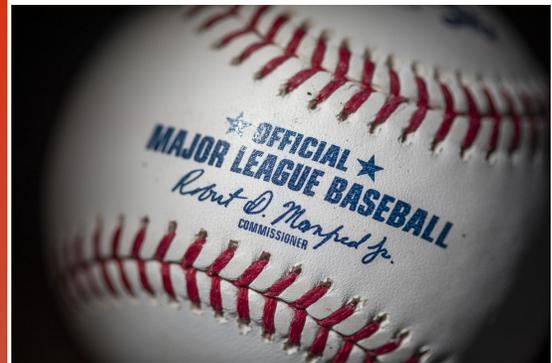


THE SPORTIER

Back to Square One: MLB

Just as things may have been looking up for the MLB, all progress may have been shot down. MLB commissioner Robert Manfred was given more power in the negotiations, yet an agreement, while very close on paper, still seems distant considering the tension between the players and owners. On Wednesday of the past week, the MLB owners proposed their best offer yet, a 60-game, full prorated schedule. This deal had been previously communicated between the commissioner and Players Association Vice President Tony Clark multiple times. The following day, the Players Association countered with a near-exact deal, with the exception being a 70-game regular season with prorated contracts, which would allow for more money for the players compared to the last proposal. Manfred has now become increasingly upset with the Players Association, citing information that states that the league has to be careful regarding health regulations. Manfred, citing Dr. Anthony Fauci, communicated that the league should not be playing in October. Manfred also used information from the MLB's health professionals to generate a statement about the use of doubleheaders, "We told them we're not playing doubleheaders. Our public health guys tell us you should not put people together for that number of hours in the day. It's not safe. But they just keep ignoring those things." The Players Association insists on doubleheaders in order to compress the season, though it may not be the right way to go concerning health. As of right now, the Players Association is tasked on voting on the the 60-game proposal, with Commissioner Manfred having the power to either come to a compromise at 64 to 66 games, or even force a season as low as 48 games. Even if the sides come to an agreement, though, COVID-19 looms as a massive and more prevalent obstacle. Over the past week, several players, most notably 5 from the Phillies organization alone, tested positive for the virus. These recent events have initiated a shut down of all spring training facilities in Florida and Arizona, with many more players and staff noting symptoms in themselves and others. Teams such as the Mets and Yankees have now evacuated and moved their training sites away from Florida and back to their home fields. COVID-19 itself may derail any progress made in these seemingly hopeless negotiations.



MLB Commissioner Robert Manfred (left) and MLB Players Association Vice President Tony Clark (right)



College Football vs. COVID-19

As the year 2020 itself has shown, things can always go down even further. Now, COVID-19 has begun to cause damage in the world of college football. Yesterday, many players from the LSU Tigers football team were quarantined to stop the spread of the virus, as some of the players on the team had contracted the virus. While not all of the 30 players quarantined had contracted the virus, many are awaiting test results to make sure they are healthy. This comes off the heels of LSU's training program that had begun in early June, with health issues deemed "what we anticipated," said Senior Associate Athletic Director of Health and Wellness at LSU, Shelly Mullenix. Though no horrid symptoms have been seen thus far, the virus may have spread throughout the camp. In fact, an outbreak of the virus had recently occurred elsewhere near campus as well. Along with LSU, Kansas State shut down its football training for fourteen days as 14 out of 130 athletes tested received positive COVID-19 results. In more massive news, the Clemson football program announced that they had 23 positive COVID-19 cases on Friday. These positive tests have led many Division I schools to force players into a fourteen day quarantine, challenging the NCAA to find a solution to the speed of COVID-19 spread. These limited cases show how easily the virus spreads, especially in a contact sport like football, and how susceptible all people are. College football, and most likely football in general, will have to come up with a safe way to play such a contact-heavy sport. If it is deemed too unsafe, it may be the unfortunate end of football for the already dim year of 2020.

Sources:

[ESPN](#), [ESPN](#), [ESPN](#), [NY Post](#), [ESPN](#), [Yahoo Sports](#)