

Monda Morning Mulligan. Keeping the Calendar Clean.

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What's happening, captain? Welcome to Monday Morning Mulligan, a weekly second shot at the latest in golf. Let's re-load and try to hit the fairway...

One of the things that need be done between now and the 2020 Olympics in Tokyo is figure out how to better squeeze Olympic golf into the professional schedule. If that's not done, its future in the Games could be shaky.

And that means a plan must be developed before the International Olympic Committee votes next year on whether to extend golf beyond 2020.

The IOC decided many years ago to abandon its quadrennial celebration of amateur sports in favor of the bigger bucks generated by including professionals. No matter how you feel about that, it's a reality with which we must live. Money won.

If golf wants to sneak a peek at its possible Olympic future it should look at hockey and baseball. The National Hockey League shuts down during the Winter Games so its top players can compete in the Olympics. Major League Baseball did not, its big names didn't compete and baseball got booted from the Games.

Now more than ever the leaders of the pro tours --- all the pro tours -- and the leaders of the international governing bodies -- all the international governing bodies -- need to work together to coordinate competitive schedules. And this needs to be done not just in Olympic years but every year. Golf can no longer afford to compete with itself. It has enough trouble competing with other sports for attention.

Since July 10, we have had the U.S. Women's Open, the British Open, the PGA Championship, a World Golf Championship event, the Ricoh Women's British Open, men's and women's Olympic Golf and now the first

two tourneys of the FedEx Cup playoffs. On the horizon are the Evian Championship, the fifth LPGA major, two more FedEx Cup events and the Ryder Cup.

While some of the men who skipped Rio have since said they made a mistake the truth is the crammed schedule had as much to do with their decisions as Zika or security concerns about Brazil. Remember, the winner of the FedEx Cup gets a \$10 million bonus. And for some players there was the mere matter of maintaining their PGA Tour cards.

The USGA has already made a positive move in spreading out the schedule. Beginning in 2018, the U.S. Women's Open will permanently end the first Sunday in June instead of July. But more needs to be done. What if in an Olympic year the PGA Championship was moved to the spring and played in Asia? And I'd like to see the Women's British Open played the week after the Open Championship. That would increase media attention for the women's game.

Golf has a choice when it comes to the Olympics: It can become hockey or it can become baseball. Now is the time to decide.

A LABOR OF LOVE

The Deutsche Bank Championship, a PGA Tour stop in Norton, Mass., since 2003 and a FedEx Cup event since its inception in 2007, will have a new name next year as EMC Corporation takes over as title sponsor. Now it might want to consider a new date. Ending on Labor Day is a nice holiday tradition, but the dicey weather this year shows the drawbacks of scheduling a Monday finish. The danger of having play spill over into Tuesday certainly impacts the 70 players who qualify for the BMW Championship, the FedEx Cup tournament that begins Thursday near Indianapolis. Again, with tournaments piled upon tournaments, going to a Sunday finish might not be a bad idea.

WATCHING THE WOMEN

With the LPGA dominated by youth – Brooke Henderson, 18; Lydia Ko, 19, and Ariya Jutanugarn, 20 – Caroline Masson seems almost ancient in getting her first tour win at the age of 27. But the two-time Solheim Cup team member from Germany was solid on Sunday to capture the Manulife Classic,

adding an LPGA title to the 2012 South African Women's Open she won on the Ladies European Tour. Now we'll see if she can build on that success... Keep an eye on Suzann Pettersen as the season heads down the home stretch. Beginning with the Olympics, she's played 12 consecutive rounds under par, finishing T-5 Sunday in the Manulife along with Ko and Jutanugarn... Speaking of Jutanugarn, job 1 for her in the off-season has to be working on the driver. If she figures out that club she can overwhelm courses. By not using the driver she's simply giving away the huge distance advantage she has over the rest of the field.

That's it for now. See you next week.