

Tutus Versus Jerseys: A Comparison of Dance and Football

ESPNDallas.com's Todd Archer reported Monday that the Cowboys have installed ballet bars outside the locker room at three different heights that will allow players to stretch in a new way. Football players are just now recognizing that dance helps them become better. Professional dancers, on the other hand, have always known that dance requires so much more qualities such as stretch and physical demand than football. Dance is harder than football.

To be successful, dancers have to have a great deal of mental AND physical strength making it more difficult than football. A survey of seventh graders suggests that dancers go through more mental stress than football players. "Approximately sixty seven percent of dancers surveyed said dance was mentally draining on a regular base. Also, about sixty seven percent said dance makes school harder." (Unkart). On another survey of 7th grade football players, it states that, "Relatively twenty seven percent of football players said it's mentally draining. And roughly thirty three percent of football players said that school is harder because of football." (Unkart). Dance requires more focus and that makes it more mentally draining and this survey supports that claim. More dancers, in both cases, said that dance was mentally draining and made school harder than football players. Football is all black and white, therefore, mentally it is easier than dance. A number of interviews with professional dancers state that the mental and physical state they are in is the hardest things they have ever faced. "It's easy, as a viewer, to miss the fact that a dancer is doing twelve counterintuitive things at any given moment to create what you see— keep stomach lifted, tailbone tucked under, legs turned out (from the hip, not the knees), arms supported (by the back, not the shoulders), neck relaxed, expression pleasant...and this is merely for standing still in first position." (Pels). At barre dancers have to do more than just stand there waving their arms, they have to constantly think about what they are doing. Stomach uplifted, arms strong, pelvis tucked, neck relaxed and a pleasant expression. Everything is purposeful and nothing is ever instinct. This is evidence that dance mentally is harder than football because just blocking everything out for x number of minutes is unprofessional. Therefore, dance is harder than football in all categories.

Furthermore, Dance takes more time dedication and years of experience than football. After following prima ballerinas such as Sharni Spencer for a day, they show a long day of work compared to an interview with Jerry Hughes, a NFL player, who works shorter days. "10.30am Arrival. Dancers begin to arrive at the theatre to start their day's work. 10pm Curtain down When the final curtain call has been taken..." (The Australian

Ballet). And the quote relating to football, “9:47 a.m. Hughes boards the fourth of six buses assigned to shuttle coaches and staff to the walk-through. 7:55 p.m. The final air horn sounds...” (Miller). Both the Prima ballerinas day and the NFL players day are busy but it says that the prima ballerina stays busier longer and has a longer day. On a survey of 7th grade students, it asks a series of question that presents how long dancers and football players have to dedicate a certain number of hours to their sport. “Fifty percent of dancers surveyed said they danced at least 10 hours a week (Unkart). Twenty eight percent of football players surveyed said they played at least ten hours (Unkart). Half of the seventh grade dancers said that they dance ten hours and over. Barely over a quarter of football players surveyed said that they played at least ten hours. Dancers have to dedicate so much time to become an expert. The evidence doesn't lie, dancers have to spend more hours out of their lives to work on dance than football. Something to consider, ballerinas can never truly become an expert on their topic but on average, the amount of years that it takes to become a professional ballerina, is more than becoming an NFL player. “Training to become a professional dancer takes between eight and ten years. Students begin at about age seven.” (Atlanta). Football players, on the other hand, “...must be three years removed from high school to enter the NFL.” (Hodge). It does take work to become a professional NFL player, but the time is nowhere near the years of training it takes to become a Professional dancer.

In contrast, people frequently think that american football is harder than dance, but in reality it is easier. Football can seem harder because they have so many possible choices but in dance there are singular movements, combos and more. “A coach's master playbook can contain about 1,000 plays -- pretty much anything he would ever consider calling in a game.” (Farmer). Moreover, there are about 169 dance terms, singular dance movements just for ballet. There are also thousands of combos to do (Ballet). Dance terms are very important and must be executed perfectly. And yes a MASTER coaches book has a lot of possible plays but dancers have more combos and terminology. Rules are very important and although football has quite a bit, dance has almost 3 times as much and are still strongly reinforced. “Technically, there are seventeen rules listed in the 2013 NFL rulebook.” (Seifert). But in dance, “There are about fifty rules for most dance competitions” (Rules). The number of rules are a huge tell that dance is harder than football. A dancer has to keep all of these rules in mind while performing and being backstage as well as many others.

Given these points, why would anyone think that football is harder than dance? Dancers work harder both physically and mentally. Not to mention, they require more training and time dedication. Dancers make it look easy, football players make it look hard. Everyone needs to know how much harder dance is opposed to football. The

tireless hours spent in a hot room. Working, repeating every movement until it's perfect. No, this topic is not a world renowned argument that is often fought about. But if a dancer is seen laughing in the face of a clueless football player, chances are the dancer was just told that football is harder than dance. As Nan Keating once said, "Most people think of ballet as children in little tutus. They don't know it is sweat, blood and tears as well."

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