

THE SPORTIER

Baseball is Back!

With sports returning, ESPN hosted the first North American major sports game since March of this past year on Thursday. In a game between the Yankees and the Nationals, new signee Gerrit Cole, facing the defending champions from D.C., the game was unfortunately cut short in the most 2020 way possible: thunderstorms that lasted for hours. Before the game was curtailed, we were able to witness the excellence of Gerrit Cole, albeit facing a depleted Nationals team without their best player, Juan Soto, who was out due to a positive COVID-19 test. Cole showed why he was worth the money that he received, lighting up the radar gun while also having incredible movement on his off-speed pitches. The Yankees were the first team to officially secure a win for the 2020 baseball season, beating the Nationals 4-1 after 6 innings. Thursday night also showcased a historic rivalry between the Los Angeles Dodgers and the San Francisco Giants, though the Giants unfortunately did not play as fantastically as they did just a few years prior during their World Series runs. The Dodgers easily took the game, 8-1, also marking a historic milestone: the first National League team to win a National League-hosted game that included Designated Hitters. The universal DH, implemented for every team for this year, could make the game more exciting. A final rule change that was first exemplified on Friday night by the Oakland A's and the Los Angeles Angels is the extra innings rule. Every half inning past the 9th, a runner will start on second base. While this will surely speed up the game, preventing long games during the pandemic, it should be interesting to see how much players agree with it, as it especially puts the home team, hitting after the away team, at a larger disadvantage.

Did You Know?

Kansas City Chiefs Right Guard Laurent Duvernay-Tardif became the first player to opt out of the 2020 NFL season, but for a reason that you may not expect. Duvernay-Tardif is a medical school graduate from McGill University, located in Canada. He has opted out to work on the frontlines in the medical sense, as he has already been doing during the pandemic at long-term care facilities in Canada. Chiefs Head Coach Andy Reid was very supportive of this decision, as his own mother had also received her medical degree from McGill University.



Mookie Betts Secures the Bag

One day prior to Opening Night has his first official game with the Los Angeles Dodgers, on Wednesday, Mookie Betts made his future a whole lot richer. Having been traded to the Dodgers alongside David Price from the Boston Red Sox, Betts inked a new 12-year, \$365 million contract extension. However, there's more to this deal than meets the eye. There are two key things to note: the special signing bonus and the deferred payments. The signing bonus, worth a total of \$65 million, is special in the fact that it is guaranteed even through work stoppages and shortened seasons, which include the 60-game plan that is being executed by the MLB currently. The bonus will be paid annually, starting in 2021, the first year that the Dodgers are required to start the payments. Though his baseball contract with the Dodgers lasts until 2032, he will continue to receive payments past that time. On November 1st in the years of 2021-2035, Betts will receive the following in bonuses: \$5 million from 2021-2032, \$3 million from 2033 and 2034, and \$1 million in 2035. The deferred payments are the other twist in this contract. \$115 million of the overall contract won't be paid off until 2044 when Betts is 52-years-old. In the event that Betts is traded within the coming twelve years, however, that money in deferred payments will be repositioned into his normal contract. If not traded, here is how he will receive a large portion of his contract. From 2021-2025, \$8 million will be deferred each year, \$10 million deferred in both 2026 and 2027, and \$11 million annually from 2028-2032. These payments, due July 1st of each year from 2033-2044, will be provided to Betts in the following manner: he will receive \$8 million annually for the first five installments, \$10 million for the following two, and \$11 million for the last five.

Betts' contract is huge, second largest in the MLB only to Mike Trout's mega-deal that was signed last season worth \$426.5 million over 12 years. Betts has a great contract for himself, as he will be receiving large payments into his 50s, while the Dodgers can save money in the short-term to make a push for a title. Unfortunately for the Dodgers, history tells us that these contracts may not be the best option, as the Mets and Bobby Bonilla agreed to deferred payments in 1991, and the affects of the deferred payments still harm the Mets organization today, and will continue to do so through 2035.

Sources:

[MLB](#), [ESPN](#), [McGill Reporter](#), [Portland Press Herald](#)