

Sports & Entertainment Beat

Sports & Entertainment Spotlight - July 30, 2021

By Joshua Bloomgarden on 7.30.21 | Posted in Sports & Entertainment Spotlight

Just months after breathing life into the "Sports & Entertainment Spotlight," I am (well, my wife is) giving birth to a new creation — a baby boy. As such, I will be taking a break from the usual commentary (sleep deprivation isn't exactly the best for the creative juices), but will keep up with the weekly curated content until my return from paternity leave. In the meantime, you'll have to come up with your own puns and snarky, yet insightful commentary!

As a friendly reminder, if there are topics you'd like to see featured, please feel free to contact me at josh.bloomgarden@foster.com.

Endorsement Deals, Sponsorships & Investments

Chris Paul, Kevin Love Invest in Sports-Card Marketplace Dibbs

July 27, 2021 via Bloomberg - News (subscription may be required)

Basketball stars Chris Paul and Kevin Love are part of a group of athletes putting money behind a sports-card marketplace as collectibles gain momentum with investors. Dibbs is a real-time trading platform that allows users to invest in fractions of physical sports cards through non-fungible tokens.

Nike Signs Potential Number One NBA Pick Cunningham

July 27, 2021 via Newsbinding - Top Stories

Ahead of the 2021 NBA draft, projected top overall pick Cade Cunningham has signed a multiyear footwear and apparel endorsement deal with Nike.

Celebrities Involved in Video Games Promotion Campaigns

July 27, 2021 via GEARFUSE

From appearing in video commercials, having a guest appearance, or voicing characters within the game as seen in celebrity endorsement of Gladiator slot machine, fans can connect with games better when their favorite celebrity is involved.

Experts: Local Businesses May Benefit From Rules to Help College Athletes Profit Off Their Name, Image, Likeness

July 26, 2021 via Biz Journal - Agriculture News (subscription may be required)

Companies already have started diving into the new name, image and likeness (NIL) rules for college athletes, which may provide local opportunities. College athletes now can earn income from their NIL in all 50 states as of July 1.

LeBron James Has Earned One Billion Dollars — The First U.S. Team Sport Athlete To Do It While Still Active

July 23, 2021 via MarketWatch - Auto Review

LeBron James is officially a billionaire. According to Sportico, Los Angeles Lakers star LeBron James has now earned over \$1 billion dollars between his on-court and off-court endeavors.

NFL Quarterback Trio Joins Bombas' Latest Funding Round

July 23, 2021 via Sportico – Business (subscription may be required)

Quarterbacks Joe Burrow, Dak Prescott and Ryan Tannehill are among the 45 athletes who have recently invested in Bombas, the crowdfunding and Shark Tank success story that did more than \$100 million in revenue in 2019.

Sponsorships in Hand, These Athletes Rely on Their Watches

July 23, 2021 via New York Times - Most Recent (subscription may be required)

Athletes can make a lot of money when they win an event. But they can make even more — much more — when they secure a sponsorship. In first place on Forbes's 2020 list of the highest-paid athletes is the tennis star Roger Federer, who made \$106.3 million that year — only \$6.3 million from salary and winnings and \$100 million from endorsements. For that money (generally much less than what Mr. Federer received), athletes are paid to promote everything from pasta to Champagne, cars to countries and, yes, watches.

Revised IOC Sponsor Rules Can't Stop Doritos Ambush and Athlete Ire

July 22, 2021 via Sportico – Business (subscription may be required)

Companies pay hundreds of millions of dollars to be official Olympic sponsors, and for decades, the IOC has tried to crack down on non-sponsor brands invading the Games' space. But that hasn't stopped unsanctioned brands from finding ways to use the IOC's valuable platform to market themselves.

Why Kanye West's Controversial Relationship With Nike is a Calculated Marketing Move

July 22, 2021 via Footwear News

Kanye West is at it again. The musician turned fashion icon has once again ignited a social media maelstrom with his recent posts on Instagram that prominently feature products from Nike, the Adidas endorser's direct competitor.

Billions of Dollars Are on the Line at the Olympics — But Not For Athletes

July 22, 2021 via Vox

There is a ton of money to be made at the Olympics, even in a year like this. NBC has paid \$7.7 billion for broadcasting rights to show the Olympics through 2032, and it's already sold \$1.25 billion in ads for the Tokyo games.

Athletes' Digital Profiles Now a Major Factor in Wealth Planning

July 22, 2021 via Sportico – Business (subscription may be required)

As we pave the way to recovery, the past year and a half has provided us with a valuable and insightful reality: The future is digital.

Health-conscious Hamilton Invests in Green-drink Company

July 22, 2021 via Times Live - News

Lewis Hamilton is investing in a green-drink business as the British racing driver and others capitalise on demand for health and wellness products. Athletic Greens, which makes a nutritional powder, is taking on external investors for the first time since it was founded more than a decade ago.

Why Olympians Are Struggling to Get Sponsorships

July 21, 2021 via Walrus

In the rapidly evolving influencing economy, many high-performing athletes are discovering that being stronger, faster, or more skilled than everyone else isn't necessarily the ticket to Instagram success and is no longer the key to signing contracts with brands. Athlete sponsorships go not necessarily to the most athletic but rather to the most persuasive, attractive, and charismatic.

Film & TV

Barstool Sports Taking Over AZ Bowl From CBS to Broadcast Online

July 27, 2021 via Sportico – Business (subscription may be required)

Barstool Sports is expanding into college football bowl games as both the exclusive title sponsor and broadcast partner of the Arizona Bowl. Slated this year for Dec. 31, the Barstool Arizona Bowl will move off linear TV with this multi-year deal, after airing on CBS Sports for the last several years.

Warner Bros. Pictures Acquires Worldwide Rights to SXSW Multi-Award Winner "The Fallout" for HBO Max

July 27, 2021 via The Futon Critic

The cast includes Jenna Ortega delivering a career-defining performance, along with Maddie Ziegler, Niles Fitch, Will Ropp, Lumi Pollack, John Ortiz, Julie Bowen and Shailene Woodley.

ESPN Powers SEC Shakeup as Realignment 2.0 Appears on Horizon

July 26, 2021 via Sportico – Business (subscription may be required)

While the lawyers will be doing much of the talking as Oklahoma and Texas plot their defection from the Big 12, the loudest voice in the virtual room belongs to ESPN.

Liberty Extends Multi-year Agreement With ESPN for Football Media Rights

July 26, 2021 via Augusta Free Press

Liberty Athletics and ESPN have reached a new five-year extension for the exclusive media rights to Liberty's home football games, beginning with the 2021 season through 2025.

Pokemon Live-Action Series in Early Development at Netflix From 'Lucifer's' Joe Henderson (EXCLUSIVE)

July 26, 2021 via Variety

A new Pokemon series is in early development at Netflix, Variety has learned exclusively from sources. As the project is still in its early days, no details are available about the plot. However, sources say that Joe Henderson is attached to write and executive produce.

Eva Longoria Teams With Grace Parra Janney, Josh Bycel to Develop Mexican-American Comedy at ABC

July 26, 2021 via Variety

Eva Longoria will direct and executive produce a single-cam comedy in the works at ABC that hails from Grace Parra Janney and Josh Bycel. The untitled series is inspired by Grace's own large Mexican-American family in Texas.

Writer Scott Snyder Inks Sweeping Deal With Amazon's ComiXology

July 26, 2021 via Hollywood Reporter

Scott Snyder and his Best Jackett Press have signed a deal to co-create eight titles for ComiXology Originals. The titles will first debut via the Amazon-owned digital comics service and Kindle, and then appear in print via Dark Horse Books.

Comcast Plans to Feature Real-Time Olympic Footage in Commercials

July 23, 2021 via Sportico – Business (subscription may be required)

Many advertisers plan to interrupt the Olympics with their commercials. Comcast will interrupt its commercials with the Olympics. Variety reports the cable-and-entertainment giant has a group of ads ready to run in the Tokyo Olympics that, if all goes well, will include footage from this year's Games.

ESL Signs Exclusive Media Rights Deal With G4

July 22, 2021 via eSports Insider - Latest News

Esports tournament organiser ESL Gaming has granted exclusive media rights to G4, the long-dormant gaming TV network set to return under Comcast NBC Universal in 2021. G4 will produce and broadcast exclusive primetime programmes around ESL content, from launch to IEM Katowice 2022 pending any renewals.

NBC Preps Olympian Ad Load as Tokyo Sponsors Stay Put

July 22, 2021 via Sportico – Business (subscription may be required)

If history is any guide, Twitter should begin erupting with complaints about NBC's Olympics ad loads early during Friday's opening ceremonies, perhaps between the moment the 60 members of the Austrian contingent give way to the 44 athletes from Azerbaijan. And while the deluge of marketing messages may certainly seem oppressive to younger viewers who've come up in an ad-averse, everything-on-demand universe, the volume of breaks in the Tokyo Games isn't likely to be any more onerous than the standard broadcast load.

Apple Taps 'CODA's Siân Heder to Helm & Write Judy Heumann's Memoir 'Being Heumann;' 'Oklahoma' Tony Winner Ali Stroker Circling

July 22, 2021 via Deadline - Hollywood Breaking News

Apple Original Films has landed rights to a package based on Judy Heumann's best-selling memoir Being Heumann. Siân Heder, whom Apple signed to a multi-year overall deal in the wake of winning an auction for her Sundance sensation CODA, is adapting the film to direct.

Damon Wayans Jr. To Host Peacock's 'Frogger' (TV News Roundup)

July 22, 2021 via Variety

Damon Wayans Jr. will host Peacock's "Frogger," a competition series based on the iconic 1980s video game. Co-hosted by "Good Morning Football's" Kyle Brandt, the series supersizes the concept of the Konami game into an epic obstacle course filled with all the same elements.

Zack Snyder's Netflix Deal Could Lead to Multiple SnyderVerses

July 22, 2021 via We Got This Covered

Any lingering hopes for the resurrection and restoration of the DCEU's SnyderVerse looked to have been extinguished for the foreseeable future after Zack Snyder's Stone Quarry Productions signed an exclusive first-look development deal with Netflix, a move that everyone was admittedly expecting him to make.

Music Biz

Timbaland Escapes Producer's Lawsuit Over Missy Elliott Songs

July 26, 2021 via Bloomberg Law - Intellectual Property News (subscription may be required)

Musician and record producer Timbaland convinced a federal judge in Pennsylvania to let him out of a lawsuit by producer Terry Williams, who alleges Timbaland and Missy Elliott used songs he helped write without permission.

BTS Owner Big Hit Music Clarifies Copyright Claims Around 'Butter'

July 23, 2021 via Marketing Interactive

Big Hit Music, the agency managing South Korean boy band BTS, has clarified recent copyright

claims regarding the band's latest song "Butter". Released earlier this year on 21 May, "Butter" was recently compared to a song written for a 90s Japanese video game.

Universal Music Cuts Licensing Deal With Video-Sharing Social App Lomotif

July 25, 2021 via The Motley Fool

After wasting much of the internet age losing a never-ending game of Whack-A-Mole against copyright infringers, Universal Music is dropping the walls around its vault of music — and getting paid to do so.

Songwriter Groups Formally Call on U.S. Copyright Royalty Board to Reject NMPA's Mechanical Royalty Rate Proposals

July 27, 2021 via Complete Music Update

An assortment of organizations representing songwriters in America and beyond — led by the Songwriters Guild Of America, the Society Of Composers & Lyricists and Music Creators North America — have called on the US Copyright Royalty Board to reject a proposal endorsed by the major music publishers to keep in place the current mechanical royalty rates for discs and downloads within the US.

U.S. Sells One-of-a-kind Wu-Tang Clan Album Owned by Martin Shkreli to Pay Off His Debt

July 27, 2021 via NBC News

The government has sold the one-of-a-kind Wu-Tang Clan album previously owned by former drug company CEO Martin Shkreli to pay off his debts. Shkreli, dubbed the "Pharma Bro," was ordered to forfeit \$7.3 million in assets after he was convicted of securities fraud in 2017.

Songwriters Urge Copyright Royalty Board to Reject Proposed Mechanical-Rate Freeze

July 27, 2021 via Digital Music News

Back in late May, songwriters demanded greater mechanical-royalty transparency from the Copyright Royalty Board (CRB). Now, music-creator organizations are once again expressing "strong opposition" to a proposed mechanical-rate freeze as well as "non-transparent elements" that could be introduced to the CRB by the National Music Publishers' Association.

Chinese Regulators Ban Tencent From Exclusive Rights in Online Music

July 26, 2021 via Digital Music News

Chinese regulators have barred Tencent from arranging exclusive music rights agreements. The Chinese government has been stepping up anti-trust action against several large tech companies. It imposed a record \$2.75 billion fine on Alibaba, China's Amazon equivalent.

Queen Latifah Inks First-Look Podcast Deal With Audible

July 21, 2021 via Forbes (subscription may be required)

Legendary rapper/actress/producer Queen Latifah and her business partner Shakim Compere's Flavor Unit are partnering with Audible to produce a series of exclusive podcasts.

Non-Fungible Tokens (NFTs)

Binance Teams Up With Russian Museum to Tokenize Da Vinci and Van Gogh Masterpieces

July 27, 2021 via CryptoPotato

The State Hermitage Museum and Binance NFT marketplace will release non-fungible tokens of renowned paintings at the end of August.

Kings to Release 100 Smart NFT Tickets for Upcoming Summer League Games

July 26, 2021 via Biz Journal - Southwest News

The Sacramento Kings said they will release 100 "smart" tickets in the format of a non-fungible token — a unit of data that can take the form of digital art, for example.

NFT As the Future of Digital Advertising

July 26, 2021 via Web Newswire

The creation of Non Fungible Tokens has made it possible to create a tokenized representation of digital items such as images, music, videos, etc.

Olympic Token Brings Excitement of Olympic Games to Uniswap

July 25, 2021 via Yahoo Finance - Top Stories

Olympic Token (\$Olympic) aims to capitalize by offering a unique opportunity to own NFTs in support of your favorite countries, and your favorite Olympic Games.

Who Will Win in the NFT Boom? Inside the Investment Innovation

July 25, 2021 via City Wire Selector - Latest News

NFTs are the latest hot topic within the crypto world, with the token-art market booming in 2021. Headline grabbing developments, such as an NFT art piece fetching almost €60m at Christie's this year, have left investors asking whether it will become an institutionally valuable trading asset.

Sotheby's to Auction Never-Before-Seen Muhammad Ali Artwork NFT

July 23, 2021 via Bitcoin

On Friday (July 23), coinciding with the Summer Olympics opening ceremony, Muhammad Ali Enterprises and the fine auction house Sotheby's will be auctioning an NFT that features a never-before-seen piece of original artwork created by Muhammad Ali.

From ABC Sitcom To NFT's: How George Lopez Made It In Hollywood

July 22, 2021 via Forbes – Leadership (subscription may be required)

"My family always told me that I would end up on the street. No mother. No father. Nobody believed in me." George Lopez recalled. "And they were right, I ended up on the street: on the Hollywood Walk of Fame."

NBA Star Spencer Dinwiddie Launches K8iros 'Crypto Sneaker' for a Good Cause

July 22, 2021 via Footwear News

Brooklyn Nets guard Spencer Dinwiddie is the latest star athlete to join the NFT world. The NBA player has teamed up with Suku's Infinite Marketplace to release an NFT shoe for a good cause. The "Crypto K8iros" sneaker has been auctioned off on July 22.

Tom Brady's NFT Platform Inks Deal With Draftkings and Lionsgate

July 22, 2021 via Bitcoin

On Wednesday (July 21), the NFT called Autograph, co-founded by the Super Bowl champion, Tom Brady, announced a strategic partnership with the companies Draftkings and Lionsgate. Draftkings Inc. also revealed on Wednesday that the publicly listed company is launching an NFT marketplace dedicated to NFT digital collectibles.

Steve Job's Physical Job Application and Mirror Copy in NFT Form to Face Off on the Auction Block

July 21, 2021 via Bitcoin

In another world-first for the NFT space, Steve Job's handwritten job application letter in its physical form and an accompanying digital NFT of the same item will go head to head in respective auctions.

Digital Horse Racing Platform Raises \$20 Million, Adds Crypto Stud Fees

July 21, 2021 via Sportico – Business (subscription may be required)

With more than \$30 million in sales of digital racehorses in the books, Zed Run parent company Virtually Human Studio has raised \$20 million to continue sprinting into the NFT future.

Right of Publicity

NCAA Athletes' Suit for Back Pay Gains Steam After Alston, NIL

July 27, 2021 via Sportico – Law (subscription may be required)

The NCAA's interim NIL policy, as well as surprising remarks from NCAA president Mark Emmert and the U.S. Supreme Court's 9-0 ruling against the NCAA in Alston, are now being actively used by college athletes in the next major litigation to take down the NCAA's system of amateurism.

Students Take Advantage of Endorsement Deals

July 26, 2021 via WECT 6 News

College athletes now have the chance to profit from their name, image, and likeness after the NCAA began allowing endorsements on July 1, 2021. "We at UNCW think it's a tremendous opportunity for our student athletes," said UNCW Athletic Director Jimmy Bass.

The Biggest and Most Notable NIL Deals in College Football so Far

July 26, 2021 via Bleacher Report

As the clock struck midnight and calendar moved to July 1, the name, image and likeness era officially began for college athletes. Many of college football's biggest names—including Miami's D'Eriq King, North Carolina's Sam Howell and Oregon's Kayvon Thibodeaux—immediately cashed in.

Report: USC QB Kedon Slovis Signs with Klutch Sports for NIL Representation

July 22, 2021 via Bleacher Report

USC quarterback Kedon Slovis reached an agreement with Klutch Sports as he seeks to maximize his earning potential through the NCAA's name, image and likeness policy, according to Ryan Kartje of the Los Angeles Times.

High School Hoops Star Inks Historic NIL Deal With Excel

July 22, 2021 via Newsbinding - Top Stories

Explosive scoring guard Mikey Williams won't be eligible for the NBA draft until 2024 and still has nearly two years to decide on college basketball or a pro pathway. Yet his massive social media following — more than five million followers across multiple platforms — has allowed Williams to become the first prep basketball star to sign with a major sports representation agency to pursue NIL endorsements and sponsorships.

UNC Becomes The First School To Organize Group Endorsement Deals For Its Players

July 21, 2021 via NPR - Business News

The University of North Carolina has become the first college athletics program to organize group licensing deals for its current student athletes, in the latest development of the sea change transforming college athletics.