

The background of the image is a dark blue and purple night sky filled with numerous white stars of varying sizes. In the foreground, there is a silhouette of a forest of evergreen trees. The text is centered in the upper half of the image.

TOPIC OF THE WEEK

OCTOBER'19 (24 to 30 Oct)

Sports-Business or Pleasure?

With the recent achievements in many sports in India, Sports got more importance than before. Introduction of league for different sports shows that India's focus on sports other than cricket is improved. In the coming days, sports will create more job opportunities and contributes to Indian economy as well. Looking at the present scenario of sports we can say the condition of sports in India is improving faster than ever. Though we still have a long way to go to catch up with the global scenario.

Recently Royal Challengers Bangalore (RCB), the Indian Premier League franchis, became the first team in the tournament to hire a woman support staff. The team captained by Virat Kohli appointed Navnita Gautam as their Sports Massage Therapist. "Navnita Gautam joins us as a sports massage therapist for the 13th edition of IPL. She will work to identify, and implement massage therapy to help the team prepare and recover better. We are proud to be the first IPL team to have a woman support staff member," RCB tweeted.

Talking about the commercialization of sport, which has evolved over decades, from the 1950's advertisements of

athletes pitching shaving cream to the multi-million dollar shoe endorsement deals of today. Much like other aspects of capitalism, when a profit is to be gained by promoting a consumer product, sport is not exempt from commercialization. However, even when adjustments for inflation are figured, the astonishingly lucrative field of sport commercialization has become a staple of product promotion and corporate gains. Sportsmen and women are people with talent that stretches far above a normal human's ability, and for this they should naturally be rewarded. However, as much as the world's economy sways the salaries of professionals only seem to be increasing. In 2008 the highest paid athlete David Beckham earned more than 48 million (Freedman) in the 1970s when TV was not as influential to sport as it now is Pete Rose was able to negotiate a million per year contract (Gillis) This clearly shows that the salaries have boomed incredibly over a short period. The average gross income for a citizen of the USA in 2005 was forty two thousand US dollars(United States Average Salaries and Income). Do athletes need forty million to survive? The amounts of money that go into the player's salary are not motivating them to strive for perfection. It only seems that more and more are doing it for the money in it, and

this, ruins the healthy spirit of competition that makes sport so interesting to watch, and most importantly to play.

An athlete being sponsored to play professional sports was once unheard of. How times have changed. Nowadays, wherever you see a top class athlete, you will see a corporate name splashed on them somewhere. The 90's saw a dramatic change in the amount of money an athlete could make from contracts and sponsorship deals. On the level of professional sports, commercialization of sport is undoubtedly the most profitable, for both the advertiser and the fan. Without advertising support, professional sports would not have progressed to the number of franchises present today, and their financial stability would be questionable on an individual basis. The prevalence of the number and quality of sports on television is directly attributable to the commercialization of sport. Without commercial sponsorship, fans would not be able to follow favored sports as closely as they desire, and at least in this aspect, the commercialization of sport has benefited society in providing entertainment.

For fans, too, the big money has been a mixed blessing. Because television has provided much of the money in

sports, a large number of games and events are available to fans. In fact, fans now take it for granted that games will be available. Giants fans were outraged when games were not telecast in the first week. The flip side is that ticket prices are higher than they've ever been, even adjusted for inflation, and that's starting to have an effect on all sports.

But you can't put the genie back in the bottle. Money has changed everything in sports and we all have to deal with the good and the bad, whether we're fans, athletes -- or sportswriters.

For reference:-

- <https://www.economist.com/international/2019/10/05/competition-between-sports-for-fans-money-and-attention-is-increasingly-fierce>
- <https://www.sfgate.com/sports/article/Big-money-in-sports-has-its-pluses-and-minuses-2571928.php>
- <https://www.nytimes.com/2015/01/17/your-money/rising-costs-of-youth-sports.html>

Additional Readings:-

- <https://www.thehindu.com/opinion/editorial/safe-but-not-entirely-on-milk-safety-survey/article29761062.ece>
- <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2019/oct/21/the-guardian-view-on-repatriating-james-joyces-remains-dublin-should-tread-carefully>
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