

## McLaren will be allowed to make chassis changes for 2021



McLaren's Carlos Sainz Jr. in action during testing

Reuters | London

McLaren will be allowed to make chassis changes in 2021 to accommodate the switch from Renault engines to Mercedes even though the sport has decided to keep this year's cars for another season.

The Woking-based team are the only ones undergoing a change of engine provider at the end of 2020.

Formula One announced this month that it was postponing until 2022 planned major rules changes for 2021 "due to the currently volatile financial situation" caused by the coronavirus.

Teams will therefore continue to use their 2020 cars in 2021 as a cost saving measure.

"This decision does not impact our change to Mercedes power units in 2021, and we will be allowed to make the necessary changes to our car to accommodate this," McLaren team principal Andreas Seidl said.

The coronavirus pandemic has so far forced the sport to cancel this month's Australian season-opener and Monaco showcase while six other races have been postponed.

# Rescheduled Games may come before summer 2021: Bach

Reuters | Athens

The head of the global Olympic movement said yesterday the rescheduled Tokyo Games faced "thousands" of logistical and financial problems but could go ahead before summer 2021.

Though most people have assumed the Games will be held around roughly the same July-August timetable as they were planned for this year, International Olympic Committee (IOC) President Thomas Bach said earlier dates in 2021 were possible.

"The agreement is that we want to organize these Games at the latest in the summer 2021," he told a conference call.

"This is not restricted just to the summer months. All the options are on the table including the summer 2021."

The IOC agreed with Japan on Tuesday to the first postponement in the Olympics' 124-year history due to risks from the coronavirus impact.

It was the last major international sporting event of 2020 to be canceled, with many questioning why a seemingly inevitable decision took so long to make as the coronavirus epidemic raged around the world.

Athletes were sad but largely relieved, given disruption to their training. The decision was a huge blow to Japan, which has invested \$12 billion in the run-up, and presents a massive



A woman walks beneath a Tokyo 2020 Olympics banner in Tokyo

headache to reorganize logistics, funding and sponsorship.

Bach said he could not guarantee all elements of the Games would remain as initially planned. For example, he did not know what would happen with the athletes' village, where apartments were set to be sold after the Games this year.

"This is one of the many thousands of questions this task force will have to address. We hope and we will do whatever we can so that there is an Olympic village, the village is where the heart of the Games beat,"

he said.

Bach also warned the \$12 billion price tag for the Games would rise further, with additional costs for everyone involved.

### "Wonderful games" promised

"Our mission is to organize Games and make dreams of athletes come true," he added. "We have no blueprint but we are confident we can put a beautiful jigsaw puzzle together and in the end have wonderful Olympic Games."

Bach, a 66-year-old German

lawyer and former Olympic fencing champion, also said outright cancellation was discussed, even though the IOC had long insisted that was not an option.

"Of course cancellation was discussed and considered like all options on the table, but it was very clear from the beginning that cancellation should not be something the IOC would in any way favor," Bach said.

The IOC has come under heavy criticism in recent weeks from athletes and teams calling for the Games to be postponed

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THOMAS BACH

and unhappy with the slow decision-making compared to other sports events.

Asked by a German reporter whether he considered resigning over his organization's handling of the issue, Bach said "No".

In talks with athletes' representatives and national Olympic committees last week, no-one opposed the IOC's stance, he added. After repeatedly insisting the Games were on as scheduled, the IOC at the weekend announced a month of consultations over possible postponement, before seemingly bowing to global pressure for a faster judgment.

The body is due to start talks from Thursday with other global sporting bodies as moving the gigantic Olympics event has a knock-on effect for many other competitions.

## Federer donates one million Swiss Francs to vulnerable families



Roger Federer reacts after a match (file photo)

Reuters | London

Roger Federer has joined the list of sports stars helping out the needy during the coronavirus pandemic, with the former world number one and his wife donating one million Swiss Francs (\$1.02 million) to vulnerable families in his native Switzerland.

Barcelona forward Lionel Messi and Manchester City manager Pep Guardiola had each donated one million euros (\$1.08 million) to help clinics and medical centers fight the outbreak.

Portugal and Juventus forward Cristiano Ronaldo and his agent Jorge Mendes also came together to donate life-saving equipment to Portu-

guese hospitals.

"These are challenging times for everyone and nobody should be left behind," Federer wrote in a statement posted on Twitter yesterday.

"Mirka and I have personally decided to donate one million Swiss Francs for the most vulnerable families in Switzerland."

Globally, more than 420,700 people have been infected by the novel coronavirus and 18,820 have died, according to a Reuters tally. Switzerland has nearly 9,900 confirmed cases with 122 deaths.

"Our contribution is just a start," Federer added. "We hope that others might join in supporting more families in need. Together we can overcome this crisis."

## Kane 'will be off' if Spurs don't win trophies, warns Shearer

AFP | London



Harry Kane

Tottenham forward Harry Kane will leave the club next year if they fail to win a trophy in that time, Premier League all-time top-scorer Alan Shearer

has warned. Kane is yet to lift silverware in his career despite an eye-catching goalscoring record for both club and country.

The England captain has not played since January due to a serious hamstring injury and was on the losing side as Tottenham lost to Liverpool in last season's Champions League final.

That is the closest the 26-year-old has come to major honours and Shearer feels it may be time to move on if that does not change in the coming months.

"My guess is, if he doesn't win

anything in the next 12 months then he has to leave," Shearer told the Match of the Day: Top 10 podcast.

"He'll do another year, I think, and if nothing comes in terms of trophies, then he'll be off."

Shearer sits at the top of the Premier League scoring charts with 260 goals.

Asked if Kane, currently on 136 goals, could one day overtake his tally, the former Blackburn and Newcastle striker said: "It depends on his fitness, where he is and what success he's had at whatever club he's

at -- whether that's at Spurs or somewhere else.

"It's going to be hard for him. He's on 136 and there's a lot of 'ifs' being asked -- if he stays fit or if he stays in the Premier League. It's going to be tough, but it's going to go one day."

Kane has said he is on track to be fit when the Premier League returns, urging people to "stay safe" during the coronavirus crisis.

He has been sidelined since suffering a torn hamstring tendon in Tottenham's New Year's Day defeat at Southampton.

## Australia says qualified athletes assured of Tokyo spots

Reuters | Melbourne

The Australian Olympic Committee (AOC) has said athletes who have already qualified for the Tokyo Games are assured of their spots when the global sporting showpiece takes place in 2021.

The 2020 Olympics were pushed back by a year on Tuesday due to the coronavirus pandemic which has disrupted qualifying for thousands of Tokyo hopefuls in a slew of sports.

Almost 60% of the 11,000-odd athletes set for Tokyo had already qualified but the International Olympic Committee (IOC) has yet to clarify publicly whether their 2021 berths are assured.

AOC chief executive Matt Car-

roll said qualified athletes were guaranteed their 2021 spots, however.

"That is our understanding at this time," Carroll told reporters in Sydney yesterday.

"Athletes may change their minds between now and 2021. But let's cover that off."

"Today the most important thing is that athletes have certainty for those who have been selected and certainty for those who are yet to qualify."

Carroll said he had spoken to the chief of Australia's national institute of sport and the heads of the sports federations about ensuring qualified athletes would be in peak form to compete in 2021.

"Therein does lie a challenge for the high performance struc-



A woman wears a face mask as she sits at a bus stop advertising the Tokyo 2020 Summer Olympics in Bangkok

tures at the AIS (Australian Institute of Sports) and our sports to work with our athletes to meet those challenges," he said.

"If you're talking about the

athletes who have been selected or the ones who are coming through, I am sure all selected athletes will work hard to be at the Tokyo 2020 Games in 2021.