


## CHAPTER 54

# The Sports Lockdown in Times of Pandemic: Present and Future

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### ABSTRACT

This chapter analyzes the situation of contemporary sport from the perspective of the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. The use of examples related to international sporting events that were affected by the lockdown serves to reflect an expectation about the

future of global sport. From a SWOT analysis based on situational assessment, the return of activities is explored in a critical way. The position of senior managers in Olympic and Paralympic sport in relation to the pandemic is also used to discuss the situation in question. It is concluded that the return of activities and the execution of the biggest mega events on the planet must take into account the benefit and health of an entire planet, before any other aspect, but above all, conscious management measures are necessary for the full execution of the project. sports planning.

**Keywords:** COVID-19, Pandemic, Lockdown, Olympics and Paralympic Sports.

## 1 INTRODUCTION

After the identification of the disease COVID-19 (Corona Virus of the Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome 2 - SARS-COV-2), based on the evidence pointing its emergence between the end of November and the beginning of December 2019, the routine on the planet has undergone constant transformation.

Sport, in turn, has not exempted itself from this resizing. Italy and Spain held football matches with thousands of spectators at the stadiums. Formula 1 was faced with the indecisiveness about holding the Australian Grand Prix, which was eventually canceled (Richards, 2020). The Tokyo Marathon was canceled for amateur athletes and the professionals ran without an audience on the streets (Mccarthy, 2020). Several trials for the Tokyo 2020 Games were canceled, which created uncertainties for countless athletes. Covid-19 crossed borders and simply caused a lockdown in the sporting hemisphere around the world.

Lockdown is the paralysis of flows, especially those that involve displacement, according to Alexandre Robazza, relationship manager at Sebrae-SP, in an article in the newspaper O Estado de São Paulo (Kerber, 2020). Lockdown measures were adopted in some parts of the world in response to the battle against the pandemic.

Thus, an unprecedented situation in modern sport opened the door and paralyzed the sector worldwide. Competitions were being postponed or suspended. The Olympic and Paralympic Games were postponed to 2021 (McCurry & Ingle, 2020), along with major continental football competitions (Conn, 2020; Ungheria, 2020), after a great discussion about the next course of action for these competitions which come under strict contracts. The major American leagues have been paralyzed or switched their calendar.

Formula 1 canceled four Grand Prix races and has postponed seven races so far. The traditional Wimbledon Tennis Tournament was canceled for the first time since World War II (Carayol, 2020).

In Brazil, the sport also stopped. However, we see discussions about how to maintain the sports industry, which depends on the functioning of the sport and activities to make the wheel spin. With poor sports management, in most cases, we are close to seeing a breakdown, too, in the sports arena.

In football, this issue is more latent, as we have clubs that do not participate in national competitions and are restricted to state competitions. These, even with competitions having been halted without their end, no longer have a perspective for 2020. Athlete contracts are at the end and clubs are not receiving the last sponsorship fee(s) (Beting, 2020; Boni, 2020). Following, there is a confrontation between the clubs and Globo TV to receive the broadcasting rights that concerns the Brazilian football championship, in which it seeks a reduction in the amount which eventually will be paid in the first installments (Folhapress, 2020). Finally, the sponsors see the situation as a threat to the previously closed deal, as there is no certainty that the purchased product will be delivered (Vaquer, 2020).

How to plan the future of athletes and organizations? Will the aid of sports organizations be enough? What about those sports with less expression? Will the professional leagues be able to return under the same status?

Many questions without answers. Perhaps, the last turn point of the sport, happened after the Second World War. From then on sports achieved exponential growth in income and exposure. And now, how will this challenge be faced by sport managers?

## **2 THE BUSINESS IN PANDEMIC TIMES: SPORTS AND THE NEW FUTURE**

The Olympics have previously only been cancelled completely during periods of World War - in 1916, 1940 and 1944 - but never suspended or postponed. The IOC tried to delay the idea to postpone the decision to gain time during the pandemic. After a global pressure for a decision following statements lasting over two days, the IOC decided to postpone the megaevent. Canada announced the drop of the games, and the United States Olympic Committee joined the British Olympic Association in coalition with Germany, Australia, Brazil and Norway in calling for a postponement. However, it will be maintaining the Tokyo 2020 brand live to not affect the commercial relationships and contracts signed before the pandemic.

According to Loy and Coakley (2015) “Sport is characterized as embodied, structured, goal-oriented, competitive, contest-based, and ludic in nature.” Following the three lines, it is possible to classify sports in different dimensions, such as: (a) Sports Leisure or Participation in which the participant is engaged in developing the human essence as a hobby or having fun; (b) Sports for Education, as part of a scholar curriculum model (using an appropriate syllabi) to provide Physical Education in educational institutions; and (C) Sports Performance, a sector dedicated for training and competition, whether or not the athletes are engaged to present the high results of performance (see also, Table 1). According to the NSCA (2017) this sector is highly dependent on fitness training, ej. power, speed, agility, reaction time,

balance, and Body Composition coordination. It is considered in addition, the strong preparation of the athlete to refine techniques, to orientate the decision making process in short reaction time, and to increase the level of competency in sport-specific motor skills.

Table 1. Dimensions of sport in relation to the pandemic.

Dimensions of Sport	Pre-Pandemic	During the Quarantine or Lockdown Period	After-Pandemic
Sport Participation	Everyone practising; indoor and outdoor environment.	Some people practice inside the house; others not practicing at all.	Sports participation will increase exponentially in public areas and under environment spaces outdoors.
Sport Education	PE lessons ranging from 1 to 2 days per week.	Stopped for most of the schools; some institutions organise online classe.	The face-to-face classes tend to return normally. However, the hybrid model, that unifies distance learning and face-to-face classes will be available in the same time
Sport Performance	Athletes are preparing for high-level competition, and for the Olympic and Paralympic Games.	Stopped the training in clubs due to the imposed curfew in most of the countries. But the athletes keep training at home or in centres.	Athletes will start training again for the competitions which were postponed or canceled. Some will have better results and some worse. They will follow standard operating procedures (SOPs) for health protection.

Source: Developed by the authors.

All the sectors in sports are affected by the Covid-19 in different dimensions that require the situational analysis, as recommended by Mataruna (2007) to report a problem identified in a sport event. Mataruna-Dos-Santos, Zardini-Filho and Cazorla (2019) recommended the SWOT Analysis for a strategic planning tool. According to the authors, this analysis (see Table 2) can be used to evaluate the Strengths, Weakness, Opportunities and Threats of company, situation or activity that is required a decision making process. Facing the COVID-19 pandemic period, it is possible to find an analysis to target the possibilities for the safe return of the activities.

Table 2. SWOT Analysis in relation to the Pandemic.

SWOT Analysis	
Strength	Weakness
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Implement strategies to apply in a short period of time.</li> <li>● Adapt the athletes and teams to train or compete in different environment (for example no spectators).</li> <li>● Time for innovation and improvement of technology applied to the sport.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Stop all the sport activities.</li> <li>● Canceling Sports events.</li> <li>● Canceling training from some clubs.</li> <li>● Some clubs continue training (weakness for the health and performance).</li> <li>● Athletes' performance dropping.</li> </ul>
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Team skills development (online workshops).</li> <li>● HR actions improvement (psychology support, accurate information).</li> <li>● IT/Virtual programmers expansion (AV).</li> <li>● New Marketing/creative strategies.</li> <li>● Finance revision considering buffer for emergency.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The Jobs of the stakeholders in the sports industry might be affected directly.</li> <li>● The number of attendees of the sports events might take a long time recover from this crisis.</li> <li>● The old known ways of organising an event might change drastically due to the COVID-19.</li> <li>● Postponing the Tokyo 2020 Olympics games to 2021</li> <li>● Athletes getting sick from Covid-19.</li> </ul>

Source: Developed by the authors.

However, some sectors can use this type of situation for their benefit if they have a proper marketing department. For example, companies which sponsor teams, clubs or athletes, it is possible to develop a campaign supporting people during the crisis and use it as advertisement to get a positive image of the brand. Same approach is applicable for athletes who desire to associate a positive image to their names through donations, volunteering and creating awareness campaigns with governments and health organizations. It is the case of many sportsmen in Brazil that joined their efforts with singerst to donate money for people living under social vulnerability or for people on the streets through live concerts or campaigns. Other initiatives used in the three levels were: live classes, sport challenges, sport training, marathon contest (indoor at home), and many other strategies.

During the quarantine, gyms lost income because there are no new customers and actual members are not consuming their product as Personal trainer sessions, supplements and tracking devices. The strategies applied by some gyms at the moment are renting their machines such as indoor bicycles and treadmills (Professionals and Amateurs) and keeping the sales team active through broadcast emails to prospective consumers; giving free months or discounts for buying a new membership which will start after lockdown. The gyms are exploring social media channels to sell packs and to maintain a positive relation with the customers. However, after the lockdown period, members will be back with some extra weight

gained and ravenous for losing the fat and getting active again; the time when the gyms can improve their income and profit. In all business, it will be necessary to respect the new orientation or policies from the government such as: compulsory social distance over 2m, keep sanitizers available and in some cases orientate the trainers to use masks and other face protection elements (WHO, 2020).

A huge number of personal trainers are already providing online courses and training sessions, as well as some coaches are coming with innovative workouts orienting how people can continue training and stay active inside their home; possible by the time several people will have their own gym and own workout routine at home. Gyms are now offering on-line classes with trainers in a personalised way with better prices. The on-line personal training can be implemented by a big number of professionals, in order to keep the fidelity to the PTs. Following different strategies, the companies could maintain the laborers jobs and pay their salaries on time or with less reduction, as well as rather than keep the equipment not being used in the gym building, gain some profit by renting their equipment. The impact in the economy is visible and will affect all sectors of the society. The association of social media influencers and trainers are providing cases of sport engagement success.

The sport clubs have the right to reduce the salaries of all their employees including the athletes, because they are private properties and most of the businesses are locked down. This action avoids employees becoming redundant and assuring the employability index. The current situation of Covid-19 is uncontrolled and the innovation in the marketing perspective is necessary to provide new models for this industry.

### **3 SAILING IN ROUGH WATERS: THE ADVANCEMENT OF COVID-19, THE IMPACTS ON CANOE SLALOM AND THE POSITIONING OF THE ADMINISTRATIVE BODIES OF THE SPORT**

Canoeing in a very broad sense is the simple act of driving any floating object, aided by paddles. Given these circumstances, it can be practised in any layer of water, which makes it possible to guide the different vessels, whether individually or collectively, subdividing into three different segments: utility, leisure and competitive<sup>1</sup> (Merkle, 1993).

Canoe Slalom is an Olympic sport, through a course (between 250 to 400m) of hanging downstream or upstream gates on river rapids (natural or artificial). Each gate consists of two poles hanging from a wire strung across the river. There are 18-25 numbered gates in a course, of which 6 or 8 must be upstream gates, and they are colored as either green (downstream) or red (upstream), indicating the direction they must be negotiated.

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<sup>1</sup> The Brazilian Canoeing Confederation - CBCa consists of thirteen modalities: I) Speed (Olympic event since 1936), II) Slalom (Olympic event, first edition in 1972, reintroduced to the Games in 1992) and Extreme Slalom kayak, III) Para Canoe (Paralympic event since 2016), IV) Downhill, V) Marathon, VI) Oceanic, VII) Wave, VIII) Kayak Polo, IX) Dragon Boat, X) Traditional, XI) FreeStyle or Rodeo (currently inoperative), XII ) Rafting (emancipated), XIII) Wa'a or Hawaiian Canoe(emancipated).



Photograph<sup>2</sup>: Brazilian canoeist, Pedro Henrique Gonçalves da Silva, on the World Championship (2018)

It is conjectured that to return to training, it is expected to take into consideration the social context of the sports centres. For international championships, the particularities of the host country in the face of pandemic must be analyzed, even as the control of athletes, technical staff, press, among other people who will take part in the event, through regular testing for COVID-19, to keep the safety of everyone involved in the event.

*We have to get to the point where everyone is safe, able to train and prepare so that we can restart.*  
- ALEXANDER SLAFKOVSKY<sup>3</sup>.

For this reason, when dealing with sports competition, it is appropriate for the occasion to highlight two aspects:

I) The conceptual understanding of sports training, aimed at improvement and the high level of performance. In this sense, high performance is one of the promoters of the show, defined by Greco (2000, p. 29) as:

The 'Sports Training' system has as its objective its direction to achieve adequate results in high-performance sport, optimizing the athlete's potential, aiming to present maximum outputs. Thus, aspects such as available organizational infrastructure, self-interest and predisposition of the individual, diagnosis and prognosis of the evolution of the level of performance in the modality (SIC:event), physical-technical, technical-tactical, tactical-psychological evolution ethically feasible to the athlete, biotypological prerequisites inherent to the chosen sport, must be permanently related to the sport.

II) The understanding of the globalization of the sociocultural sports phenomenon, both as a practice and as consumption by the masses. Given this, the high level of performance is one of the gears for the movement of the prosperous market of products and/or services, because when offered as the main attraction, it provides the spectacle for potential consumers. Because of this reality, Constantino (1990, p. 78) identifies the values incorporated into the sport and considers that:

Sports 'show-business' went through everything and everyone. He perfected market research techniques. He applied marketing. He projected the image. It fueled its media consumption. It removed the added value of being a phenomenon of the masses. It was used for advertising purposes.

<sup>2</sup> Photograph: Buda Mendes. Retrieved from: <https://www.zimbio.com/photos/Pedro+Goncalves/2018+ICF+Canoe+Slalom+World+Championships/LKO1fOurVR7>

<sup>3</sup> Slovakian Alexander Slafkovsky was a silver medalist in the 2013 and 2017 world championships and European champion in 2014, 2016 and 2017 editions. He is currently the world representative of slalom canoeing athletes.

It intensified economic relations. It served as a means of ideological political affirmation. He sat at the negotiating table in the face of world conflicts.

The objectives proposed here to present the impacts caused in the training and competitions of the Olympic sport Canoe Slalom, accompanied by the positioning of the administrative bodies of the sport: International Canoeing Federation - ICF and Brazilian Canoeing Confederation - CBCa, as well as the Olympic institutions: International Olympic Committee - IOC, Tokyo Organizing Committee, Brazilian Olympic Committee - COB for the 2020/2021 biennium. We are aware of the incipience of this essay, due to the innumerable unknowns to be solved, but it is relevant given the complexity of the storm that humanity has been going through, with sport being one of the vessels to face it.

After identifying the onset of the disease COVID-19 (Corona Virus of the Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome 2 - SARS-COV-2), based on evidence pointing between the end of November and the beginning of December, in the province of Hubei - China, since then, its progress has been colossal. In January it arrived in Europe and Oceania, in the following month, the American and African continent diagnosed the first infected patients and when spreading across the planet, it was classified by the World Health Organization as a pandemic on March 11, 2020 (WHO, 2020c).

In the first months of 2020, insecurity hovered across the globe and immediate readjustments needed to be established in the economic, social and cultural spheres along with the reinvention of everyday life was put to the test; promoting inevitable strangeness and discomfort caused by the short time for reorganization in the routine.

The sport was not exempt; in a short time, the training was interrupted to comply with the isolation recommended by the World Health Organization (WHO) measures adopted by most of the affected countries. Sports organizations showed solidarity and engaged in combating the spread of the disease and preserving the health of athletes.

The International Canoeing Federation (ICF) has 157 affiliated entities, is present on five continents. Annually it fulfils a vast calendar of competitions, in 11 official modalities, offering courses, training and assemblies.

However, its first official statement was dated March 2, 2020, with mild measures, because at the time, despite the progress of the disease, the countries were not in such alarming situations:

The International Canoeing Federation (ICF) is regularly receiving updated information from the advice of health experts and the International Olympic Committee (IOC) on the status of COVID-19. The virus has already caused serious disruption at sporting events around the world, but so far the canoeing program has not been affected. Currently, Chinese athletes (of high performance) are outside their country and the ICF does not have events scheduled in China for this year. Changes and travel restrictions may affect some of our qualifying events for the Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games. We continue to follow the recommendations of the World Health Organization (WHO), the International Olympic Committee and making decisions in the best interest of everyone involved. ICF continues to monitor the situation. Family health and safety canoeing are our priority (ICF, 2020).

Soon after the first communiqué, weekly newsletters began to be published on the ICF website, warning about the proper precautions to be taken. Competitions have been cancelled or postponed on all continents. The 32<sup>nd</sup> edition of the Olympic Games, scheduled to be held in Tokyo, from July 23 to August 9, 2020, was under constant pressure for the postponement to happen.

Countries like Norway, Canada, Spain, Italy, Australia, Brazil and Great Britain added to the North American athletics and swimming federations who were already positioning themselves in favour of changing the date. It is appropriate to emphasize that the countries with more tradition in the Winter Olympic Games - Canada and Norway - were the most incisive (and supportive), even declaring a boycott, if the events were maintained in 2020.

The North American Swimming and Athletics Federations, with the largest number of medals in dispute<sup>4</sup>, knowing their political strength due to sports that have a huge television and media audience, asked the United States Olympic Committee to advocate for the date to be revised and extended by one year.

The Brazilian Olympic Committee - COB, in an official statement issued on March 21, 2020, demonstrated a reciprocal position to the postponement, as explained by Paulo Wanderley, president of the entity.

The Brazilian Olympic Committee defends the postponement of the Tokyo Olympic Games to 2021, in a period equivalent to that originally scheduled. (...) "The IOC has experienced immense problems before, as in the episodes that culminated in the cancellation of the Games of 1916, 1940 and 1944, due to the World Wars, and in the boycotts of Moscow 1980 and Los Angeles 1984. The entity he knew how to overcome these obstacles and we see the Olympic Flame stronger than ever. I am sure that Thomas Bach (president), gold medal athlete in Montreal 1976, is fully prepared to lead us in this difficult time" (COB, 2020).

With such international pressure, the maintenance of the Games was inevitable, leading the President of the International Olympic Committee - Thomas Bach and the Japanese Prime Minister - Shinzō Abe<sup>5</sup>, to jointly postpone the 32<sup>nd</sup> edition to exactly one year.

For this cautious moment, the International Canoeing Federation (ICF) was favourable to the measures adopted, according to the statement issued on its website, on March 24<sup>th</sup>. It is worth noting that the publication only took place after the Committees (Olympic and Organizer) made official the 1-year extension of the Tokyo Games (ICF, 2020). It is presumed, therefore, that there is a punctual alignment of this Federation with the International Olympic Committee for decision making.

Atypical situations caused by COVID-19 put countries in unequal performance conditions in a short time. However, it is known that the performance of sporting excellence (especially the Olympic) is

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<sup>4</sup> Vecchioli (2020) noted that two sports won the largest number of medals for the United States. In the Rio Olympics 2016, North American swimming rose to the podium 33 times and athletics 32. Therefore, they would only be behind Great Britain (by the difference of 02 medals), China (five medals) and, of course, the United States as a whole. Swimming, if classified as a country, would rank eighth in the overall Olympic medals table.

<sup>5</sup> The meeting also included: Mori Yoshiro - President of the Tokyo 2020 Organizing Committee; Hashimoto Seiko - Olympic Minister; Koike Yuriko - Governor of Tokyo; John Coates - Chairman of the IOC Coordination Commission; Christophe De Kepper - Director General of the IOC and Christophe Dubi - Executive Director of the IOC Olympic Games.

associated with several other factors. Vagenas and Vlachokyriako (2012, p. 211) when correlating the demographic and socioeconomic profile of the countries participating in the Athens Games - 2004, concluded that: “The achievement of Olympic medals depends on the combined potential of population, wealth, growth rate, unemployment, former host and spending on social sports”.

Despite all the historical differences between countries, considering the demographic and anthropometric profile of the population, socio-economic development, cultural characteristics, investments in sport, among others, it is up to us to register the comprehensive position of Alexander Slafkovsky, in an interview given to ICF, being one of the shortlisted to represent Slovakia at the Tokyo Games:

You (SIC:he) want to go to the Games, as long as everyone can prepare and you (he) want to compete when everyone has a chance to prepare enough to be at the Games. (...) It would be unfair to all other athletes who can do nothing. Here in Slovakia, we can do something (SIC:train), but everyone is in the same boat. We can't say: okay, let's train and compete, while the rest of the world is locked up (ICF, 2020b).

Even with the uncertain future, sport is reinventing itself, athletes are looking to remain physically active and new ways are being put into practice for social re-framing. The Brazilian Confederation of Canoeing-CBCa, in the second half of March, after the national trials, released the athletes of the national team to return to their cities. The athletes went through social isolation by performing physical training in their homes, monitored by the technical staff and under local flexibility policies, gradually resumed specific training in their clubs.

#### **4 ECONOMIC PROTOCOL X VALUES: RECONNECTING THE GAMES**

The pandemic opened up some issues that we thought were consolidated in the most diverse sectors of society. In sports, a very latent issue was the hosting of the Olympic and Paralympic Games in Tokyo.

At the beginning of March 2020, Thomas Bach (IOC President) went so far as to say that the IOC was fully committed to the Games on the previously planned date. Also, he encouraged athletes to keep their preparations (Euronews, 2020).

It is not known for certain why this posture. Whether it was triggered due to lack of knowledge about the extent of the lethality of the virus, or whether due to the economic protocol that involves the Games. One can see the erratic conduct of the decision-making process about the future of Tokyo 2020.

Just two days before the announcement on the postponement of the Games, the IOC issued a statement setting out some scenarios for the Games. What would serve as a basis for the best decision was taken in favor of all stakeholders (IOC, 2020). However, between the lines of the Olympic world, what was said about the delay in making this decision was due to the complex contracts involving the Games, as well as the contracts with the sponsors.

So, this position on the part of the authorities was delayed as much as possible. Although everyone involved (IOC, Organizing Committee, and Government of Japan) declared the maintenance of the Games, it was more difficult to maintain this position every day.

As said by Bull (2020), the IOC had an opportunity to take the global leadership as often claimed. He continues:

Because if the delay caused by the coronavirus pandemic is a crisis for the IOC, it's also an opportunity for it to prove the Games really do have a greater significance to us all. And its leaders being criticised for delaying the decision to postpone the Games so much longer than many of the competitors felt was necessary (as recently as three weeks ago Bach was still insisting that they would go ahead as scheduled) that will matter less, in the end, than what comes now, and whether the IOC gets its next steps right.

Only at the end of March, when it no longer made sense to insist on the Games, was the Games postponed confirmed. Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe declared that: "we agreed that a postponement would be the best way to ensure that the athletes are in peak condition when they compete and to guarantee the safety of the spectators" (McCurry and Ingle, 2020). Meanwhile, Thomas Bach said: "this is about protecting lives" (BBC, 2020; Grohmann, 2020).

About the challenge never saw before, Bach noted: "we will work hard now to undertake this extremely challenging task of postponing the Games and of organising postponed Games, which have never happened before, so we have no blueprint for this" (Tokyo 2020, 2020).

Andrew Parsons, President of the International Paralympic Committee (IPC), declared:

Postponing the Tokyo 2020 Paralympic Games as a result of the global COVID-19 outbreak is absolutely the right thing to do. The health and well-being of human life must always be our number one priority and staging a sport event of any kind during this pandemic is simply not possible. Sport is not the most important thing right now, preserving human life is. It is essential therefore that all steps are taken to try and limit the spread of this disease (IPC, 2020).

It is important to note that, despite the organization of the Games encompassing the Olympic and Paralympic, the rich cousin and the IOC are the ones who have the greatest decision-making power. The Paralympic Games have always sought to be part of this "circus". Since 1988, the Paralympic Games have followed the Olympic Games in the same host city and since 2000, there has been a formalized understanding between the parties.

Through the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding in 2000, basic principles and relationships between the International Olympic Committee (IOC) and the International Paralympic Committee (IPC) were established, ensuring resumption of their organisation in the same city. This obligation was included in the Host City Contract. In 2001, the second part of the Agreement was signed, protecting the future of Paralympic Games, and since then many extensions of this agreement have occurred, formalising the 'One Bid, One City' concept (Brittain 2010; IPC 2014).

However, even though the agreement provides greater financial support, brand protection for the Paralympic Movement, and includes further co-operation in a range of other areas, the Paralympic Games still suffer from a lack of funding, with a lesser degree of importance given by society in general, as well as the complexity in the relationship between the Committees and the difference in philosophical and ideological foundations.

The discussion about the dichotomy between the Games and the financial issue has been fostered for some time. Cities give up their candidacy, some due to pressure from the population itself, others due to financial demands that end up exhausting the local budget.

For the Modern Era of the Olympic Games, Pierre de Coubertin, using the traditional concept of the Games, rescued in order to promote the changes that were necessary at the end of the nineteenth century, bringing to the sports field the clashes that occurred in other spheres. That is, Coubertin sought means for the promotion of peace, taking advantage also of the emergence of internationalist organizations (Tavares, 2003).

Nevertheless, it seems that the financial sphere has supplanted the original idea of the Games. Today, the clashes are a little bit different. The economy has appeared as the main focus on the Olympics background, bringing the Games as a powerful tool to promote the cities, either by leveraging your image or through your own development.

On the other hand, the Paralympic Movement appears to give a chance for those was condemned because of serious injuries. Until then, these people carried a death sentence after suffering the injury. After Guttman recognized the physiological and psychological value of sports in the rehabilitation of the patients, sports worked as a factor of social integration, especially when it was perceived that it provided good results in medical treatment (Brittain, 2010; Legg & Steadward 2011; Brittain, 2012; Mataruna-Dos-Santos, L, Guimaraes, A., Range, 2018, Mataruna-Dos-Santos, Khan & Al-Shibini, 2018; Santos Neto, Oliveira, Cardoso & Haiachi, 2019). Thus, it is so complex to evaluate the dichotomy between values and economic protocols (sponsorship, deals, broadcast rights, licensing, among others). If in one hand the main advertising throws the light on values, the economic protocol is mandatory to keep running gear during the whole time.

## **5 FINAL CONSIDERATIONS**

For the sport's definitive return, the opening of the practice centres should be considered, in the case of canoe slalom, it is the natural or artificial course, generally integrated to the tourist and sports complexes or hubs, so that the training periodicity is re-established.

Regarding the organization of national and international competitions, it is necessary to consume the services offered by the chains and sectors of the hotel, gastronomy, security, cleaning, transport, tourism operations, among other areas that are essential for holding events of this size.

Specifically in international competitions, even if the host country demonstrates to be in comfortable conditions and progressive control of the disease, as is the case in Slovenia <sup>6</sup>, it will receive athletes, technical staff and the press from all over the planet, which could harm the stability previously achieved.

Finally, we list actions, aiming to respect the particularities of the host countries: I) A peculiar analysis of the progress and, consequently, the confrontation of COVID-19 in its territory, taking into account the policies for the prevention and circulation of people; II) Providing health infrastructure to the population; III) Socioeconomic restoration; IV) Progressive and safe resumption of daily activities.

Despite the complexity of the current period which requires time, solidarity, investments and joint efforts by the Nation States to solve the pandemic, the deadlines for holding events, including sports, are stipulated according to the demand for financial resources, personal and infrastructure. Despite all these aspects and difficult as it may be, at first the postponement is established, until the necessary cancellation, if it is so vital for human health.

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<sup>6</sup> On May 14, 2020, Slovenia (a country with approximately 2 million inhabitants) announced that it had controlled the spread of COVID-19, but preventive measures would remain in place. On May 23 and 24, the country was the first in Europe (perhaps in the world) to hold a national slalom canoeing event and, following international recommendations, vetoed the public's presence (ICF, 2020c)

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