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Sports & Entertainment Beat

Sports & Entertainment Spotlight: Comedian Kevin Hart Is Not Joking Around With His New, Entirely Plant-Based Fast-Food Concept Restaurant, ‘Hart House’

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Welcome back to the “Spotlight!” With the Fourth of July just around the corner here in the States, Americans can set aside their many differences (one of the few Judges that did anything that I can applaud this past month presides over 161st Street in the Bronx) and celebrate a holiday on which we "dissolve[d] the political bands which have connected them with another" and declared independence from a tyrannical, autocratic ruler. But with the dark shadows of autocracy remaining in our midst (if not outright supported by many) today and our current political bands fraying, perhaps our lowest common denominator for common ground is wholesome entertainment and (sports?) competition. For that, look no further than the gluttonous spectacle that is the annual Nathan's Hot Dog Eating Contest on Coney Island. If the tradition of watching people (elbow-to-elbow in scorching, soup-like conditions) scarfing down in one sitting more tubed beef and soggy rolls than many have had in their lifetimes does not foster a common sense of patriotism (and nausea - even more so for the vegans and Celiac sufferers among us) and galvanize our *esprit de cor(-onary artery disease)*, I don't know what does. So, take that, Britain! Without further fanfare, one truth I hold to be self-evident is that this week's “Spotlight” is below:

- Comedian Kevin Hart is not joking around with his new, entirely plant-based fast-food concept restaurant, "Hart House." With the first location opening in Los Angeles, perhaps it is ripe for a partnership with a different kind of plant-based establishment.
- Tomorrow marks one year since "NIL Day" in college sports - a financial Independence Day of sorts - that has allowed athletes even from smaller colleges to monetize their name, image and likeness. Rayquan Smith of Norfolk State University is a prime example.
- House music pioneer Marshall Jefferson's publishing company sues Kanye 'Ye' West and creator of the Stem Player device on which West's latest album "DONDA 2" was exclusively distributed, alleging copyright infringement over unauthorized sampling of Jefferson's work, "Move Your Body." One wonders whether West would be in the same predicament had the song been named, "Clear Your Samples."

Endorsement Deals, Sponsorships & Investments Tim Hortons, Esso Withdraw for

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World Juniors in Another Blow for Hockey Canada June 29, 2022 via Collingwood Today Tim Hortons and Imperial Oil have joined a growing list of corporations to pull sponsorship dollars in the wake of Hockey Canada's handling of an alleged sexual assault and out-of-court settlement.

College Sports' 'King Of NIL' Is Racking Up Endorsement Deals at a Small HBCU June 19, 2022 via Forbes (subscription may be required) Less than three weeks after the NCAA began allowing athletes to profit from their name, image and likeness last July 1, Alabama football coach Nick Saban announced that "our quarterback already has approached ungodly numbers"-nearly $1 million in endorsements, he said, maybe a bit overzealously.

Kevin Hart Set To Open Two Plant-Based Restaurants In Los Angeles June 17, 2022 via Deadline Eater Los Angeles reports that actor/comedian Kevin Hart will soon open two plant-based restaurants called Hart House. The first Hart House will open this summer, locations to be announced, although one will be in Hollywood.

Sports **Fanatics, NHL Grant New Licensing Rights to Streetwear Brand Mitchell & Ness** June 29, 2022 via Sportico (subscription may be required) Mitchell & Ness is gaining a wide swath of NHL licensing rights, one of its first major business moves since becoming part of the Fanatics portfolio.

NFL and Players Union Negotiating Watson Deal in Test of New CBA June 23, 2022 via Sportico (subscription may be required) .According to journalist Josiana Anderson, the NFL and NFLPA, along with representatives for Watson, are attempting to negotiate a settlement before retired federal Judge Sue Robinson.

Blitzer Completes Equity Deal for MLB Guardians June 28, 2022 via Sport Business

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(subscription may be required) Major League Baseball's Cleveland Guardians have completed a long-expected deal in which David Blitzer, part-owner of the National Basketball Association's Philadelphia 76ers and National Hockey League's New Jersey Devils, has acquired a minority stake in the club with a pathway toward majority control.

Music Biz **Kanye West Sued Over Sample: 'There's a Right and Wrong Way To Do It'** June 30, 2022 via BBC Kanye West is being sued for sampling a song by a legendary house musician without permission on Donda 2. **Ricky Martin Sued by Former Manager for Breach of Contract** June 29, 2022 via Billboard In the complaint filed in the L.A. Central District Court, Rebecca Drucker - who managed the Puerto Rican superstar from 2014-2018 (and was rehired again from 2020-2022) - alleges that Martin "completely and maliciously refused to pay Rebecca the millions of dollars in commissions that he owes her."

Napster Outlines New Web3 Music Ecosystem June 29, 2022 via Yahoo Finance Napster Music Inc., the music streaming service, announced the publication of its Litepaper V1 which outlines its plans to apply Web3 technology to its existing business and millions of users in order to improve how music makers, rights holders and fans can interact.

SoundExchange Files Suit Against Slacker, Inc. for Failure to Pay Creators June 29, 2022 via Markets Insider SoundExchange, the premier music tech organization powering the future of music, today filed suit in the United States District Court for the Central District of California against Slacker, Inc. and its parent company LiveOne, Inc. to recover unpaid royalties owed to performers.

Film & TV **Barcelona Reportedly Agrees €200 Million-Plus TV Rights Sale** June 29, 2022 via Digital TV Europe Catalan football club FC Barcelona has reportedly agreed to sell a

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10 percent stake in its television media rights to U.S. private equity firm Sixth Street.

ESPN Beats Out Amazon, Comcast, Netflix for Formula 1 Rights: Here are the Details June 24, 2022 via Benzinga Leading sports network ESPN has renewed rights for one of the most popular racing leagues in the world, beating out several other players and raising the annual amount paid to the league.

NFL Courts Apple, Amazon to Give New Life to 'Sunday Ticket' Football – WSJ June 24, 2022 via Wall Street Journal (subscription may be required) The National Football League is accustomed to huge pay increases whenever its media-rights packages come up for renewal. Now, the league faces its biggest test in years: a deal for Sunday Ticket.

Non-Fungible Tokens (NFTs) **NBA Teams With Pokemon Go Maker for Basketball's 'Real-World Metaverse'** June 28, 2022 via Sportico (subscription may be required) Since launching in 2016, Pokemon Go has driven enthusiasts to chase their favorite monsters in delivery rooms, at funerals, and even inside the White House. Soon, we'll see how far hoopheads will go in search of their favorite players.

Cristiano Ronaldo to Release NFTs, Experts Say This is Just the Beginning June 27, 2022 via LiveMint Corporate News Celebrities such as Paris Hilton, Snoop Dogg, and Tony Hawk have already endorsed NFTs, with the Portuguese football star Ronaldo becoming the latest member of the club.

NHL to Launch NFT Platform With Eye on Fan Engagement June 23, 2022 via Sportico (subscription may be required) After tracking the market for more than a year, the NHL announced a league-wide, multiyear partnership with NFT platform Sweet. The league will launch a blockchain marketplace for digital collectibles and video moments later this year,

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with a focus on engaging fans both online and in person.

Posted in Sports & Entertainment Spotlight

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