

Response Medicine

The Law faculty says...

The National University of Singapore (NUS) Law Club noted that there are “a few factual inaccuracies” from the article “Scalpels vs Gavel: Medicine-Law Debate 2012” (SMA News March 2012, see <http://news.sma.org.sg/4403/DIT2.pdf>), specifically in this portion of the article:

Notes

1. Perhaps due to some earlier disagreements arising from our esteemed Law counterparts who attempted to field a certain Swedish exchange student, who was a professional league handball player back in his homeland, in many of the Med-Law Games, without informing us of their intentions to field any exchange students (he was one of the many) or his illustrious background beforehand. These all happened despite the rules set before the start of the games (by the hosting faculty) that exchange students were not allowed to play. He was eventually allowed to play in every game but handball.



to “Scalpels vs Gavel: -Law Debate 2012”

They requested *SMA News* to publish the following clarification:

The Swedish exchange student, Axel Fagerhall, is not a professional in any way. He was not paid to play, and as such he was just an amateur, albeit a very good one.

We did not attempt to field him in “many” of the Med-Law Games, as was claimed by the writers. Axel was interested only in soccer, and handball, and thus, only played in two of the Med-Law Games. Even leaving aside the question of journalism ethics, surely even a layman would never think of two as “many”. Even if we had intended to field him in many of the games, it was our right, because exchange students are part of the faculty.

The writers claim that he was “one of the many” exchange students fielded in the games. Once again, we would like to clarify that a grand total of five exchange players played. In a tournament where more than 100 players represented the Law faculty, five could hardly be considered “many”.

Axel was allowed to play in every sport, including handball, because he was an amateur player, and there was no reason for excluding him.

This is the most glaring and significant inaccuracy about the article: the writers claim that “these all happened despite the rules set before the start of the games (by the hosting faculty) that exchange students were not allowed to play”.

It has been settled from previous editions that neither faculty would be allowed to impose any rules unilaterally, in the spirit of the games, and in the interest of fairness. For years, this was the practice. As for the issue of exchange students, no rules were agreed on prior to the games, and this could be an oversight by both camps.

The Law faculty did not see any issue with it, because exchange students wanted to play, and being students of our faculty who have come as a like-for-like replacement for our players who have gone overseas, there was to be no question that they were our students. The Deanery was also supportive of this stance. Thus, this is why no one from the Law faculty even thought it would be an issue.

As for Medicine, the organisers probably assumed that exchange students were not allowed because there were no

exchange students in the last few years’ games. However, this was because they showed no interest in playing, not because they were barred from playing.

The Medicine faculty says...

SMA News also contacted the NUS Medical Society for a response, which is as follows:

It has come to our attention that we may have included some inaccuracies in our article that might have painted the Law faculty in a bad light.

We mentioned that the Law team fielded a professional handball player. He is in fact not a professional, but is a Swedish league player.

We would also like to clarify that he was fielded in two out of six games, and not in “many of the games” as was mentioned.

There were also five exchange students fielded from the Law side, not “many” as stated, just merely “more” than we were initially informed would participate (before the games, a list of participating Institute-Varsity-Polytechnic players and exchange students had to be submitted). We have been informed that this was due to the fact that some of the exchange students initially thought that they would not be able to make it for the games, but managed to in the end.

That the student was “allowed to play in every game but handball” is an error as well, because he was eventually allowed to play in every game *including* handball – but only chose to play handball and soccer.

Lastly, rules were set by the hosting faculty before the games that exchange students would not be allowed to participate is inaccurate, because a resolution on the issue was not reached before the games. The Medicine faculty did not want to allow exchange student participation, while the Law faculty insisted upon it. In the interest of fairness, neither faculty would be allowed to impose any rules unilaterally, so eventually it was agreed upon that exchange students could play in all the games as they were true blue members of the Law faculty.

SMA News thanks both the NUS Law Club and the NUS Medical Society for their comments. **SMA**