

## MONEY TALKS, SO OLYMPICS SHOW WILL GO ON

It's 2021 but the 2020 Summer Olympic Games, scheduled for July of last year in Tokyo, Japan but postponed due to COVID-19, are but one month away.

Maybe. Almost for sure.

You'd never know by watching NBC or CBC that there is anything short of full steam ahead for the four-year athletic showcase, because the two networks are promoting the July 23 start in ostrich-like fashion. You know, head in the sand ... the 'hear no evil, see no evil' approach.

Meanwhile, in Tokyo, medical personnel are ramping up efforts to have the Games postponed again, due to the pandemic threat. But there are hundreds of millions of dollars at stake — facilities, hotel bookings, TV rights — and the money side will likely win in the end.

It's a shame that if the Games do, indeed, go ahead, athletes will be performing in front of, basically, a television audience, because international spectators have been banned from watching.

The pandemic is still a major problem in Japan, which has one of the world's lowest vaccination rates, and the medical world suggests a gathering of athletes, officials and media from all over the world carries with it dangerous, perhaps deadly, prospects.

On the website Japan Today, the head of the the Japanese doctors union warns that the Olympics could produce a stronger coronavirus strain.

"All of the different mutant strains of the virus which exist in different places will be concentrated and gathering here in Tokyo," said Naoto Ueyama, head of the Japan Doctors Union. "We cannot deny the possibility of even a new strain of the virus potentially emerging."

A June 2 story on [cbsnews.com](https://www.cbsnews.com) carried an ominous warning: "More infections and deaths are happening now compared to when Tokyo froze the games in March 2020. Japan's top COVID-19 adviser said, "It's not normal to hold the Olympic games in a situation like this."

It's entirely possible, of course, that proper quarantining efforts and 'bubble' practices in the Olympic Village will offer protection from a virus surge. The Japan Today article said: "Japanese officials, Olympics organizers and the International Olympic Committee (IOC) have all vowed the Games will go ahead, albeit under strict virus-prevention measures. Foreign spectators have been banned and a decision on domestic ones is expected next month."

Money, it appears, will reign in the end. While Games organizers will forego a huge portion of revenue by banning spectators, it will need to hire a fleet of Brinks' trucks to carry the loot being supplied by media outlets around the world. And if a new virus strain is produced, and the death toll rises, it will be nothing more than a footnote to the 2020 ('21) Summer Olympics.

- **Bob Molinaro** of pilot [online.com](https://www.online.com) (Hampton, Va.): "How is it that the USA men failed to qualify for the Olympic debut of the 3-on-3 basketball tournament? This is like Australians failing to qualify for a boomerang contest."
- Headline on [Deadline.com](https://www.deadline.com): "The Olympics are on, NBC has decided."
- **RJ Currie** of [sportsdeke.com](https://www.sportsdeke.com): "**Devin Booker** of the Suns scored 47 points and eliminated **LeBron James** and the Lakers, who couldn't keep up. Oh, and Booker recently started dating Kylie Jenner, so he's keeping up — with the Kardashians."
- **Alex Meyers** of [Golf Digest](https://www.golfdigest.com), on **Jon Rahm** being told greenside that he had tested positive for COVID-19 and was out of the Memorial tournament: "The leader in the clubhouse was no longer even welcome in the clubhouse."
- **Patti Dawn Swansson**, on the Winnipeg Jets' exit interviews: "Apparently (**Mark**) **Scheifele** arrived in the Zoom Room with a chip on his shoulder the size of a Zamboni, and his boo-hoo level reached its highest pitch when he went all snot-nose on jock journos and the department of player safety. Meanwhile, he confirms that he is still a saint."
- **Mike Whan**, incoming USGA executive director, who is a fan of the use of range finders in the pro game: "There is nothing worse on TV than watching a golfer and caddie do arithmetic."
- **Mike McIntyre** of the Winnipeg Free Press, after fans criticized him for suggesting the four-game suspension against **Mark Scheifele** was appropriate: "The Free Press signs my cheques. Not the Jets. My tool of the trade is a laptop computer, not a set of pom-poms."
- Comedy writer **Alex Kaseberg**: "**Jon Rahm**, who refused to get a vaccine, was forced to resign from the Memorial Tournament due to testing positive for COVID-19. By not getting two shots, he lost his six-shot lead. While his iron play was good, his irony cost him over a million dollars."
- Another one from **RJ Currie** of [sportsdeke.com](https://www.sportsdeke.com): "Pirates third baseman **Ke'Bryan Hayes** had a dinger taken away because he missed first base. Which pretty much describes most of my dating life."
- Sign on the door in old Tiger Stadium. "Visitors Clubhouse, No Visitors."

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