



Sport Social Work Journal

Sport Social Work Journal Special Issue: "In Their Own Words"

Athletes hold powerful truths about the realities of sports—truths that are often silenced, misunderstood, or ignored in coaching, administration, and policy. This special issue invites current and former athletes to write personal letters or narratives directly to sport professionals—coaches, athletic staff, social workers, trainers, administrators, and policy makers to tell their truths.

We believe storytelling can be a radical tool for justice. Your words can teach professionals how to truly listen with care, challenge harmful stereotypes, and create sport spaces that affirm the complexity of athletes' identities and lived experiences—across race, gender, sexuality, class, and ability.

Submissions should focus on authentic athlete voices and offer insight into how sport professionals—especially those in social work, mental health, or athletic support roles—can foster environments rooted in equity, care, and systemic change.

We invite submissions in the form of personal letters, narrative essays, or reflective pieces from current and former athletes. Submissions may explore—but are not limited to—the following topics:

Topics of Interest (*including but are not limited to*):

- Being seen, heard—or ignored—in coaching or support systems
- Coping with athletic related injuries
- Racial stereotypes and racism in sport
- Navigating gender identity, sexism, or misogyny
- Class and access: hidden costs, pay-to-play, inequity in elite sport
- Disability and ableism in athletic environments
- LGBTQ+ athletes: visibility, erasure, or exclusion

- Mental health, injury, grief, and healing
- Athlete activism and pushing back against injustice
- Joy, liberation, and belonging in sport
- Advice to future sport professionals: what we wish they knew

How to Submit

Manuscript files (Microsoft Word format only) should be submitted electronically via the SSWJ Portal. You can access the portal below.

[CLICK HERE TO ACCESS SUBMISSION PORTAL](#)

Each manuscript must be typewritten, double-spaced throughout, use “Times New Roman” font (size 12), and utilize one-inch margins on the top, bottom, and sides. The preferred page length is 3-5 pages.

Each submission must state the manuscript has not been simultaneously submitted for publication and/or published elsewhere.

To ensure anonymity, the name of the author must be deleted from the manuscript's text and file properties. The submitting author must upload a separate file with a title page that includes author name and affiliation.

Key Dates

- **Submissions Due:** November 20, 2025
- **Peer Review Notification:** December 15, 2025
- **Publication Date:** Spring 2026