

## The Cardinals' alleged casino trip is exactly how the MLB will fail

Written by Administrator

Tuesday, 04 August 2020 10:54 -

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The MLB season hinges on personal responsibility. The absence of a bubble means players, teams, and the league need to work together to ensure the season can progress. After about two weeks, it's been an unmitigated failure. The [Miami Marlins](#) have already had a major outbreak, more than 20 games have been postponed, and the future of the season hangs in the balance.

Of course, this isn't all on the players. Commissioner Rob Manfred deserves a heaping helping of blame too for letting the season progress with scant few safeguards. The return to play plan was rushed, poorly implemented, and failed to account for a multitude of scenarios that we're now seeing emerge.

The [St. Louis Cardinals](#) are the latest team to have an outbreak, and it poses another threat to the long-term viability of this baseball season.

### **It began on Friday with the Cardinals making an announcement.**

At this point positive tests are bound to happen. With a bubble like the ones basketball and hockey are using, there's no way of completely avoiding the virus. Even with strict quarantine rules and testing, gaps remain. And that's if the players and coaches are doing everything they can to adhere to Covid best practices.

Fans noticed that the Cardinals weren't doing a good job upholding MLB's guidelines on social distancing, participating in high fives during their six games back from the break, despite rules saying players should avoid contact with each other.

### **Then a new report emerged.**

With the source of the Cardinals outbreak largely unknown, Jerry Hairston Jr. reported that a few players went to a casino following their series against the [Twins](#). This obviously represents a huge breach in protective measures, and is a considerable risk to the rest of the league at a time where players are supposed to be working to ensure games can be played as safely as possible.

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[The rumor was corroborated by MLB insider Jon Heyman](#) , which caused the Cardinals to work overtime to say there's "no truth" to rumors their players would be foolish enough to go to a casino in the middle of a pandemic and potentially help jeopardize the entire season. Team president [John Mozeliak tried to defend the possibility his players were unsafe](#) , but did so in the weirdest way:

"We understood there were going to be risks... just the inherent risk playing in the middle of a pandemic. Would it make it easier if we said, 'Oh somebody went to a strip joint?' "

Yes, yes it would John. It would make things much easier if you notified the league when learning that a player went to a strip joint. In fact, not only would it be easier, but it would be the most responsible thing to do in that case. Then the player could be quarantined, monitored, have their exposure to others limited, institute contact tracing, and ensure rapid testing. That might not sound easy, but it's a substantially lighter lift than doing nothing, waiting for an outbreak, then trying to do damage control while everyone else's season is at risk.

### **The extent of the outbreak is revealed, and its impact.**

[On Monday MLB announced that 13 members of the Cardinals organization were positive for Covid 19](#) , with seven players and six staff members all being flagged following mandatory testing. As a result the team's series against the [Tigers](#) was cancelled, and there is a tentative plan for the team to resume play on Friday against the [Chicago Cubs](#)

It's unclear how the larger baseball schedule will be impacted by delays around the league. The typical solution of playing more double headers seems fine, but increases the amount of contact between players on a daily basis — which isn't ideal in the current climate.

### **Teams and players need to stop being dumb, if we want baseball to continue.**

This is the blunt reality of the situation. This isn't an issue isolated to the Cardinals. It's now apparent the source of the Marlins outbreak, which had widespread ramifications on the rest of the league, was caused by players leaving team hotels and going on unapproved excursions.

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### [Derek Jeter is desperately trying to make excuses for his players](#)

, saying they simply “let their guard down,” by going out for coffee, milk and to have dinner.

Players do not have the luxury of being able to let their guard down, and executives making excuses for this type of behavior only enables future foolishness. Everybody knows the risks of Covid-19, and how fragile the restart to baseball is. The season will be lost unless the virus is back under control, and that begins with teams scrutinizing their players and demanding more of them. There is no reason any player should need to go anywhere outside the confines of a team hotel, and doing so isn't a sign of “letting their guard down,” it's selfishness. It's deciding their immediate needs are more important than their teammates, team staff, and the league as a whole.

If individuals couldn't handle the prospect of losing some of their personal freedoms for a little while in exchange for returning to baseball, then they shouldn't have agreed to come back in the first place. As it stands we will continue to have outbreaks inside of teams, games being postponed, and the season under constant threat until everyone works together to ensure baseball can proceed as safely as possible.

Excuses need to end now.

**Read more** <https://www.sbnation.com/mlb/2020/8/4/21353902/cardinals-covid-outbreak-casino-report-details>