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Uhhh...what exactly were we thinking in Louisiana??

As a significant portion of the world enters into lockdown again, in some places for the third time, and oxygen supplies and respirators run in short supply (while admittedly having far less of their respective populations having received the COVID vaccine), I was rather dismayed to see thousands of people acting in complete disregard of social distancing at large gatherings, protective masks, and the 6 foot rule at TPC Louisiana during the past weekend:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8LehC97r7so>

Increased spectators were obviously approved in the Louisiana parish for the event up to 10,000/day:

<https://www.wvltv.com/article/sports/zurich-classic-to-host-up-to-10000-spectators-a-day-for-april-tournament/289-53b39423-34c5-4d93-8488-599a08c2fa7c>

And, of course, increased spectators in the world of golf is a GREAT thing for golf and business of golf. BUT what is NOT a great thing is if two weeks from now hundreds or even thousands of contact tracings for new COVID cases clearly demonstrate that there was common source of the new wave of infections and that it had been lack of social distancing at this potential “super-spreader” event.

<https://www.nytimes.com/2020/08/04/fashion/weddings/weddings-as-covid-super-spreaders.html>

In other words, while increased spectators were approved for the event, what was NOT approved was the utter disregard of social distancing and the 6 foot rule and the wearing of masks imposed by the governor of Louisiana until at least May, 2021.

<https://www.katc.com/news/covering-louisiana/edwards-to-hold-media-briefing-on-covid-19-response>

Let's consider this another way, using the “herd immunity” standard. The population of Louisiana is approximately 4.65 million people.

As of one day ago, according to the Louisiana Department of Health, 1.2 million people in Louisiana had received **both** doses of the COVID vaccination.

https://twitter.com/LADeptHealth/status/1386728507095535619?ref_src=twsrc%5Egoogle%7Ctwcamp%5Eserp%7Ctwgr%5Etweet

That's about a quarter of the population. Getting back to herd immunity protection, according to the CDC, herd immunity requires a **far greater** percentage of the population to have received full vaccinations before COVID has mutated into new strains not protected against by the vaccine.

<https://www.cdc.gov/careerpaths/scienceambassador/documents/herd-immunity-2013.pdf>

On the upcoming world stage for the most watch sporting event on our planet, the Olympics, it is a **near-certainty** that spectators will not be allowed at all or, at minimum, substantially diminished to prevent super-spreading by attending the games in person, **however** television viewing of Olympic events in Japan will be at all-time highs from every corner of the globe. The decision to ban or largely curtail spectators is going to be VERY expensive for Japan which has spent an estimated 30-60 billion dollars in preparation for the upcoming Olympics. BUT...it's the right thing to do.

Japan, which thought it had beaten COVID through early measures taken to stop the spread, similar to New Zealand, now has a result one of the lowest vaccinated population percentages in the world. The percentage of Japan residents having received both doses of the vaccine: Less than 1%.

<https://japantoday.com/category/features/kuchikomi/japan%27s-vaccination-rate-lowest-in-g7-here%27s-why>

What perhaps some of our leaders have forgotten is how 100 years ago, during the Spanish Flu epidemic, many states and countries opened too early, ignoring the warnings, which resulted in wicked second and third waves sickening and killing millions more.

<https://www.nbcnews.com/politics/politics-news/san-francisco-had-1918-flu-under-control-then-it-lifted-n1191141>

PLEASE, stay safe. Don't let your guard down. Let's NOT cause history to be doomed to repeat itself at the expense of millions more lives than have already been lost by letting our guard down too early. Wear your masks. Socially distance. Minimize large social gatherings.

And, as always, thanks to *everyone* for taking time to check out a course or two. We're on track to reach our first 2 million page views month... a "personal best" for golftraxx.com!

Enjoy and wishing everyone great golfing!

Frank
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