

# THE SPORTIER

## The Effect of Coronavirus on Sports

In the past weeks, the worldwide outbreak of COVID-19 (better known as Coronavirus) has caused a state of panic everywhere. All across the globe, we can see loads of legal action and additional precautionary measures that are being put into effect to make sure people stay safe. One of the largest industries affected by this crisis: sports. Originating in Wuhan, China, this virus eventually made its way to Europe, America, and elsewhere. With over 100,000 cases worldwide and a death toll of around 3,600 thus far, this outbreak is no joke. In the sports world, one of the most significant actions taken was in Italy. In a country with the second-highest death toll at the hands of this disease globally, the Italian government took a big step by closing off all sporting events in the country from fans for at least the next month. Elsewhere internationally, the 2020 Summer Olympics in Tokyo is in jeopardy at the moment. Japan, while not being as affected by Coronavirus as some other nations, would be bringing people from all over the world into their space, where the virus could cause destruction at any second. Japan faces a difficult task in choosing whether to continue on with the Olympics or not. On the American side, sports here have been adversely altered. In the NBA, soon arriving at its playoffs, many West Coast games have been given Coronavirus warnings, as the American form of the disease originated in Washington state. The NBA has even gone to the lengths of notifying teams that they should prepare for playing in empty stadiums, as seen in Italy. Through these rumors, Los Angeles Lakers star LeBron James has said that he would not play without an audience, explicitly stating, "I ain't playing if I ain't got the fans in the crowd." The NBA has paid attention to even the smallest details, as they are telling players that they should avoid high-fiving fans and instead consider fist-bumps. To continue with basketball, one of the most significant American sporting events of the year is almost upon us. March Madness is around the corner, and Coronavirus is trying to take hold of it. Colleges such as Stanford and Washington have shut down classes due to the disease, and the NCAA has a massive problem on their hands. The NCAA is considering the possibility of cutting its number of host cities, and potentially even holding games without fans, though the tournament being canceled all together is unlikely. The traditions of America's Pastime have been shifted, as MLB players in Spring Training and carrying on into the regular season have been told not to sign memorabilia from fans, with teams like the Nationals and Phillies declaring that they would distribute pre-signed baseballs instead. With the MLB season inching upon us in less than 20 days, their fan situation is still in question. With these cancellations, fans would have to be refunded tickets, as ticket sellers like StubHub would be losing money. Employees of teams and facilities that have been shut down could lose a significant amount in wages or potentially be released without the use of their services. The Coronavirus is a pandemic, with people around the world being quarantined and scientists trying to speedily recover patients. The sports world faces many dilemmas to consider, as they must balance entertainment and safety.



## Did You Know?

A 2015 game between the Chicago White Sox and the Baltimore Orioles in Baltimore was the first baseball game to ever take place without fans. This event was not related to any kind of disease, though, as it followed the death of Freddie Gray, an African American man who had died while in police custody.

Sources:

[Worldometer](#)

[NY Post](#)

[NY Times](#)

[USA Today](#)

[Sports Illustrated](#)