

Coronavirus precautions reach another level

College and pro sports take action

By JUSTIN CHAPMAN



The precautions taken for the coronavirus (COVID-19) have officially reached the collegiate and professional sports level. Media members are no longer allowed in the locker rooms of the big four American sports leagues in season. This includes the NBA, NHL, MLB and MLS.

That was where the COVID-19 impact was at while I was writing this column for the first time. Now several Division I conference tournaments have been cancelled, such as the Big Ten tournament in Indianapolis.

Not only that but March Madness has officially been cancelled and the NBA has suspended its season for the time being.

At first, the news of games being played without fans was a little shocking to players.

“We play games without the fans?” said LeBron James in a tweet from SportsCenter in a locker room interview on March 7. “Nah, that’s impossible. I ain’t playing, if I ain’t got the fans in the crowd, that’s who I play for.”

I’m all for players, fans and employees at these games for staying healthy. The death rate on this virus is pretty small, around 3%, but this pandemic should not be taken lightly. The way this thing is spreading is exponentially and gathering thousands of people for games is too big of a risk.

According to the Center for Disease Control (CDC), COVID-19 is spread when people are in close proximity – within six feet of each other – and through coughing and sneezing if someone comes into contact with respiratory droplets.

Contact with fans differs between leagues and levels of play, but in the NBA the players usually walk through a tunnel to get to and from the locker room, with fans being seated on either side of the tunnel in the stands.

Those few moments of being close to the fans is unlikely to cause the virus to spread to the players. In fact, the CDC said the virus spreads most when someone is sick and showing symptoms. I doubt anyone wants to go to a game while feeling under the weather.

But why risk it? If you knew that going to a game might possibly give you this virus, would you want to go? Probably not.

“I don't think about any of that,” said Miami Heat forward Jimmy Butler in an ESPN article regarding COVID-19. “I'm still going to be who I am. We're still going to be who we are.”

Butler's comments on this were before the NBA suspended it's season – before Utah Jazz center Rudy Gobert tested positive for COVID-19 on March 11.

In some regards though, I still agree with Butler. We can't stay in our homes every waking second of our lives now. People have jobs, you need to go to the grocery store and do things of that nature. But, the phrase 'better safe than sorry' is definitely applicable with COVID-19.

Taylor University took actions as well and cancelled all spring break trips, this includes spring break missions trips and the athletic program trips.

The drama surrounding this virus will march on as it continues to spread, but fans and players alike need to agree, precautions taken for this virus are for the better.

There's not much we can do to help everyone stay healthy except wash your hands and stay home when you're sick.

For now, we wait. We watch a virus change the world around us, including our beloved sports.

Related Stories



Taylor reaches COVID-19 decision

By ANSLEY KARY



The problem with Indiana basketball

By JUSTIN CHAPMAN



A historic season in Odle Arena

By JUSTIN CHAPMAN