

How are different sports coping in the midst of a pandemic?

“Lockdowns of businesses, schools and overall social life, which have become commonplace to curtail the spread of the disease, have also disrupted many regular aspects of life, including sport and physical activity”- UNDESA

Sports is one of the many activities halted due to lockdown during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The slow resumption of professional sports has generated financial repercussions in television, event tickets, sponsorship, etc. Furthermore, the difficulty of maintaining social distancing also prevent sporting events from being organised.

In this snapshot, we explore solutions in professional sports during the COVID-19 pandemic through **football, racing, basketball, major events, and industry contribution.**

SOLUTIONS SNAPSHOT

FOOTBALL

As one of the most lucrative professional sports in the world, there were **significant financial repercussions** when top-tier leagues in France (Ligue 1) and The Netherlands (Eredivisie) were halted due to the pandemic. Meanwhile, England's Premier League and Germany's Bundesliga have resumed games since May and June respectively.

France allowed spectators in the stadium for a Cup Final on 25 July. This was the first European match open to the public, with **spectators capped at 5,000** following strict social distancing regulations.



Photo: New Indian Express

Despite difficulty to maintain social distance during the match itself, **the substitutes bench** in this Bundesliga game was sparsely arranged to maintain **physical distancing** between players.



Photo: Squawka

All footballs were **sanitised before and during halftime** of games in Germany's top two football tiers (Bundesliga and Bundesliga 2).



Photo: Wheels24

RACING

Although racing only involves one driver and occasionally a co-driver, the logistics required to transport equipment and large teams from race to race prove difficult during a pandemic. To solve this, **no spectators were allowed during races.**

Muted podium celebrations in the 2020 Formula 1 Austrian Grand Prix, with no presence of fans. Some teams have implemented bubbles, where drivers have their own separate unit and are not working together with the full team.

BASKETBALL

The American National Basketball Association (NBA) resumed its games in July with **new social-distancing guidelines.**

New social distancing guidelines require players to be **six feet apart from each other outside the court.** Chairs were sparsely arranged in the bench area to ensure social distancing.



Photo: Fox Business

The NBA has also partnered with private companies to develop wearable tech, the **"Oura Ring" - which tracks players' key health data** such as:

- heart rate, respiration rate, body temperature and sleep patterns.

This acts as a preventative measure and helps the NBA to promptly identify COVID-19 symptoms in players should any arise.

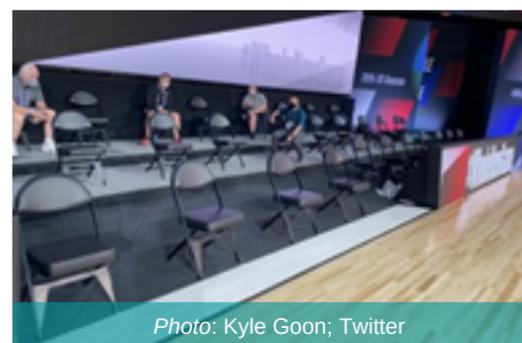


Photo: Kyle Goon; Twitter

MAJOR SPORTS EVENTS

In July, the Tokyo Olympic 2020 committee **postponed the Olympic Games to 2021** due to the pandemic.

The president of Tokyo Olympics stated that following the postponement of the Olympics, the all new **"All Partners Task Force"** was established with experts from WHO and local Japanese authorities to provide continuous advice to the Olympic organising committee.

Similarly, the Union of European Football Associations (UEFA) has also announced the postponement of the European Football Championship (Euro 2020) to June 2021.

The decision was made to **give priority to all domestic and European club competitions**, and to protect the public and those involved in the competitions from the spread of COVID-19.

INDUSTRY CONTRIBUTION

Seven Formula One teams with UK based factories initiated 'Project Pitlane', an **industry-wide engineering effort to manufacture respiratory devices.**

The Mercedes AMG Petronas F1 team collaborated with clinicians at University College London (UCL) to develop **Continuous Positive Airway Pressure (CPAP) devices.** Mercedes has since made design and manufacturing specifications available via open source.



Photo: Formula 1

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