

All the idiocy of Covid and vaccine mandates in one neat package

An unvaccinated Kyrie Irving can sit courtside but isn't allowed to play basketball; does this mean the earth is flat?



Alex Berenson

Mar 15

1,103

225



On Sunday, Kyrie Irving decided to watch a basketball game in Brooklyn.

And all heck broke loose.

In case you don't know, Irving plays basketball for the Brooklyn Nets (my favorite team, from back when their home was a parking lot in New Jersey). He's very good. He has maybe the best "handle" - ability to dribble - in the world.

Irving is also an odd duck. He made news in 2018 for saying he thought the earth might be flat.





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Kyrie Irving Doesn't Know if the Earth Is Round or Flat. He Does Want to Discuss It.

Last year Irving decided he needed time off mid-season because he was upset about police shootings of African-Americans. By all accounts, his feelings were genuine. Still, most of us would get a one-way ride to the unemployment office if we didn't show for work because of our feelings, however genuine. Having the world's best handle has its privileges.

This season, Irving has been in the news for a different reason, his refusal to be jabbed with mRNA.

As a fellow pureblood, I am on Irving's side. And unlike Green Bay Packers quarterback Aaron Rodgers, Irving owned his choice. He didn't say he was "immunized" or "partially hydrogenated" or "league MVP so I can do what I want."

No, Kyrie said he wasn't vaccinated and wasn't getting vaccinated. The end.

Only it wasn't. The NBA and its players had agreed Covid shots would not be mandatory

(professional athletes have unions nearly as strong as teachers), but New York City had other ideas.

In September, as part of his never-ending quest to ruin New York, then-Mayor Bill de Blasio required Covid jabs for adults going to indoor venues like restaurants or gyms. Including Barclays Center, where the Nets play. Then, in December, de Blasio extended the mandate to all private workplaces.

The mandates meant that Irving couldn't play basketball at Barclays. He was allowed to play outside New York, but in October the Nets said they wouldn't let him do that either if he couldn't play at home.

Irving was due to make \$35 million this season, just shy of \$400,000 a game (which made him only the *third*-highest paid player on the Nets, amazing but true). Thus, every home game he missed cost him \$400,000.

And I thought I was committed to staying unvaccinated. Though the team still had to pay Irving for the road games.

Kyrie's stance brought him a lot of heat from the ESPNs of the world. Sports talk show hosts have been among the loudest screechers for Team Apocalypse. I thought they were men who liked sports, but apparently not. They were desperate to see the college football season canceled in 2020, and their disappointment when the games proceeded without dozens of Covid deaths was palpable. They have also resolutely refused to say a word about athletes who have heart problems after getting mRNA shots.

But Kyrie stayed firm. Dude said the world might be flat! He doesn't care what some chubby middle-aged radio announcer thinks. So the season started without him.

The first crack in this standoff came in December, when the Nets said they would start playing Kyrie on the road.

Why? *Because so many of their vaccinated players were infected with Omicron and missing games.*



Adrian Wojnarowski ✓

@wojespn



ESPN Sources: With the unfolding circumstances of Brooklyn's season – including injuries, Covid losses and an inordinate minutes load on their superstar players – the Nets are bringing back All-Star guard Kyrie Irving as a part-time player for games outside of New York.

5:04 PM · Dec 17, 2021 · Twitter for iPhone

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Yes, the Nets needed to suit up their unvaccinated player because their vaccinated ones had Covid.

Because vaccines work!

Then, in late February, Eric Adams, New York's new mayor, made a partial concession to reality and rolled back the jab mandates for indoor spaces. (The mandates had worked so well that New York had far more Covid infections than ever before this winter.)

Now anyone, vaccinated or not, can watch a game at Barclays.

But the city's workplace mandate remains in place, so Irving still can't play. By the way, the workplace mandate does not and has not ever applied *to visiting players*. Trust The Science!

This combination of rules means that Kyrie Irving is the *only person in the world* who faces any sanction at Barclays Center for refusing to take an mRNA shot.

On Sunday, Irving decided to demonstrate the absurdity of the situation in the simplest possible way. He bought himself a courtside ticket for Brooklyn's game against the New York Knicks, the city's other and lesser professional basketball team.

Irving brings his unvaccinated cooties to Barclays:



Irving even wound up going into the locker room with his teammates - but as a spectator (safe!) and not a player (dangerous!).

If Irving intended to demonstrate the idiocy of the workplace mandate, he succeeded. At a press conference after the game, Kevin Durant, the top player on the Nets, called the rule “stupid” and added - in reference to Mayor Adams - “Eric, dude, you gotta figure this out.”

Durant's honesty set off a new round of whining from the sports-talk screechers - *how dare*

he call
mond

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Jennie Lucas Mar 15

f now, the useless workplace mandate remains in place. And Irving remains welcome
to buy a courtside seat anytime to root for the team he can't play for.
This is one of your finest pieces, Alex! Superb summary of the stupidity with just enough snark,
not too much, to make it fun reading!

Kyrie, if you need a plus-one, I'm available! We can talk clinical trial design and whether
LeBron James is as big a douche as he seems.

5 replies



Jerry Mar 15

the fun.
I predict that when people look back on the COVID period in 50 or 100 years (assuming we're not
all killed in a nuclear war most of the media seems intent on starting) they will struggle to
understand how we could have been so STUPID.

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