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CARL AZUZ, CNN 10 ANCHOR: Basketball was invented in the United States by a Canadian immigrant, but the National Basketball Association has more fans

in China than anywhere else, and that country just announced it won't show or stream any NBA preseason games played there. The reason why is our

first topic today on CNN 10.

An international political storm involving the National Basketball Association started with a tweet. The subject of that tweet concerned

recent protests in Hong Kong.

For months, demonstrators have been calling for more democracy and less influence by China. Some of the protests have been violent. Hong Kong is

a special administrative region of China and the communist country says it has ultimate control over what happens there.

So, there are two sides in the story of the protests. And the basketball manager's tweet that picked a side is what led to the NBA controversy.

(BEGIN VIDEOTAPE)

BRIAN TODD, CNN CORRESPONDENT (voice-over): The National Basketball Association is risk of fouling out in China while also facing boos and

backlash from fans back home.

It all began when the general manager of the NBA's Houston Rockets, Daryl Morey, posted this on Twitter over the weekend: Fight for freedom. Stand

with Hong Kong.

But what may have seemed like simple tweet ignited a geopolitical fire storm. That is because Morey's comment was a clear show of support for

anti-China protesters who have been out in force on Hong Kong streets for months. Hong Kong is officially part of China. And to say the Chinese

government was furious would be an understatement.

UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE TV ANCHOR (through translator): We want to warn people like Morey that it is not realistic for them to earn a large amount of

money from China while hurting the feelings of the Chinese people.

TODD: Chinese state TV demanded an apology. The league, which has stood up for free speech by its players when it comes to U.S. politics backed down, saying Morey`s views have deeply offended many of our friends and fans in China which is regrettable.

The Rockets owner and star players distanced themselves from their own general manager.

JAMES HARDEN, HOUSTON ROCKETS GUARD: We apologized, you know. You know, we love China. We love playing there.

TODD: Even Daryl Morey himself whose original tweet has since been deleted, said he didn`t intend to offend anyone in China, saying in a

follow-up tweet: I have had a lot of opportunity since the tweet to hear and consider other perspectives.

CHRISTINE BRENNAN, SPORTS COLUMNIST, USA TODAY: The NBA has led the way in progressive thought, in ideology and speaking your mind. And to see the

NBA cave in this manner is absolutely stunning.

TODD: So why would the NBA, which one senator derisively called the wokest professional sports league buckle to pressure from a foreign power?

Experts say it`s because China is a financial slam dunk for the NBA, worth billions.

The NBA has at least 25 marketing partnerships and more than 200 stores in China. More than 600 million people watched NBA games on Chinese TV during

the 2017-2018 season.

BRENNAN: The fact is that the NBA ratings were actually higher in China. More people in China watched the NBA than watched the NBA in the United

States. Extraordinary.

TODD: China, sports analysts say, knows its influence on and off the court and immediately started issuing threats.

The Chinese Basketball Association led by the iconic Yao Ming, a former Rockets star player himself, has said it would suspend cooperation with the

Rockets.

The company, Tencent Spots, the NBA`s exclusive digital partner for China, is suspending live-streaming of Rockets games.

THOMAS WRIGHT, THE BROOKINGS INSTITUTION: China has a long track record of placing pressure on governments and companies that say things that offend

the Chinese communist party.

TODD: The NBA's response has led to a Rocket's red glare with members of Congress and others going hard in the paint against the NBA.

Leaders on both side of the aisle from Republican Senators Ted Cruz to Mario Rubio to Democrats Chuck Schumer and Congresswoman Jackie Speier are

calling the NBA hypocritical.

(END VIDEOTAPE)

AZUZ: So, the National Basketball Association is getting criticized on both sides of the Pacific. On one hand, it says it regrets that the tweet

offended its fans in China, but on the other, the NBA's commissioner says he still supports Daryl Morey's right to speak out.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

ADAM SILVER, NBA COMMISSIONER: We are not apologizing for Daryl exercising his freedom of expression. I regret again having communicated directly

with many friends in China, that so many people are upset, including millions and millions of our fans.

I understand that there are consequences from that exercise of, in essence, his freedom of speech and, you know, we will have to live with those

consequences.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

AZUZ: Chinese media strongly disagreed with Commissioner Adam Silver on the issue of free speech, responding to his statement, China's main

government-run TV broadcaster said, quote: Any remarks that challenge national sovereignty and social stability do not belong to the category of

free speech.

China's constitution does give its citizens the right of freedom of speech, but human rights organization say, in practice, China's communist

government limits that right.

Commissioner Silver says he plans to travel to China this week for a game between the Los Angeles Lakers and the Brooklyn Nets. He's hoping to meet

with Chinese officials to talk about the issue but says it may not be going away anytime soon.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

AZUZ (voice-over): Ten-second trivia:

Which planet has 82 known moons, the most in our solar system?

Venus, Jupiter, Saturn, or Neptune?

The record holder is no longer Jupiter. The planet with the most moons is Saturn.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

AZUZ: That's because of a brand new discovery by the International Astronomical Union. It says it recently identified 20 previously unknown

moons around the ringed planet, and that gives Saturn a total of 82 moons, surpassing Jupiter's previous record of 79. Sorry, Jupiter, but hey, at

least you're still a planet.

Scientists say Saturn's satellites, the newly identified ones, are all around the same size and that they were located using stronger computing

power and better algorithms for keeping track of faint, distant objects. And now, you can help name them.

There's a contest being held until December 6th. But there are guidelines. You can't just submit something like Kimberly. The astronomer whose team

found the moons says they have to be named after giants from Norse, Gallic or Inuit mythology. So, good luck.

Up next today, Palos Verdes is a peninsula in Southern California. It's known for its horse trails, ocean views, great schools, incredibly

expensive homes and what just might be the rarest butterfly on the planet.

The Palos Verdes Blue Butterfly was thought to be lost forever after its habitat was developed in the early 1980s. Since then, it's been

rediscovered, reinvigorated and reintroduced to parts of the peninsula.

(BEGIN VIDEOTAPE)

NARRATOR: This butterfly was once thought to be extinct. Though rediscovered, it remains one of the world's rarest and most elusive butterflies.

This is the Palos Verdes Blue Butterfly.

SUBTITLE: A Great Big Story. On the Brink: The Palos Verdes Blue Butterfly.

NARRATOR: This butterfly is as elusive as it is beautiful. And the brilliance of its blue wings are only visible when it opens them. The wings are distinctive with their brilliant silvery blue color.

The butterfly was thought to be extinct in the 1980s, when it seemed to disappear without a trace. It wasn't until the 1990s that this visually striking butterfly was spotted again. Biologists were surprised and delighted in its existence, and a breeding program was begun to build up the species.

Though captive breeding has helped bolster numbers, the population is still low enough to remain on the endangered list. Through careful nurturing and

management, this small but mighty butterfly has a fighting chance.

This is the Palos Verdes Blue Butterfly.

(END VIDEOTAPE)

AZUZ: Ten out of 10 goes to the marching band and color guard of Corona del Sol High School in Tempe, Arizona, for illustrating how the show must go on even when the sprinklers do. This happened when they were in the middle of their half-time show. But what won the crowd and national news coverage was their determination to soldier on until the sprinklers were finally turned off. After that, they took it from the top without missing a beat.

Well, that's certainly not in the drill book. Those students could have easily disbanded, gotten brass off, had some drum major issues, faced plumes of problems or dropped their color guard and marched off on a bad

note. But by sheer determ-instrumentation, they showed nothing could stop
them even if it rained on their parade.

That`s all for CNN 10. I`m Carl Azuz.

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