

THE SPORTIER

Bad Blood in the MLB

The tensions between the MLB and the MLB Players Association officially came to a boiling point on Saturday. After the MLB owners offered their most recent pitch, one that consisted of a 72-game regular season, with players receiving a guaranteed 70% of their full prorated contracts, and the opportunity to receive up to 83% of their prorated deals if players play in the postseason. With the MLB losing billions of dollars due to the lack of revenue from in-stadium concessions, and mainly, no fans, this deal would have had the MLB paying a total of \$1.5 billion to players across the league. Though this offer was clearly the best offer that has been proposed by the league thus far, it was not enough to entice the players association, with the union noting that they will not be making a counteroffer, leaving the final decision to MLB commissioner Robert Manfred to lay out the plans for the season. The players have fought for full prorated contracts all along, and have additionally fought to play well into October and November to boost salaries. The MLB owners, on the other hand, would like to keep the season to a limited number of games, as they believe that heat concerns may arise again, halting any progress that would have been made, and that with their loss of revenue from a shortened season, they cannot afford a full prorated offer unless the season is shortened to 40-50 games. The relationship between the owners and players association has grown even more severed over the past weeks. First, when the players association requested data to confirm the MLB's statement of projected losses nearing \$4 billion, the players association received information that did not back up those claims, and therefore pushed harder for full prorated salaries. Second, just yesterday, the MLB struck a billion-dollar TV deal extension with Turner Sports. After the MLB had claimed to be losing too much money to be paying players the contracts that they believed were deserved, and off the heels of the St. Louis Cardinals owner stating that "the [baseball] industry isn't very profitable," the MLB rakes in a deal that will make them approximately \$350 million per year? Even though the MLB will be coming back, as the commissioner will make a decision by the end of Monday, it seems as though baseball has taken a toll from these endless negotiations.



MLB superstar Mike Trout



MLB commissioner Robert Manfred



NBA star Kyrie Irving

Developing Story

Just yesterday, a bombshell was released in the MLB regarding a potential “cheating” scandal involving the New York Yankees. New York judge Jed Rakoff ruled that a sealed letter from MLB Commissioner Robert Manfred to the Yankees dating to 2017 will be unsealed on June 19. The Yankees seem distraught by this, and are likely to make an appeal. With the infamous Astros cheating scandal of 2017 and Boston Red Sox illegal use of technology in 2018, the past few months have seen more than enough controversy in baseball. It is believed that the contents of the letter may could describe the Yankees as cheaters and tarnish their reputation.



Sources:

[ESPN](#), [Boston Globe](#), [ESPN](#), [CBS Sports](#), [Click Orlando](#)

Trouble in Disney?

Just when we thought that the NBA was going to be the first professional sport to return, there is a chance that the NBA will be returning to square one. A group of NBA players, led by Brooklyn Nets guard Kyrie Irving, had an approximate 80-player conference call to speak about the Orlando plan. When the decision was made, the National Basketball Players Association, led by Oklahoma City Thunder guard Chris Paul, only required one representative per team to vote on the 22-team plan, with many of these players not consulting teammates. One month ago, the powerful voices of stars collaborated in a call, including LeBron James, Kawhi Leonard, Giannis Antetokounmpo, Stephen Curry, Damian Lillard, Anthony Davis, Russell Westbrook, and Paul himself. Now, the situation has flipped. Orange County in Florida, which houses the city of Orlando, has seen a spike in COVID-19 cases, with the Director of the Department of Health in the county, Dr. Raul Pino, saying, “We are on our way up.” Coupled with the recent death of George Floyd, many NBA players feel that it is not the time to go back to play. Along with Irving, a group consisting of Chris Paul, Kevin Durant, Carmelo Anthony, Dwight Howard, Donovan Mitchell, and Avery Bradley, CJ McCollum and many more, believes that discomfort around playing has grown. Irving flat out stated, “I don’t support going to Orlando,” mainly citing the racism that he has seen in the country. Carmelo Anthony, making sure that unity among the players was expressed, suggested that each of the players on the call donate \$25,000 to an important cause. Donovan Mitchell felt that players are heavily unprepared, having not played 5-on-5 basketball in an extensive time. CJ McCollum told his colleagues that they should expect a significant salary cut, one that may see the NBA dismantle the collective bargaining agreement, and Dwight Howard said that the NBA would just be a distraction from the important events happening in the world. As we continue to live through this confusing and treacherous year of 2020, each day brings something different. Many players seem to understand that one month ago was a completely different world compared to today, though it is the 1% of superstars that disagree and still want to play that may have the most influence.