

# Sports & Entertainment Spotlight: Female NCAA Athletes Largely Outpace Their Male Counterparts on Endorsements; and Ex-Wife of Beach Boys Founder Brian Wilson Sues Him Over His \$50 Million Song Catalog Sale

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*Welcome back and please come on in, lest you catch a cold. This past Sunday's Grammy Awards dialed up the heat, taking place in the Las Vegas desert, having been bumped from its usual Los Angeles stage due to COVID restrictions. To the relief of many, no cringeworthy, front-and-center battery took place at this awards show (evidently the Nevada Gaming Commission put the kibosh on that). Indeed, the show seemingly went on without a 'hitch' - though I would have liked to have seen our ridiculously talented, Grammy-nominated clients leave with trophies. Another uber-talented nominee, singer/songwriter Ed Sheeran (sadly, not a client) is celebrating a big victory this week but it was not at the Grammys. Rather, he prevailed in his defense in his court case alleging that his hit song, "Shape of You" had infringed upon another musician's copyrights. The "Bad Habits" singer went on the offensive, blasting baseless copyright infringement claims such as the one he faced as being, well...bad habits.*

*Elsewhere this week, March Madness gave way to April Adulation as two new NCAA Division I College Basketball champions were crowned, with the University of South Carolina Gamecocks and University of Kansas Jayhawks taking home the women's and men's top prizes (respectively). Notably, Kansas overcame a substantial deficit and was the beneficiary of a late injury to University of North Carolina star forward Armando Bacot caused by what many have theorized was a loose floorboard in the basketball court. For its part, the court's manufacturer denied there being any issues with the court (which is incidentally what I would have advised it to do had I been its lawyer...). In any event, I hope that the winners from the past week enjoy their time in the spotlight as you enjoy this week's Spotlight.*

- *Having nearly a one-year sample size that includes the NCAA's most marketable event (March Madness), one encouraging development in the name, image and likeness era is that female athletes have largely been outpacing their male counterparts on endorsements. Meanwhile, it is clear that NCAA and Commissioner Mark Emmert are no closer in efforts to have Congress establish uniformity in NIL rules, but having let Pandora out of the box without any meaningful guidance, should we even be surprised?*

- Marilyn Wilson-Rutherford, California girl and ex-wife of Beach Boys founder Brian Wilson sues Wilson over his \$50 million song catalog sale. This should be an interesting case to watch - if for nothing else, to see whether Wilson is represented by counsel named "Rhonda" or "Barbara Ann," or whether Wilson updates the famous Beach Boys chorus to "I wish they all could be California (other than the ones that sue me for millions) Girls."
- Riding intrigue fueled by the popularity of Netflix docuseries (but regrettably, non-renewable resources), Formula 1: Drive to Survive is making U.S. media rights a hot commodity.
- For those, like me, who have felt at times powerless to help the Ukrainian people, Ukraine's government has created a website through which users can donate cryptocurrency and fiat directly to the government to aid in its war effort and provide humanitarian aid. Soon, the website will be set up with an NFT marketplace to raise additional funds from the sale of hundreds of donated NFTs. So you'll be able to buy a CryptoPunk from Kyiv while sticking it to a real punk in Moscow.

## Endorsement Deals, Sponsorships & Investments

**Thanks To A Show-Stopping 2021, Shohei Ohtani's Endorsement Earnings Tripled In A Year** April 6, 2022 via Forbes – Business (subscription may be required) The latest sign of Shohei Ohtani's importance to Major League Baseball came in the form of a rule change passed two weeks ago.

**Genius Sports, Club Necaxa Sign Data and Video Analytics Deal** April 5, 2022 via Sportico – Business (subscription may be required) Mexican soccer team Club Necaxa has signed a data and video-analytics partnership with Genius Sports, aimed at helping the Liga MX club enhance offerings to fans while aiding coaches and players in maximizing performance.

**Icon Source Unveils Free Open Market Exchange Software for College Athlete NIL Disclosure, Compliance, and Local Dealmaking** April 4, 2022 via Yahoo Finance The new Icon Suite platform levels the playing field for NCAA colleges across the country with a free, customizable local exchange supporting student-athletes.

**Man City playmaker Jack Grealish reportedly set for seven-figure Gucci endorsement deal**

April 4, 2022 via *Manchester Evening News – All News* Manchester City talent Jack Grealish is set to pen a major endorsement deal worth ‘seven figures’ with fashion giant Gucci, according to reports.

**Men's and Women's Fashion NIL Deals in March Madness 2022 So Far** April 1,

2022 via *Women's Wear Daily* As usual, March Madness proves to be one of the most exciting times of the year.

**29 top TikTok marketers helping brands like Netflix, Duolingo, and Chipotle go viral** April 1,

2022 via *Business Insider – Latest News* TikTok recently crossed 1 billion users, and brands are staffing up to engage with its audience. Many hire TikTok power users who can help a company find the right tone for the app.

**Kansas Basketball Can Maximize NIL Opportunities For Five-Stars Like Gradey Dick** April 1,

2022 via *Forbes – Business (subscription may be required)* Gradey Dick, a McDonald's All-American headed to Kansas, already is on Cameo, a site where consumers can pay celebrities to give personalized video messages for any occasion.

**Which Final Four Basketball Players Have Greatest Earnings Potential? It's the Women**

April 1, 2022 via *Bloomberg (subscription may be required)* College players are cashing in for the first time on endorsement deals. This year's collegiate basketball tournament has a new twist: Amateur players can now make money from endorsements, and some female athletes stand to make more than the men.

**New collective membership models will provide more guaranteed NIL money to college**

**athletes** March 31, 2022 via *Biz Journal* College collectives burst onto the scene a few months ago and quickly became recognized as the fastest and most efficient way to help college athletes make money off their name, image and likeness.

**Female NCAA Players Set to Smash Gender Pay Gap With Brand Deals** *March 31,*

*2022 via Bloomberg Quint – Stories* This year's collegiate basketball tournament has a new twist: Amateur players can now make money from endorsements, and some female athletes stand to make more than the men.

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Sports

**NHL Purchases \$10M in Sportradar Shares, Lets Another Option Expire** *April 5, 2022*

*via Sportico – Business (subscription may be required)* The National Hockey League has purchased more than \$10 million of Sportradar stock, and let another \$30 million worth of options expire, as the sports data giant's stock price sags below its IPO levels.

**NCAA Play for Congress' Help on NIL Faces More Hurdles Than Ever** *April 5, 2022*

*via Sportico – Law (subscription may be required)* NCAA president Mark Emmert is once again pleading with Congress to pass federal name, image and likeness legislation. And, once again, Emmert's request faces stiff political and legal headwinds.

**Duke's Loss Drags Down Ticket Prices for NCAA Championship Game** *April 5, 2022*

*via Bloomberg (subscription may be required)* It turns out Coach K was a big driver of ticket sales for the NCAA Men's Basketball Tournament. Duke University's loss to the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill in the semi-final match is prompting a wave of ticket selling, according to reseller Gametime.

**World Cup Draw Gives USMNT Hope** *April 1, 2022 via Sportico – Business (subscription may*

*be required)* The draw for FIFA's 2022 Men's World Cup took place in Doha, Qatar, and while the immediate chatter on Friday was about the individual games next November.

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Music Biz

**[Bob Dylan Prevails in Appeal of Lawsuit Filed Over Royalty Dispute](#)** *April 5, 2022 via Rolling Stone Magazine* Bob Dylan successfully fended off an appeal of a lawsuit filed by the widow of former collaborator, Jacques Levy, who's argued she deserves a cut of his \$300 million publishing deal, Billboard reports.

**[The Grammys Return, but Struggle to Hit the Right Notes](#)** *April 4, 2022 via New Yorker – Business* It's not terribly surprising that the public's appetite for televised awards shows in which moneyed and powerful people squeeze into gowns and cummerbunds and skinny sunglasses and metal-plated Balenciaga platform Crocs, and heartily congratulate each other is waning.

**[Here are the winners, snubs and highlights from the Grammys](#)** *April 4, 2022 via The Star* Here are some notable moments from this weekend's 64th Annual Grammy Awards held Sunday, including the boycotts, the nominees and BTS shut out for a second year.

**[Classic Rock's Library Continues To Be A Goldmine, As 2021 Catalog Sales Grew At Least 180%](#)**. *April 4, 2022 via Inside Radio – News* If you think you're hearing a "ka-ching" sound effect during a set of music on your local classic rock station from Bruce Springsteen, Fleetwood Mac, ZZ Top and Yes, there's good reason.

**[The Music Catalog Boom May Be Coming to an End](#)** *April 3, 2022 via Bloomberg – Top Stories (subscription may be required)* Bob Dylan, Bruce Springsteen and Stevie Nicks have all cashed in on the streaming boom. But the market may have hit a ceiling due to inflation and rising interest rates.

**[Brian Wilson's Ex-Wife Sues Beach Boys Founder After \\$50 Million UMG Publishing Deal](#)**

March 30, 2022 via *Greenwich Time* Brian Wilson 's ex-wife Marilyn Wilson-Rutherford is suing the Beach Boys founding singer and songwriter following a \$50 million deal Wilson made with Universal Music Publishing Group to sell song rights to the publisher.

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Film & TV

**Hockey East conference gets rights deal with ESPN, NESN** April 6, 2022 via *Sports Business Journal* Hockey East has struck a pair of multiyear media rights deals with NESN and ESPN that will put the New England area D-I conference's games on linear television as well as ESPN+.

**MLB blackout restrictions, explained: Map shows why you can't watch out-of-market baseball games in 2022** April 6, 2022 via *Sporting News – MLB* With regionalization dividing MLB in 2022, regional sports networks (RSNs) carry their own rights to broadcast games, except in certain situations.

**A Year After Nearly Losing a Leg, Tiger Woods Is Back to Save TV** April 5, 2022 via *Sportico – Business (subscription may be required)* Thirteen months after nearly losing his right leg in a devastating car crash, Tiger Woods said he expects to suit up for the Masters Tournament.

**'Grand Ole Opry' Owner Sells Minority Stake to Atairos and NBCUniversal for Nearly \$300 Million** April 4, 2022 via *Greenwich Time* Ryman Hospitality Properties, the Nashville-based parent company of the Grand Ole Opry, has struck a deal to sell a 30% stake in its entertainment operations to investment firm Atairos and NBCUniversal.

**Maffei: Value of F1's U.S. media rights rising** April 4, 2022 via *Sports Business Journal* Liberty Media President & CEO Greg Maffei noted 's TV rights in the U.S. are drawing "a lot of

interest" and that the company is "looking for a broadcast partner."

**French league approves \$1.66 billion deal with CVC Capital** *April 1, 2022 via St. Joseph News* The French soccer league announced an investment deal Friday with private equity firm CVC Capital Partners as part of a new commercial subsidiary in charge of marketing media rights.

**Billionaires Jeff Bezos and Mukesh Ambani set for new clash over television and streaming rights to IPL in online auction** *March 31, 2022 via Asia Newsday* Jeff Bezos and Mukesh Ambani, billionaires who have been battling for years in India, are headed for a ferocious new clash over rights to the country's cricket matches.

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Non-Fungible Tokens (NFTs)

**DJ Steve Aoki Touts Music's Unstoppable Embrace of NFTs, Web3** *April 6, 2022 via Bloomberg (subscription may be required)* Digital assets like nonfungible tokens could help musicians build better relationships with their fans, according to Steve Aoki, a keynote panelist at last week's NFT | LA conference in California.

**Ukraine Readies NFT Sales as Crypto Donations Top \$60 Million** *April 6, 2022 via Bloomberg (subscription may be required)* Ukraine is launching a web page for selling the estimated 300 nonfungible tokens it has received in donations to help in the nation's war effort. The NFTs include a donated CryptoPunk that is expected to fetch about \$200,000, according to Alex Bornyakov, deputy minister of Digital Transformation of Ukraine.

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