

# OUTDOOR SPORTSMAN GROUP



**TIM BOELL, VP**  
DISTRIBUTION AND MARKETING

**CELL:** 917.880.8619  
**TBOELL@OUTDOORCHANNEL.COM**

**TRISH BOOTHE, COORDINATOR**  
DISTRIBUTION AND MARKETING

**CELL:** 303.615.8827  
**TRISH.BOOTHE@OUTDOORSG.COM**



April 20, 2020

*Ars Technica*  
**[AT&T gave FCC false  
broadband-  
coverage data in  
parts of 20 states](#)**

*Reuters*

**We had a short outage with our bulk mail provider this morning, thanks for your patience!**

Americans shell out nearly \$20 a month in pay-TV fees to watch sports programming, but the main attractions—live events—are all canceled

[Kept home by COVID-19, U.S. politics goes virtual with digital dance parties and avatars](#)

**CNBC**  
[Facebook just released its coronavirus symptom tracking map](#)

**USA Today**  
[The great 5G coronavirus conspiracy](#)

**Bloomberg**  
[Facebook, Google to be forced to pay for news in Australia](#)

**Spotlight PA**  
[Quarantine backlash has begun in Pa., with anti-shutdown rallies Monday in Pittsburgh, Harrisburg](#)

**Washington Post**  
[Pro-gun activists using Facebook groups to push anti-quarantine protests](#)

**The Hill**  
[GOP online donor platform expanded to state level](#)

**Community Newspaper Holdings Inc.**  
[Remote voting creates new challenges for local governments](#)

**Allentown Morning Call**  
[How did Pennsylvania decide which businesses got waivers to stay open during coronavirus](#)

because of the coronavirus pandemic. So can you get a refund? In short, no.

Pay-TV providers say they are still paying to carry sports channels in their packages despite the lack of live games, so they are just passing on the cost to customers. Several large providers said they would issue rebates if entire sports seasons are canceled—right now they are technically suspended—depending on the refunds they get from the networks. “Networks continue to charge the cable company full price for sports programming, since leagues believe sports will take place again,” a spokesman for Cox Communications Inc. said. Representatives of Comcast Corp., Charter Communications Inc. and AT&T Inc.’s DirecTV took a similar view.

For now, that \$20 will buy you reruns of classic games and documentaries. Industry analysts have said pay-TV providers that keep charging customers for nonexistent sports content risk losing them to less expensive internet-TV bundles or streaming services—a phenomenon known as cord-cutting. “For some people the decision may come down to economics. If someone loses their job or pay is cut, and they are paying for something they can’t watch, they are more likely to cut the cord,” said Michael Huyghue, a sports lawyer and professor at Cornell Law School.

Pay-TV subscribers’ monthly bill for sports content costs about the same as two of the most popular streaming services combined—Netflix Inc. and Walt Disney Co.’s Disney+—while many “skinny bundles” such as Dish Network’s Sling TV and Alphabet Inc.’s YouTube TV offer most sports channels. A significant portion of the average monthly \$84 pay-TV bill—about \$53, according to Kagan, a media research group within S&P Global Market Intelligence—goes directly to the channels available in the cable bundle.

The sports fees account for about 37% of such payments. Some providers are still considering their options. A spokeswoman for Altice, which provides cable service under the Optimum and Suddenlink brands, said it is reviewing its contracts. “We are negotiating aggressively on our customers’ behalf to issue credits and/or pass savings on to them,” said Erin McPherson, head of consumer content and partnerships at Verizon Communications Inc. Dish Network didn’t comment on the matter. An AT&T spokesman said the company would either not charge or would reimburse subscribers of add-on services, giving them access to out-of-market baseball and soccer games until the Major League Baseball and Major League Soccer seasons—both of which were postponed—officially begin.

Under typical contracts, pay-TV providers’ payments to sports channels depend in part on airing a minimum number of the games played during the season. Sports leagues’ decisions on the remainder of the season will determine who is refunded, and when. It remains unclear if the National Basketball Association and National Hockey League fulfilled those minimum-game requirements, given that they both were nearing the postseason.

Viewership of sports-specific channels has fallen off a cliff since March 12, when most of the major U.S. sports leagues suspended their seasons, following the NBA’s move a day earlier. To fill airtime without any live sports, channels are airing classic games and “best of” sports moments, while working to push up the release dates for original content. On Wednesday, for instance, Disney’s ESPN aired the deciding game of the 2010 NBA Finals between the Los Angeles Lakers and the Boston Celtics,

**crisis? Wolf isn't saying.**

while Fox Sports showed some key games of the 2018 soccer World Cup, including Belgium's upset quarterfinal victory against heavy tournament favorite Brazil. Fox Corp. and Wall Street Journal parent News Corp share common ownership.

In an effort to generate fresh content, ESPN recently aired an NBA 2K20 videogame basketball tournament—with every game having opposing real-life NBA players at the controls—as well as a H-O-R-S-E shooting competition between current and retired NBA and WNBA players, each attempting trick shots from their respective driveways or home gyms. 6/11 ESPN said it expects to attract strong audiences for the coming National Football League draft and “The Last Dance,” its Michael Jordan documentary. A person familiar with the company said ESPN is poised to benefit from what could be a very crowded fall sports lineup, with many postponed events potentially returning at once.

Combined, ESPN, Fox Sports and Comcast's NBC Sports Network account for a large part of sports carriage fees, which also go to regional sports networks and league-controlled channels such as MLB Network and NHL Network. Prices for regional sports networks vary, with the channels in the biggest markets—and those that carry games from multiple pro sports leagues—costing the most. Despite lower sports TV ratings, sports fans still tend to watch more TV than the average viewer. Nielsen found that the 20% of U.S. adults who spent the most time consuming sports on TV before the league-ordered suspensions watched TV for about 2½ hours longer than the average adult viewer, according to data published Thursday.

That trend continued in recent weeks despite the absence of live sports on TV, Nielsen said. That doesn't mean the most dedicated sports viewers spent that extra time watching sports. Nielsen found that during the last weekend of March, heavy sports watchers spent only 9% of their viewing time consuming sports, compared with 3% for all U.S. adults. For the weekend of March 7-8—the last before the league suspensions—these numbers were 32% and 11%, respectively. – **Wall Street Journal**

---

The plan to reopen Pennsylvania's economy will be slow and gradual, hinging on a “regional, sector-based approach,” Gov. Tom Wolf said Friday, though he offered no timetable on when the plan would be enacted. The plan, available [on the governor's website](#), comes in three phases — relief, reopening and recovery — but Wolf offered few specifics. He said the statewide restrictions will remain for now. “Over the next few weeks, we will need to continue our social distancing efforts while we plan for a phased reopening,” he said.

A “strong testing regime” will be necessary for that reopening, he said, and monitoring will be in place to spot outbreaks or resurgences. Large gatherings will continue to be limited, and employers will be required to follow guidelines from the Department of Health and other state agencies. The reopening will be data-driven, Wolf said, and rely on a “targeted, evidence-based, regional approach,” though he did not specify what data or evidence will be used to determine when it is safe to loosen restrictions. That, he said, will come next week. Wolf announced the plan at a virtual press conference Friday afternoon.

The first phase is aimed at throwing a lifeline to everyone affected by the pandemic-induced shutdown. It addresses food insecurity, student loan debt, unemployment, health insurance, education, business owners and employers, and hospitals and health care providers. “There's not one policy or one answer or one ideology that

can solve all of our problems we have on our road to recovery," he said.

Wolf offered residents a wide range of plans to move the economy forward, including an increased minimum wage, better sick and family leave and more affordable childcare options. Wolf's plan comes a day after President Donald Trump, pressing to restart the ravaged U.S. economy, gave governors a road map for economic recovery. The White House guidance said that states should see a "downward trajectory" of documented cases over a 14-day period. Wolf's plan does not mention the two-week metric.

The Democratic governor has imposed a series of progressively tougher measures in the face of a pandemic state officials say threatened to swamp hospitals and spike the death toll. Covid-19 has sickened nearly 30,000 Pennsylvania residents and killed more than 750. Wolf shut down businesses deemed "non-life-sustaining," closed schools through the end of the academic year and ordered all 12.8 million Pennsylvania residents to stay at home unless absolutely necessary. Just this week, the Wolf administration ordered people to wear masks inside supermarkets, pharmacies and other stores.

State health officials have said the restrictions have worked to slow the rate of infections and prevent hospitals from running out of bed space, ventilators and other supplies. But the pandemic and Wolf's business shutdown order have caused economic devastation, throwing at least 1.4 million residents out of work. Wolf has been under increasing pressure from Republicans, small business owners and others to relax the restrictions. Protesters plan to gather Monday in Harrisburg to demonstrate against the shutdown. – **Community Newspaper Holdings Inc.**

---

There are many frightening aspects to the coronavirus pandemic. Among the most frightening is how much we still don't know. We don't know why [some cities and areas of the country are seeing higher mortality](#) rates than others. We don't know what percentage of the population is currently infected, and what percentage may have immunity. We don't know when we will have an [adequate supply of N95 masks](#) and tests.

Amid this uncertainty, one thing is clear: There is something more fatal than the virus, and that is political partisanship. We're not just talking about the way [President Donald Trump has often defaulted to partisan swipes](#) and blaming other parties and administrations for the crisis, though that is damaging enough. We're talking about the battles that are firming up along political lines about when it will be safe to reopen the economy — and whether "safe" should even be a criteria.

In Pennsylvania, [the state legislature last week passed a measure](#) that would reopen the economy for those businesses that adhere to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention guidelines. SB 613 would effectively overrule Gov. Tom Wolf's closure of nonessential businesses that is set to expire April 30. Wolf says he will veto the bill.

Seeing our elected officials playing out the same tired old partisan dramas is disheartening and depressing. They should be doing what the rest of the country is doing from community to community, neighborhood to neighborhood: putting aside differences and figuring out how to offer support and solve problems together. Of course, the economy is important. People are suffering from its sudden collapse.

(That's in part because of the shaky ground on which it was built, with few safety nets in place.) Businesses need to get back on their feet. But a rational and transparent framework and detailed plan driven by what we do know must be in place before that can happen.

That would require both sides of the aisle in Harrisburg to commit themselves to putting a plan together that makes sense for all — and for sharing that plan and the thinking underlying it with the rest of the public. That should be the minimum criteria for the reopening of the economy. We have not only seen little evidence of that, but we are still at the point that the public's health depends on crude homemade masks because no one quite knows where the next big supply of medical-grade masks is coming from.

We are also lacking the capacity for the widespread testing that most experts agree is critical to a return to "normal." The idea that certain businesses can open, even at a staggered pace, without acknowledging that a plan for schools and day care must also be resolved so parents can actually return to work is also worrisome. This crisis has altered almost every aspect of society. The best-case scenario is that many of them will lead to positive, needed changes — in the structure of the economy, for example. If it doesn't alter how our political system operates, prioritizing partisan victories over the public good, then this crisis truly will have been in vain. — **Philadelphia Inquirer editorial**

# Stay safe



**Broadband  
Cable Association  
of Pennsylvania**

127 State Street Harrisburg, PA 17101  
717-214-2000 (t) 717-214-2020  
bcapa.com

First in Broadband.  
The Future of Broadband.®