



# An Open Letter to Adam Silver

By: Austin Rader

VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL

March 29, 2020

SUBJECT: ***An Idea For The Remainder of the 2020 Season***

Dear Commissioner Silver:

America needs you.

We are all sitting on our couches debating what to do before the NFL draft in four weeks. We are scared, worried, anxious, and tired of watching sports re-runs from the 1980s.

Please help us. Please give us something to get excited about. Please bring us some joy, something positive. We're done streaming everything on Netflix, and Disney Plus.

We applaud you for having the leadership to suspend the season. You were out ahead of all other sports leagues, businesses, and even our government. You've become an iconic figure in all of sports for how you've handled difficult issues.

We are clearly in one right now, the idea of another three months of self-quarantining without any escape. The only statistics on TV are sad ones - of those infected, those who have died, those who are suffering. Our hearts go out to all of them, and we pray for their recovery every single day.

We aren't looking at NBA standings right now. We aren't counting how many points LeBron scored last night, or if Luka Dončić had another triple-double. We wake up each morning and look at other statistics: how many masks are being made, how many ventilators are left, and how many hospital beds can be added.

Everyone is looking for a "bright light" right now. Something to look forward to, especially those who are quarantined at home, in a senior center, or in a hospital. We are sad, and feel helpless.

But we have found a solution, and we believe you are the “leader” to help make this happen.

Introducing “July Madness”, the NBA’s version of the NCAA’s March Madness. This idea will set the sports world on fire, open up a whole new dialogue, and give the sponsors, viewers and fans something to talk about everyday.

And yes, it will save the 2020 season, and save us from the pandemic blues we are suffering with. It can be done in a safe manner too.

Consider this idea. You begin after the Fourth of July holiday with a “sweet sixteen” bracket. You take the eight eligible playoff teams from each league when the season was suspended.

The first weekend would be match-ups of the number one team versus the number 1 versus 8 seed, 2 versus 7, 3 versus 6, etc. Over the course of three weekend days, sports fans would be treated to incredible match-ups (Lakers vs. Grizzlies, Celtics vs. Sixers, and Clippers vs. Mavericks). Every game would have a “game 7” mentality. Single elimination.

Please see my attachment for what this would look like, and my predictions for games.

The second weekend would give us the “elite eight” games. Instant classics such as Heat against the Bucks, and Nuggets playing the Clippers. These games would attract more eyeballs than typical postseasons!

By the third weekend of July Madness, we would have the NBA’s version of the Final Four. The matchups are tantalizing and unbelievable. In one bracket (the Western region), you would likely see the Lakers versus the Clippers. This may even top some of Michael Jordan’s 1990s classics.

In the other Final Four region, we could see the Bucks and Celtics.

The one game championship is almost unbearable to think about. It could have the matchup everyone wanted to see this season - LeBron versus Giannis.

We know the sponsors will come back. Over the past five years, sponsors such as AT&T, Capital One and Coca-Cola have spent over \$900 million to sponsor the NCAA’s tournament. We bet that “July Madness” will exceed “March Madness”.

And most importantly, we would suggest donating at least ten percent of the proceeds to a special NBA fund set up for coronavirus victims and their families.

Everyone wins.

Yes, we have to take precautions. You might not be able to have the games in front of fans. It may only be referees, players, media and cameramen. And, sure, they would have to be tested frequently to be certain that they are healthy enough to participate, and not infected with Covid-19. You would also have to give players a good three weeks to get in “game day” shape.

But “July Madness” would accomplish everything America is looking for right now. And it would inspire your biggest product - your players - to bring some happiness and hope to all sports fans around the world.

What a break from the sadness of this devastating virus.

Mr. Silver, you are the right person at this moment to deliver this gift to our country. Please strongly consider a “July Madness”. It will take our negative thoughts away from our own “quarantine madness” we are dealing with each day. You would be sending a message around the world of inspiration and hope, bigger than anything the NBA has ever done before.

I look forward to your response, and hope that you and your NBA team consider this idea to save the 2020 season, and turn July sadness into “July Madness”.

Thank you from sports fans around the world, for your consideration.

Respectfully submitted,

***Austin Rader***

“What’sOnTheRadar” blogger  
University of Alabama, 2020 Public Relations Major  
[amrader@crimson.ua.edu](mailto:amrader@crimson.ua.edu)  
[audi567@gmail.com](mailto:audi567@gmail.com)

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## **APPENDIX**

### **FIRST WEEKEND (SWEET SIXTEEN):**

#### **East**

- (1) Bucks vs. (8) Magic
- (2) Raptors vs. (7) Nets
- (3) Celtics vs. (6) 76ers
- (4) Heat vs. (5) Pacers

#### **West**

- (1) Lakers vs. (8) Grizzlies
- (2) Clippers vs. (7) Mavericks
- (3) Nuggets vs. (6) Rockets
- (4) Jazz vs. (5) Thunder

### **SECOND WEEKEND (ELITE EIGHT):**

#### **East**

- (1) Bucks vs. (5) Heat
- (2) Raptors vs (3) Celtics

#### **West**

- (1) Lakers vs. (5) Thunder
- (2) Clippers vs. (6) Rockets

### **THIRD WEEKEND (FINAL FOUR):**

#### **East**

Bucks vs. Celtics

#### **West**

Lakers vs. Clippers

#### **Championship**

Lakers vs. Bucks