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**DURATION**

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**START OF TRANSCRIPT****[00:00:03]**

Esports is competitive video gaming, it's growing exponentially around the world, international tournaments worth millions of pounds are being played in front of sellout live audiences while millions watch online. This summer, three teenagers from London picked up well over a million pounds in prize money, competing at the Fortnite World Cup in New York.

**[00:00:24]**

But as eSports continues to gain in popularity, I want to find out how young people are making a career for themselves or playing video games.

**[00:00:36]**

Benji Fish is one of the most famous sports players and gaming influencers in the world stage his own real, you know, about two miles up in the air. Take a look there, Benji Fisheye.

**[00:00:47]**

Earlier this year, Benji beat 40 million competitors to qualify for the highest paying eSports tournament. Yet the fortnight World Cup, the prize fund, was 30 million dollars.

**[00:00:58]**

I know from the World Cup there are at least 100 top tier players doing this week in, week out. Are there other levels of this? Are there thousands of people?

**[00:01:07]**

Oh, yeah, anybody can compete in this tournament. It just keeps getting harder and harder to qualify for the tournament, much like you've got to be a certain level to get to the finals age.

**[00:01:17]**

Just 15, Benji left school to focus on his career playing in tournaments that have won him over 400000 pounds to date.

**[00:01:24]**

So how much have you earned out of the trios from the chairs? One hundred. Forty thousand.

**[00:01:31]**

Then designed to energize sports earlier this year, one of the biggest professional gaming organizations in the world, but taking Benji out of school was no easy decision for his mom.

**[00:01:41]**

And I look to see if we could negotiate and work our way round of doing school and sports. But it wasn't very practical. The nature of EA Sports is that they tend to still be up in the evenings, then they don't sleep enough and therefore they're too tired. It was better to go down a homeschooling route. What you want is for your child to be happy, to be able to earn a living, and so therefore I think I would be doing him an injustice to not let him follow his passion.

**[00:02:15]**

I can only see myself doing stuff in sports, whatever that's going to be moving on to the next game or even like creating something like my own organization. I think I'm always going to be an East Coast rest of my life.

**[00:02:28]**

A sports isn't just for top tier teenagers battling each other from their bedrooms. It's fast becoming a career choice.

NSC is the official body of university sports in the U.K. and are proud to boast that university gaming societies are rapidly growing in popularity.

**[00:02:45]**

Every major university now has a gaming society or any sports society, and they have in some locations, tens of teams entering competition work into 29 teams into our entire competition last year, which is incredible.

**[00:03:01]**

He sports has already overtaken football, netball and rugby union as the sport with the highest number of teams of British universities.

**[00:03:09]**

Roehampton has set up a scholarship program. You've got physical gaming facilities every university. And you look at that, I don't see a way that in five, 10 years time, every university doesn't need physical gaming facilities in order to, you know, compete for students. But sports isn't just about the student experience during university undergraduates are now using it as a gateway to a future career, that eSports is this fantastic platform for engaging with students who are the future of the technology industry, not just the games industry, but in technology as a whole.

**[00:03:44]**

The video games aren't just being taken seriously in further education as exports continues its meteoric rise in popularity. A new report suggests that over 70 percent of schools are considering introducing gaming into the curriculum.

**[00:03:58]**

Not only that, but one in five schools say they already have a dedicated sports program.

**[00:04:03]**

Okay. Would you like to write your own algorithm for Aribert?

**[00:04:08]**

Potentially grammar in Bexley Heath School, children as young as nine years old are already using video games to enhance their learning with the algorithm. Shalala said is the program director of Digital Schoolhouse. They've partnered with Nintendo to deliver free creative workshops in schools.

**[00:04:27]**

The essence behind every single workshop is play based learning, and it's using that sense of fun to capture a child's imagination, to use it as a vehicle to teach computing skills.

**[00:04:38]**

Typical workshops involve magic and dancing, using offbeat resources that children wouldn't normally see in a classroom before moving on to a computer to transfer their skills.

**[00:04:49]**

We are teaching them the concepts of programming, networking, communications, the breadth of the national curriculum. But it's more than that. It's about the widest of skills. It's about teamwork and collaboration. It's about computational thinking, providing students with the ability to be able to think creatively and outside the box to help them solve problems.

**[00:05:07]**

But with video games traditionally seen as a distraction from a child's learning, I want to know how much gaming can really be used to teach new skills.

**[00:05:15]**

Ninety nine percent of students play video games, so I think we'd be missing a huge trick if we weren't capitalize on that as educators. We continue to learn throughout our lives, and if we can capture students excitement in harnessing new knowledge, then we're all the better for it.

**[00:05:34]**

And tomorrow's workforce, despite progressive attitudes in the industry, EA Sports and video games is still dominated by teenage boys. And the vast underrepresentation of female players is something it's trying to grapple with.

**[00:05:49]**

The fortnight World Cup in July or 100 finalists were male. Well, that makes it. Freya Spare's is a professional EA Sports host and producer. How does she feel about being one of the very few female figures on the British sports scene?

**[00:06:05]**

If you search your name on the gaming forums, you can see lots and lots of lovely stuff, but there's also some

misogynistic comments and things like that. Do you ever look at these and how is it that you feel there's a form called HCB?

**[00:06:16]**

I remember seeing my name pop up on the top on the size. And so out of curiosity and naivety, I clicked it. And then it's all this whole wave of comments that I just, you know, flooding in and that at that point I was like, no more. I don't I don't want to read this. If people are going to be supportive, they'll reach out to me directly. What sort of things were you saying? Mostly massive comparisons to other females in the scene, which you just don't see with the guys based on looks more than sort of professionalism.

**[00:06:44]**

So what does Freya think can be done to make women feel more welcome in his sports?

**[00:06:48]**

It's almost like a grocery scene when encourage the women to be coming in and aspiring to play at the level of some of the male players. But I do think in five years time we will be saying, as I said, the next generation coming through who have been playing since they were eight or nine years old.

**[00:07:05]**

Back at Townly Grammar, things are progressing faster than Freyr could have imagined. The next generation of female gamers are already taking part in an in school EA Sports competition. Two teams made up of the school's best players are fighting it out on Super Smash Brothers. Many of them have ambitions to go into future careers in EA Sports and beyond.

**[00:07:27]**

I would love to kind of like develop games because I kind of have a passion for it. I like the way that it works and how actually what I want to try and make something of computing, it's just something for me to program programming. I really want to be able to incorporate. Both of them I think would be better for me in.

**[00:07:43]**

Making it with an ever expanding industry and its growing popularity amongst young people, it's only a matter of time before eSports becomes an integral part of our future education system.

**END OF TRANSCRIPT**



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