Foster Garvey

Sports & Entertainment Beat

Ownership Changes, Comedy Milestones and AI Controversies

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Welcome back to the Spotlight! Thanks to our neighbors in the North, this edition is coming to you with a firsthand account straight from the secondhand smoke-filled room that is New York. I'd like to think that the Canadians would be gracious enough to complement the campfire aroma with some s'mores, but with Ontario native Justin Bieber performing at the halftime show at this weekend's World Cup final, I guess we can call it even. Fortunately, poor air quality has not detracted from the entertainment quality in the week past and this weekend to come.

Indeed, not even a plume of smoke could drown out the afterglow of Jay-Z's three consecutive sell-out concerts at his Yankee Stadium residency last weekend, where eager and (for Sunday night's show that started about 4 hours later than originally scheduled) saintly patient fans to three decades worth of songs from his singular hip-hop career, with special guest appearances by Beyoncé, Rihanna, Eminem, Pharrell Williams, Nas and Usher (to name a few). The residency itself was emblematic of the intersection between sports, entertainment and fashion, not just because the venue is home to the New York Yankees and among the concert attendees were some of the biggest names in the sports world, but also because the branded merch included customized versions of Yankees jerseys and jackets commemorating the residency. The man who made the Yankee hat more famous than a Yankee can, also made Yankee merch more expensive than a Yankee can, with prices 2-3x above retail for comparable non-HOV merchandise.

Wednesday night, at Lincoln Center, New York played host to the biggest night in entertainment and sports, the ESPY Awards. There, the New York Knicks continued their torrid summer, going a perfect five for five in each award category the team or its players (most notably, Jalen Brunson and OG Anunoby) had been nominated.

Then, the very next day, Fanatics Fest kicked off at the well-ventilated and air-conditioned Javits Center, where-as the name would suggest-fans gathered to meet their favorite athletes, peruse some of the biggest brands in the sports and entertainment business and step into immersive activations.

And of course, last but not least, on Sunday, the FIFA World Cup Final between Spain and Argentina will be played at New York/New Jersey Stadium. Quite a lot of bright spots amidst the gray skies and reddened Sun. But if that's still not bright enough, the Spotlight is here to illuminate the way.

- Billionaire tech founder and venture capitalist Vinod Khosla emerges as the winning bid for the Seattle Seahawks, bringing to the table a similar professional background as the team's predecessor owner, Paul

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Allen. On a separate but related note, Khosla also makes for a refreshing summer side dish to bring to the table at your next cookout

- Comedian John Mulaney makes history becoming the first comedian to perform at Chicago's Wrigley Field - a welcome change for Cubs fans used to watching *unintentional* comedy for years at Wrigley Field.
- AI music startup Suno is revealed to have scraped data from Genius, Deezer and YouTube to train its generative AI model. Although this was discovered by analyzing hacked code, the dead give-away about its using YouTube data should have been the facility with which it makes songs about cats.

Endorsement Deals, Sponsorships & Investments

Kickoff Game Announces 'Multimillion Dollar' NIL Deal With Auburn Before Opener Against Baylor
July 14, 2026 via WVTM 13

Iron Maiden Sells Music Catalog, Name, Image and Likeness Rights to Pophouse
July 14, 2026 via Variety

Christy Turlington Burns, Ruth Rogers and Ronny Turiaf Inspire Nonprofit Leaders at the American Express Leadership Academy
July 13, 2026 via American Express News

Red Light Therapy is the Latest Fad for a Glow-Up as Celebs Swear by LED Masks
July 12, 2026 via Economic Times

Influencer Lawsuits Spur Insurance Demand as Creators Become Global Publishers
July 12, 2026 via Risk & Insurance

Vinod Khosla to Buy Seattle Seahawks for $9.6 Billion
July 11, 2026 via Sportico

Fast Track Group Secures Strategic Capital to Support Next Phase of Entertainment and Media Growth
July 10, 2026 via GlobeNewswire

REIGN Total Body Fuel Signs QB Keelon Russell and RB Caden Durham to NIL Deals
July 10, 2026 via PR Newswire

Sports

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Will Poor Air Quality Impact the World Cup Final?
July 17, 2026 via Front Office Sports

Fox Draws Largest MLB All-Star Game Audience Since 2018
July 17, 2026 via Sportico

England Crash Out World Cup To Lionel Messi's Magnificence With 22 Million People Tuning In
July 16, 2026 via Deadline

NBA Commissioner Adam Silver Says Clippers Probe Should Wrap Up Before the Regular Season Begins
July 15, 2026 via Yahoo! News

Stacks of Wax Packs, Now Obsolete, Summon the Joy of Baseball-Card Childhoods
July 15, 2026 via ABC News

Christian Pulisic's $20M Endorsements at Serious Risk After USA Star's 'Dud' World Cup
July 14, 2026 via Talk Sport

Official Knicks Garden Gnomes Are the Latest Merch Release Celebrating Team's NBA Title
July 13, 2026 via Rolling Stone

Why Corporate Logos on Kentucky Wildcats Jerseys Shouldn't Bother You
July 12, 2026 via Lancaster Online

Bryce Harper Video to FanDuel User With Gambling Addiction Under Review by Pennsylvania Officials
July 11, 2026 via Fox News

The Sports Overload is Here
July 10, 2026 via The Atlantic

Music Biz

Suno Scraped YouTube, Deezer to Train AI, Hacked Code Reveals - Potentially Strengthening UMG and Sony's Legal Case
July 16, 2026 via Music Business Worldwide

Suno is 'Building Toward IPO Readiness'
July 15, 2026 via Music Business Worldwide

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Jay-Z's Yankee Stadium Show Is a Family Affair
July 13, 2026 via Vulture

Taylor Swift Reportedly Paid $160,000 for NYPD Cops at Madison Square Garden Wedding Weekend
July 13, 2026 via Police 1

How Music Publishing Royalties Are Tracked
July 13, 2026 via Business Day

RIAA, Grammys, SAG-AFTRA and Other Groups Launch New Labeling Program for AI Music
July 10, 2026 via Variety

Film & TV

Chipmunks Return: Why Waiting a Decade for the Right Deal Paid Off
July 15, 2026 via Business Matters Magazine

John Mulaney Makes History in Chicago, Brings Out David Letterman, Fred Armisen and Richard Kind
July 13, 2026 via Hollywood Reporter

The Comic Book Store Will Never Be the Same: How the Latest ‘Big Bang’ Spinoff Was Born
July 13, 2026 via Yahoo! News

Stephen Colbert's 'Late Show' Bows Out With 9 Emmy Nominations, Its Biggest Haul Ever
July 8, 2026 via Variety

Posted in Sports & Entertainment Spotlight

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