazine). The USA Olympic swim team gave the U.S. 11 of the 39 Olympic gold medals we received. Caeleb Dressel won a total of five gold medals. Aiden Allen (11) mentioned that "Dressel is the fastest swimmer in the world." Dressel won the 100-meter at an Olympic record time of 47.02 seconds. Katie Ledecky won gold in the 800-meter freestyle and in the 1,500-meter freestyle. The latter was a first in women's swimming, putting Ledecky in the history books (The New York Times). Allen also commented on "some standout performances" by "Lydia Jacoby, who won the 100-meter breaststroke at 17, and Bobby Finke who came out of nowhere to win the 800-meter freestyle." Bobby Finke was in fifth place for most of

the race, but in the last 50 meters pushed ahead to win gold (The New York Times).

The Olympics is an every four year event which brings the best athletes around the world to participate in something special. People all across the world watch to see their home country bring home a medal that

signifies the hard work their athletes put into their training. The Olympics brings everyone together, especially the young athletes that watch from home. The next generation of Olympians are training right now and many schools across the country are churning out amazing athletes, including Madison Central.



SeaWorld: hearing both sides of the story

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Sea World is a theme park chain that has three locations in the United States in San Diego, California; Orlando, Florida; and San Antonio, Texas. These parks are centered around marine life, with many things to do including roller coasters, live animal shows, and a water park. In the last decade, many accusations have been made against SeaWorld for the mistreatment of animals.

Ever since a movie called Blackfish came out in 2013 uncovering SeaWorld's habit of animal abuse, SeaWorld has been under high scrutiny. The film was made about mainly one killer whale named Tilikum, and the three separate incidents when he killed three people, as well as the reasons leading up to why he was provoked. The film also touches on the court case that SeaWorld was involved in

with the Occupational Safety and Health Admissions (OSHA). This film brought to light the mistreatment of animals under SeaWorld's care, and the employees who were exposed to drowning and striking hazards while in the tanks with killer whales. "I watched this movie, and it really changed my opinion on SeaWorld. I don't think that any company should be able to get away with mistreating animals," said Allie Hurt (11).

In addition to the film, there are many past employees of SeaWorld that have spoken up about SeaWorld. One past employee named John Hargrove talked about how cruel Sea World and other marine parks are to animals. The parks capture the baby whales and dolphins from their parents in the wild, and then keep them in a concrete enclosure for the rest of their lives. "We should continue wanting to know more about these animals, however, we should not force them to put on a show for us and live in captivity in the name of learning," said Hollin Brew-

er (10). Another employee who spoke out against SeaWorld is Sarah Fischbeck. She claimed that Sea World was very secretive, and if something ever went wrong, the people who knew about it weren't allowed to talk. She claimed that accidents and injuries were always covered up.

Even with all these accusations against SeaWorld, many people have contradicting opinions about whether or not SeaWorld is a bad company. Since the movie Blackfish came out in 2013, Sea World has been cleaning up their act by not capturing anymore Orcas, slowly transitioning out of killer whale live-shows, and donating millions to research and observation of marine animals. Also, SeaWorld has helped rescue and rehabilitate over 33,000 animals. Some people think that the measures that SeaWorld and other marine parks go to are worth the positive outcomes. Mr. Hackman said,

"I honestly have mixed emotions. I don't like the idea of animals in captivity any more than anyone else. However, the educational value of combined with proper care is invaluable and far outweighs the negatives in my opinion." There are always two sides

to a story, and with all the evidence provided for both sides, it is up to everyone to decide what they want to believe. With many people advocating for both sides, there is no wrong or right answer to what you believe.

