

Supersized Moves in Sports & Entertainment: The NCAA Tournament Expands to 76 Teams, Pickleball Lands a \$225M Investment and Avatar Gets a Case of the Legal Blues

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Welcome back to the Spotlight! Ever since I took up New York Yankees fandom in the 1990s (for the record, *several years* before they won the World Series in 1996), I have known at least two truths to be self-evident: 1) I was fortunate not to be brought up as a Mets fan and 2) when it came to listening to a play-by-play broadcast of Yankee games, there was no one better than John Sterling. Sterling's colorful, candid commentary, signature home run calls and trademark victory line "YANKEES WIN, THEEEEEEEEEEE YANKEES WIN!" made him an indelible voice of the team, befitting of his last name. So, the news that he had passed on Monday created one of those unique moments where an entire fanbase who may never have actually met the man, had a personal sense of loss because of knowing the man. Amidst the tributes pouring in, there was also a baseball game to be played on Monday, and in a poetic way that only sports can deliver, the Yankees, playing with Sterling's initials on their caps, defeated the Baltimore Orioles, propelled by a "Judgian blast" from team captain Aaron Judge in the first inning. If that does not convince you that sports is more than a game, then I don't know what else will. In any event, John's commitment to the team (never missing a pitch in 34 years of broadcasting), like his voice, will not be soon forgotten.

- The NCAA Men's and Women's Basketball Tournaments are seeing their fields again expanding - from 68 teams to 76 teams. This reminds me of those shaving companies that try to convince you that you need additional razorblades in their already adequate razorheads, all in the name of making a few extra bucks. So far, reception to the news of the expansion, like that of the use of additional blades, seems to be increased irritation.
- Pickleball, Inc., parent company of Major League Pickleball, receives a \$225 million investment from Apollo Sports Capital and Dundon Capital Partners, bringing the company's valuation to a cool-as-a-cucumber \$750 million.
- James Cameron and The Walt Disney Company were sued by actress Q'orianka Kilcher alleging that her likeness was used to create the facial features of a blue-skinned character Neytiri in "Avatar." Lawyers for Smurfette and The Blue Man Group could not be reached for comment as to whether they'd assert claims of their own.

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May 7, 2026 via Adidas

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[Apollo Sports Capital and Tom Dundon Make Landmark \\$225 Million Investment in Pickleball](#)

May 1, 2026 via CNBC

Sports

[NCAA Basketball Tournaments Expanding to 76 Teams](#)

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[Former Cowboys Star Ezekiel Elliott Sues NCAA for Cashing in on Jersey Sales and Highlights](#)

May 6, 2026 via New York Post

[WNBA is New in Toronto this Season but Women's Basketball has a Long History in Canada](#)

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Music Biz

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