



AP Photo/Ryan Kang

Dustin Johnson hits on the 12th hole during the final round of the Genesis Invitational golf tournament at Riviera Country Club on Feb. 16, 2020, in Los Angeles.

Johnson decides against Olympics

Golfer instead will pursue lucrative FedEx Cup, his manager announces

By DOUG FERGUSON
AP Golf Writer

On the fence about the Olympics at the start of the year, Dustin Johnson decided he won't be going.

Johnson's manager said in a text message Monday that the FedEx Cup playoffs hold as much importance to Johnson as chasing a gold medal in Tokyo this summer.

"I feel certain he would choose otherwise if the timing were different, but feels he is making the best decision under the circumstances," said David Winkle of Ham-

bric Sports Management.

Johnson's name was removed from the Olympic golf ranking Monday afternoon.

At No. 5 in the world ranking, he currently would have been No. 3 among Americans behind Brooks Koepka and Justin Thomas. Countries are allowed a maximum of four players in golf provided they are among the top 15 in the world ranking.

Golfweek first reported Johnson's decision.

Johnson was the leading American for the 2016 Olympics in Rio de Janeiro when he decided at the last minute to withdraw because of concerns over the Zika virus.

This was more about the FedEx Cup and the lucrative prize Johnson has yet to win.

The top prize is now worth \$15 million.

Asked about the Olympics at the beginning of the year, Johnson said he wasn't sure how his schedule would be in the summer with the Tokyo Games coming after the final major and before the FedEx Cup playoffs.

"Having had a few close calls in the playoffs, he really wants to win them before his time is done and feels that he wouldn't be giving himself the best opportunity to do so if he added a lengthy international trip," Winkle said.

Johnson plans to play five out of seven weeks through the British Open. He then would have a week off before heading to Japan for the Olympics. Now, he is contemplating the 3M Open in Minnesota after returning from the British, and

then two weeks off before the FedEx Cup playoffs.

Johnson nearly won the FedEx Cup in 2016 until he lost the 54-hole lead and lost the FedEx Cup when Rory McIlroy won the Tour Championship and its then-\$10 million prize. He has spent 91 weeks at No. 1 in the world, third only behind Tiger Woods and McIlroy among active players.

With just over three months before Olympic qualifying ends, the leading four Americans are Koepka, Thomas, Patrick Cantlay and Webb Simpson, following by Patrick Reed and Woods. There are still three majors, The Players Championship and a World Golf Championship — all offering big ranking points — before qualifying ends on June 21 after the U.S. Open.

What's next for the Tokyo Olympics as coronavirus spreads?

By STEPHEN WADE
Associated Press

TOKYO — The spreading virus from China has been reported in more than 60 countries and puts the Tokyo Olympics at risk. The Olympics are to open on July 24 — less than five months away. The Paralympics follow on Aug. 25.

IOC President Thomas Bach, in an interview last week, said the "IOC is fully committed to have the opening ceremony there on July 24th in Tokyo." He declined to speculate about a postponement, cancellation, or any combination of those possibilities. "I'm not ready to add fuel to the flames of speculation there in any way."

Others are. An Irish bookmaker last week

began taking bets: 4/6 the opening ceremony will not go ahead in Tokyo as scheduled, or 11/10 that it will.

Senior IOC member Dick Pound last week suggested Tokyo and the IOC had roughly until the end of May to announce a decision. Pound, a former International Olympic Committee vice president, said there's no decision so far and stressed talks were nearly constant with the World Health Organization.

"You just don't postpone something on the size and scale of the Olympics," Pound told the Associated Press. "There are so many moving parts; so many countries, so many different seasons and competitive seasons, television seasons. You can't say: 'We'll do it

in October.' It's a big, big, big decision and you just can't take it until you have all the reliable facts on which to base it."

The virus has caused more than 3,000 deaths, the vast majority in China. Japan has reported 12 deaths with almost 1,000 cases.

The next thing to watch

Tokyo 2020 CEO Toshiro Muto is holding a teleconference Wednesday with the IOC executive board in Switzerland. The 14-member board along with Bach made the big decisions.

There could be changes to the torch relay, which is set to open March 26 in Fukushima prefecture, northeast of Tokyo. The event is heavily sponsored by Coca-Cola and Toyota. It might face crowd

limits the way Sunday's Tokyo Marathon did. Preseason baseball games are being played in empty stadiums, soccer's J-League has suspended play, and a large Sumo event will be held without fans. Training for Tokyo's 80,000 volunteers has been postponed.

What about qualifying?

Officials announced Monday that an Olympic baseball qualifying event was postponed from April to June.

Olympic qualifiers have been moved from China. Bach said that many Chinese teams and athletes are out of China and training elsewhere: the table tennis team is in Qatar, the women's basketball team is in Croatia, and wrestlers are in Serbia.

Is late May a deadline?

Pound speculated that late May was a deadline to decide on Tokyo's future. The call will be made by the IOC executive board, the WHO, and local organizers. It seems reasonable that a decision will have to be made with two months to go.

The Olympics have thousands of moving parts. Sponsors who have paid billions must activate ad programs. More than 11,000 Olympic athletes and 4,400 for the Paralympics have to know their training schedules. Add to that: flights, hotel reservations, catering, ticketing, and broadcast schedules. Almost 75% of the IOC's income of \$5.7 billion in a four-year cycle is from broadcast rights.



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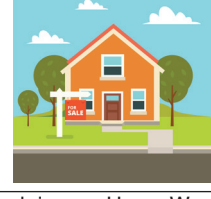
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	3		1	9	8	6		4
		1		5				
	1		9					7
	7	2		3		1	9	
4					1		5	
				4		5		
7		4	6	1	3		8	
				7	2	4	6	1

DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★☆☆☆