



In collaboration with:



Weekly #SportPositive Twitter Chat

Tuesday, May 19

The Future of Sport and How To Recover Better

Please note we have just taken salient points that were added in the discussion and have not given attribution. This document is to give a flavour of the Twitter Chat, it is not a transcription. If you wish to see who wrote points that resonate with you, to pick up a discussion, search #SportPositive on Twitter and you will be able to see the original tweets.

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Q1: We know the biggest challenges for sport of getting up and running post-COVID19 are when (timing) and how (logistics), but more broadly and long-term what will be the challenges that sports organisers have to contend with? Do you think these will impact sustainability efforts?

Obvious challenge for sports organisers will be spatial distancing, crowd flows, catering and travel modes to/from venues. Potential sustainability setbacks would be more car travel, more materials used and preference for disposable items for hygiene purposes.

COVID19 presents so many layers of challenges and sustainability will be no exception. The critical key to our green sports/sport positive industry will be to anticipate which elements will likely get sacrificed and identify new ways to integrate positive outcomes!

To disrupt & leapfrog. We cannot cut/paste anymore and implement incremental change. Events have been delayed to 2k21, opportunity should be taken to reinvent themselves & set ambitious targets/measures. Good comms + attractivity towards new sponsors.

Yes, there will be operational challenges but the industry is already working to address those. Sustainability will be a part of the adaptations at [@AEGworldwide](#). We're still in!

Contending with revenue impact long-term will be significant. However the green sports movement emerged and grew post 2008 recession(N.A.) out of the need for efficiency. Poss that the fans' expectation of 'purpose' will 'sustain' efforts to retain fan love

Challenge is safely managing spectator interaction/social distancing. "Behind closed doors" still has 100s of people in attendance. Re: sustainability, fewer resources/by-products from normal ops, but more used for hygiene. Must use as opportunity to change!

Challenge is also for sustainability to be seen as aligned with new priorities of healthy, wellbeing, hygiene and safety. Risk is that the critical focus on climate action could get pushed aside. Must not happen

Short term will focus on practical solutions to provide 'risk free' venues for people to return to sport - this may result in waste. Longer term plans can ensure operational solutions are based on sustainable good practice through a 'better than before' mentality

Q2: We have had an unavoidable moratorium on pretty much all global professional sport. What ways do you think sport can #recoverbetter, which old practices can be reset and more sustainable ones implemented?

Things we're liking:

- Closing urban streets to cars to facilitate walking
- Changing division alignments to reduce team travel
- Greater focus on human health impacts in indoor & outdoor environments

-> Fascinated by the concept of realigning divisions and finding efficiencies in schedules in general. While we're shaking up what 'normal' means, why don't we really create something that makes sense!?

—> We've always thought it's better for the sport anyway, because local rivalries are the best!

What changed during Covid and could remain in a positive way and to a certain extent:

- smart mobility [remote work (+sports?) /soft mobility / etc.]
- local F&B / sourcing

Resetting old practices should mean having fewer but better events; more logical locations and sequences (i.e. no more tours back and forth across the world); paying much more attention to fan experience at the event (not just sport presentation)

This is what I've been racking my brain on since early March... This hiatus provides the opportunity to catalyze smarter, more efficient contract negotiations, new initiatives that are safe and better for the environment, and push brand partners to get involved

One idea- go through the supplier list to find opportunities to eliminate unnecessary purchases (REFUSE purchasing), switch to eco products (REPLACE), or find REUSABLE (multi-use) or RECYCLABLE materials. Most contracts are paused right now... a good opp!

->This works on the procurement side and the disposal side! Food waste is just one topic that is impacted from both angles... It's amazing what cross-collaboration can do to identify opportunities throughout the process!

This will be the best opportunity the sport industry has had to reset its operation.

1. Rethinking transit to events
2. Rethink sponsorships & partnerships
3. Use time to upgrade infrastructure and building ops

Three suggestions for healthier & sustainable recovery: 1) Stadia, clubs & events to promote active travel to venues; 2) Catering offer with emphasis on plant-based food & recyclable usage; 3) Adopt ethical framework for sponsorship e.g. no HFSS products

Q3: The long-term outlook for travel is a slow recovery, and we should all be flying less if we are serious about climate change.

Do you think leagues/tournaments that take place on a global scale (where large contingent of audience travel by plane to spectate) will have to change in a post-COVID world? If yes, how?

Absolutely! Similar to Zika concerns in Rio 2016 we cannot risk having masses gather in one location and spread disease to continents where it is not present. I hope we consider the one site hosting strategy and see more regional competition emerge again

-> Encouraging higher levels of local attendance and digital spectating for those further afield?

—>Support local but for sport. Decrease carbon footprint in the process

—> Agreed! There has to be some kind of hybrid model for all sport post-COVID doesn't there? The sports world will have gone through the period of adaptation and most will have made it work financially, why go back?

—> Key example was Real Madrid playing Atletico Madrid in Lisbon for UEFA Champions League final in 2014. In the future, hosting a virtual experience in one Madrid Stadiums could hold back a lot of non-ticket holders to travel to city and offer new sponsorship activation programs.

Similar to the long-lasting effects of 9/11, I anticipate very simple scalable strategies will remain 5-10 years from now, but fear that the reason we go through the motion of germ-spreading mitigation strategies may largely be forgotten in the long term

Long-term prediction very difficult, but there's bound to be a reflection by many would-be travellers as to whether or not to travel. Organisers will have to work harder to pull in visitors and sustainability credentials will be vital attributes

-> I think I know the answer to this, but do you think for the likes of the Olympics that a model of local visitors and digital spectators from further afield could ever work/be palatable?

—> Not as stark as that because Olympics raison d'être is about bringing people and cultures together, so without international visitors, Games are poorer. But ratios will change. Many other options such as remote production, smaller venues, better use of venues

Team/staff flights should be revisited & reduced. E.g. smarter scheduling to reduce # of x-country flights. Short distance trips via bus/train. For fans: partnerships between pro teams + local transport should be developed to encourage use of public transit. Car-less tailgate!

We must ensure there are long-lasting impacts in the front-office in all decision-making. Future risks can be reduced/mitigated by proactive thinking and operational resilience. 9/11-driven standards won't be value engineered, neither should sustainability.

Esp critical to reduce number of competitions. Do we need global tourneys for 13 year olds? Also time to get away from the 365 day season for various sports. Why are we playing (ice) hockey in the summer?

-> YES. YES. YES. High pressure competition and sport specialization at that age has been shown to be unhealthy to development.

Tools like French Ministry Sports <https://optimouv.net> could be tailored/deployed at UN Level & pushed 2 mega events when defining calendar. Other tools could also be implemented to prevent Site Visits (ex. virtual tours, photo DDB). Remote competitions could also be spread

Olympics are fine - 4yr cycle, cultural unity etc. It's all the filler that has popped up in btw that's an issue. With fewer events, an opportunity to focus on quality over quantity (and to maintain stds) and better economic sustainability of events

Q4: Ideas on what the future of sport might look like, from short term ideas like 'Drive-Ins' for games or fans using virtual reality (VR) solutions, to more long-term ideas such as the rise of broadcasters using remote production, and consolidation of sports leagues are being touted.

What is your prediction on what the future of sport might look like & how will sustainability factor into that?

One important task should be to associate carbon pricing/ footprint to each event management budget line. Another task within budget mgmt, to associate end of life/second

life description to each product purchase. With those two processes, disruptive change and decision-making kick in.

I have always been keen on idea of remote production. Lots of resistance to this in the past but in new situation opportunity is there to make this the default approach. Would save so much infrastructure and travel costs

Ideally, consider managed retreat strategies from certain untenable sport practices/ locations/venues. More realistically: Fewer fans on site, with more (\$ making) options for fans to engage from outside the (e.g. VR drive ins) to promote social distancing.

The need for sports team, leagues, owners, and athletes to have a 'do good' or purposeful mission will be more critical, for one... Isn't that the definition of sport positive?

The era of building new stadia for tournaments & mega-events is surely being put into question; they often have little lasting legacy & construction of new stadia produces huge amounts of CO2; modular & temporary stadia are a good starting point for change

With more cities/nations recognizing the lack of benefit in hosting mega-events, the trend will be towards fewer bids, meaning hosts without ability to achieve sustainable outcomes. Worrying to see. IOC already lacks teeth in their sustainability policy.

-> That's bleak, but I recognise your point. Challenge for IOC is the minimum 7 years from bid to delivery. In 2013 who would have thought Tokyo wouldn't host the Games in 2020. Definitely means all sport needs to embrace more resilience measures

—> I go back and forth on this. Extending planning/preparation time should lead to better outcomes, but it increases financial burden as well.

Article of the 'day' in French. Pro Handball player asking to accelerate change and for instance adding ecology into regulations, which is a powerful tool for change.

<https://lequipe.fr/Handball/Actualites/Karabatic-mise-sur-l-ecologie/1135731...>

Winter Olympics will be 1st to have fixed site or two. While we may not see single perm. fixed site, I see a small pool of cities as designated host sites. Poss. lower number of international tix offered

Q5: Free space. Ask the group the question on your mind in regard to the future of sport & how to #recoverbetter, or share thoughts on another facet that wasn't mentioned or maybe you read a great article you want to share. Over to you!

Would love to hear thoughts on ingress/egress management -- even when COVID is past. Are there opportunities to create a positive flow/incorporate active transport to game (walk/ride groups, busses in from select suburbs) etc

[heresy alert] Could we accept lower broadcast quality! Does it all have to be super high definition, pin sharp images? I think there's a lot of over-scoping that is ripe for review and could significantly reduce impacts and costs

-> The Last Dance has made us all appreciate 'retro' video quality for a nostalgia factor. Certainly requires more active viewing/focus!

—> Broadcasters will say no (at first), but a new reality has to be embraced. I think the way we have all adapted during COVID19 with a bit more "homespun" broadcasting has been refreshing

As much as we miss and love professional sports, this time has been just as detrimental to amateur sports. My kid misses Little League. I miss my Sunday morning pickup soccer game. What does the future hold for amateur sports and the pipelines to the pros?

-> Agreed! So many local and community clubs which are the breeding ground for great sports talent won't survive COVID19 and we will all have to step up to help them.

Thank You!

If you contributed to the #SportPositive Twitter Chat this week, thank you for being a part of it! If you didn't, I hope you find this document useful, and mark your diaries now to join us next week, **Tuesday, May 26th at 4-5pm UTC.**

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