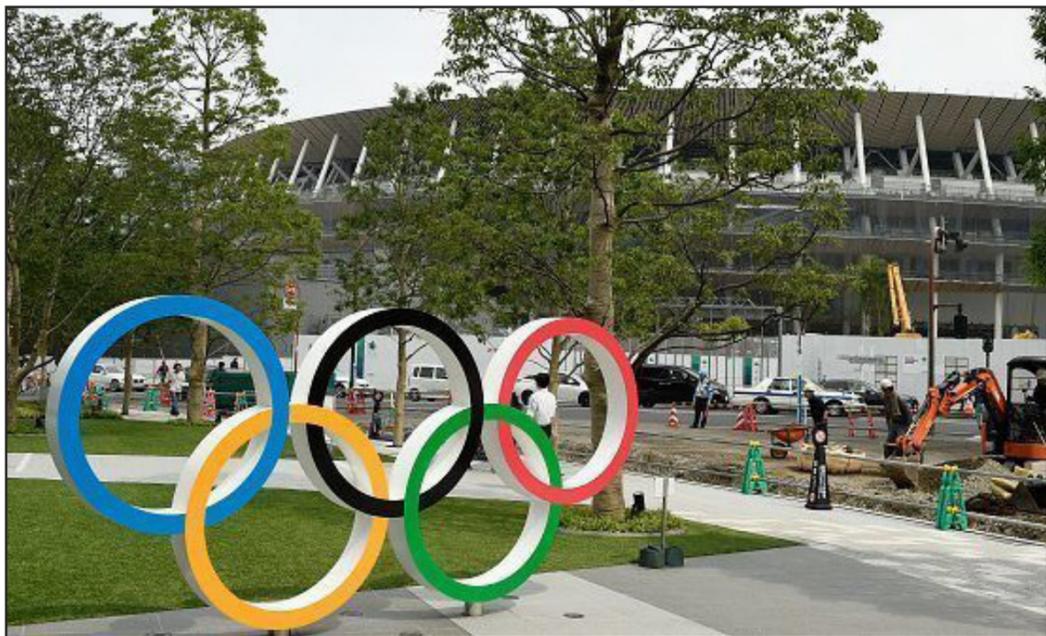


# Olympic Leaders, Japan Prime Minister Deny Report About Tokyo Games Cancellation



TOKYO (Dispatches) - Tokyo Olympic organizers, the IOC and the Japanese government said the Games are still set to open July 23, opposing a Thursday report that quoted an unnamed source

that suggested the Tokyo Games would have to be canceled. "All our delivery partners including the national government, the Tokyo Metropolitan Government, Tokyo 2020 Or-

ganizing Committee, the IOC and the IPC are fully focused on hosting the Games this summer," according to a Tokyo Olympic Organizing Committee statement. "We hope that

daily life can return to normal as soon as possible, and we will continue to make every effort to prepare for a safe and secure Games."

The IOC on Friday referred to a Japanese government statement that called the report "categorically untrue."

Prime Minister Yoshihide Suga told his parliament that he was determined to realize the Olympics and would work closely with the IOC, according to Reuters.

John Coates, an IOC vice president and its coordination commission chair for the Tokyo Games, said the Olympics are "proceeding fully," noting IOC President Thomas Bach had a previously scheduled briefing with all IOC members on Thursday and one set with National Olympic Committee presidents, according to the Sydney Morning Herald.

## Liverpool's 68-Match Unbeaten Home Record Ended by Burnley

LIVERPOOL (Reuters) - Champions Liverpool have suffered a shock 1-0 defeat to lowly Burnley, ending their 68 match unbeaten home record in the Premier League as their title defense continued to fade.



An 83rd minute penalty from Ashley Barnes, after he was brought down by goalkeeper Alisson Becker, decided the contest after Juergen Klopp's side failed to score for the fourth straight league match. Matt Lowton nodded a header into the box and Barnes wriggled free of Fabinho and went down under challenge from Becker, rising to confidently

convert from the spot. Liverpool have not won for five games in the league and trail leaders Manchester United by six points, in fourth place. "We can't imagine the title

bar for Liverpool in the first half, with only Burnley keeper Nick Pope to beat and Roberto Firmino missed a good chance after the break.

Liverpool are fourth in the league on 34 points, six behind leaders Manchester United. Burnley move up to 16th place on 19 points.

Burnley's English striker Ashley Barnes celebrates after scoring his side's goal from the penalty spot during the English Premier League soccer match between Liverpool and Burnley at Anfield in Liverpool, northwest England, on Jan 21, 2021.

## Jazz Beat Pelicans for 7th Straight Win

SALT LAKE CITY (AP) — Mitchell scored a season-high 36 points and the Jazz rallied to beat the Pelicans 129-118 on Thursday night for their seventh straight win.



"Every chance I got, just kept putting pressure on the defense and getting to the basket," Mitchell said. "I was able to get 13 quick and they focus on me so now the guys are open. Then guys are hitting shots, now they're not worried about me anymore — just a mind game in the sense."

Mitchell went 6 for 8 from 3-point range in another efficient performance.

"He's picking his spots and he's taking what the defense gives him," Utah coach Quin Snyder said. "Early in the game, he really attacked the rim, was able to get in the paint ... then as the game progressed the defense dropped back."

Utah shot 50% (44 for 88) from the field after it made 50.6% of its shots during a 118-102 victory over New Orleans on Tuesday night.

Mike Conley scored 20 points and Jordan Clarkson had 19 for Utah, which has the longest active win streak in the NBA.

"There were games earlier in the season like Minnesota where we came out flat and if teams hit us first, we didn't have a push-back like we do now," Mitchell said.

Zion Williamson scored 27 points and Brandon Ingram had 23 but the Pelicans couldn't sustain the momentum of an almost perfect first quarter and a half.

"Our pace offensively slowed down," coach Stan Van Gundy said. "We didn't play with much pace or force on the offensive end. We quit making shots. And defensively we really weren't good the entire game."

Still, New Orleans led for a bit early in the second half. Eric Bledsoe made a jumper to make it 78-75 Pelicans right before the Jazz took over.

Joe Ingles made a fast-break la-

Utah Jazz center Rudy Gobert (27) blocks the shot of New Orleans Pelicans guard Josh Hart (3) during the second half of an NBA basketball game Thursday, Jan. 21, 2021, in Salt Lake City.

yup on a feed from Mitchell, capping a 21-2 run that lifted Utah to a 96-80 lead with 4:27 to play in the third quarter.

Frustration boiled over for the Pelicans. Coach Stan Van Gundy got a technical and then lost a challenge to overturn a foul. Minutes later, Steven Adams leapt off the bench to argue a call and earned a technical, and Van Gundy kept arguing and was ejected with 2:23 remaining in the period.

Williamson's leaner got the Pelicans within 100-94 early in the fourth quarter, but the Jazz used their precision passing and shooting to rebuild a comfortable margin.

Ingram made all six of his shots, including four 3s, as the Pelicans tallied 43 points in the first quarter. It was the second-highest total for the first quarter in franchise history.

The Pelicans led by as many as 16 before the Jazz grabbed a 70-69 edge at halftime. Both Mitchell (21 points) and Ingram (20 points) posted season highs for a first half.

## London Marathon Plans for 100,000 Runners This Year



LONDON (Reuters) - This year's London Marathon is set to break new ground with a record 50,000 runners expected to tackle the course on the city's streets while another 50,000 compete in a remote race "wherever they are on the planet", organizers said on Thursday.

The virtual London Marathon was held for the first time last year after the actual race was cancelled due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Nearly 38,000 runners took part to set a Guinness World Record for the most in a remote marathon in 24 hours.

With a national vaccination drive underway, organizers also hope to have 50,000 runners for the traditional race on Oct 3.

The virtual marathon allows participants to run on a 42-kilometer course of their choice but they must complete it on Oct 3.

"The world record-breaking success of the virtual event in 2020 and the incredible stories from participants across the globe showed how the ... marathon brought light and hope in the darkness of the pandemic," said event director Hugh Brasher.

## Real Madrid Coach Zidane Positive for Covid-19: Club



Real Madrid coach Zinedine Zidane has tested positive for Covid-19

MADRID (Dispatches) - Real Madrid coach Zinedine Zidane has tested positive for Covid-19, the Spanish club announced Friday.

The positive test comes a day before Madrid travel to Alaves in La Liga seeking to bounce back from an embarrassing midweek Copa del Rey exit.

"Real Madrid C.F. report that our coach Zinedine Zidane has tested positive for Covid-19," the club said in a statement.

Zidane already had to self-isolate this month after coming into

contact with a person infected with the virus.

He tested negative at the time and was able to oversee the team.

After successive defeats in the Spanish Super Cup and Copa del Rey, the second a shock loss to third-tier Alcoyano, Zidane is again under pressure as Real Madrid try to reignite their La Liga title challenge away to Alaves.

Zidane's side are playing catch-up to Atletico Madrid after draws against struggling Elche and Osasuna, two of the league's bottom three, in recent weeks.

## Algarve Tour Postponed as Portugal Battles COVID-19 Surge

LISBON (Reuters) - Spiralling COVID-19 infection rates in Portugal have forced the postponement of next month's five-day Volta ao Algarve UCI Pro-Series cycling race.

The event, scheduled to start on Feb. 17 has been provisionally moved to May 5-9, organizers said.

"Postponement is a difficult decision, but it has become inevitable, given the evolution of the pandemic situation in Portugal," a statement said.

Daily coronavirus cases in Portugal rose 40% on Wednesday from the previous day to a record 14,647, with the national health system (SNS) on the verge of collapse and the government pondering tougher lockdown measures to tackle the surge.

The Algarve Tour, which had attracted 14 WorldTour teams, is the latest race to be postponed as the professional cycling calendar faces disruption.

The Tour Down Under, Vuelta a San Juan, Challenge Mallorca, Herald Sun Tour, Tour Colombia and Tour of Antalya have already been cancelled or postponed.

