

The Spotlight is Back in Session: A Busy Start to 2026 in Sports & Entertainment

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Welcome back to the Spotlight! If one of your New Year's resolutions was to delve into the uber-interesting sports and entertainment business world with a witty bent, congratulations, you are on the right track! If one of your New Year's resolutions was to be more active, then perhaps you need to find a track. That's right, folks - the kid's still got it. Though I was off for a few weeks, it seems writing in this space is akin to getting back on a bicycle. I understand the same can be said of skiing, but I haven't attempted that since age five when I was pushed down a hill backwards by my skiing instructor (that explains a lot, doesn't it?). Mercifully, my plans to try skiing again over the holidays got cancelled, so this Spotlight comes in the form of a reprise (or re-prize) rather than a requiem. Anyway, enough yammering on - there is already so much to cover in just the first week of 2026 that I can tell it will be a busy year. So let's get to it...

- Mere days after signing a \$4M revenue-sharing deal committing to play football at the University of Washington for the 2026 Season, then apparently indicating his intent to transfer from Washington, Quarterback Demond Williams, Jr. is staying at UW. The change of heart might be due to his signing a contract that would have required him to forfeit the \$4M - so it's true what they say: the demand is in the details.
- Hip Hop Artist Drake finds himself in hot water for allegedly scheming to artificially inflate his songs' streaming numbers. Would it have killed him to artificially inflate my readership numbers, too?!
- Social Media Influencers are increasingly finding success in obtaining "extraordinary artist" visas to immigrate to the United States, bringing life to Emma Lazarus' words inscribed on a plaque at the The Statue of Liberty: "Give me your tired, your poor, your skincare routines..."
- Warner Bros. is encouraging its shareholders to reject Paramount's takeover bid and stick with Warner's Netflix deal. Ironically, the film "He's Just Not That Into You" is available to stream on Netflix.

For inquiries and/or unabashed compliments, please feel free to contact me at

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Endorsement Deals, Sponsorships & Investments

[Lionel Messi, Logan Paul Resolve Beverage Dispute](#)

January 8, 2026 via Front Office Sports

Zurich and Players Health Form Injury Insurance for NIL Era of College Sports

January 6, 2026 via *Insurance Journal*

Louis Vuitton Casts Jeremy Allen White and Pusha T in Travel-Themed Campaign

January 6, 2026 via *Women's Wear Daily*

Why Celebs Like Dwayne Johnson and John Legend are Getting Into the Skincare Business

January 5, 2026 via *Coastline Pilot News*

Datavault AI and The Dream Bowl to Set New Benchmark in Sports Innovation with World's First Tokenized Autograph Session, Featuring Current and Future NFL Stars

January 2, 2026 via *LancasterOnline*

Sports

UW QB Enters Transfer Portal, Signed Multi-Million-Dollar Contract with School Days Earlier

January 8, 2026 via *KIRO 7*

Demond Williams Walks Back Transfer Talk, to Stay at Washington

January 8, 2026 via *Front Office Sports*

TGL Launching Women's League, Exploring Future Media Rights Options

January 7, 2026 via *Awful Announcing*

Las Vegas A's Trademark Whiff Doesn't Mean Game Is Over

January 7, 2026 via *Sportico*

Napheesa Collier and Breanna Stewart Are SI's 2025 Innovators of the Year

January 5, 2026 via *Sports Illustrated*

Onetime NBA Draft Pick James Nnaji of Baylor Gets Frequent Boos in College Debut at TCU

January 3, 2026 via *Lancaster Online*

Predictions for the Business of Sports in 2026

January 2, 2026 via *Front Office Sports*

Music Biz

Taylor Swift Cameo Sparks US Sell-Out for Sancerre

January 7, 2026 via *The Drinks Business*

Universal Music Acquires 30% Stake in India's Excel Entertainment, Valuing Bollywood Production House at \$267M

January 5, 2026 via Music Business Worldwide

Drake Accused of Manipulating Streaming Play Counts With Bots in New Lawsuit

January 2, 2026 via Gizmodo

Film & TV

Warner Bros Rejects Revised Paramount Bid as Risky Leveraged Buyout

January 7, 2026 via Reuters

Oasis Would Be "Honored" To Write James Bond Theme Song, But Noel Gallagher Says He's Not Heard From Amazon MGM Studios

January 6, 2026 via Deadline

Tracee Ellis Ross Strikes Development Deal With Fox Entertainment Studios

January 6, 2026 via Deadline

NBCUniversal's Ad Slots for 2026 Winter Olympics Sell Out to 'Unprecedented' Demand

January 6, 2026 via Reuters

More and More 'Extraordinary' Artist Visas Are Going to Social Media Influencers, Say Immigration Lawyers

January 5, 2026 via ArtNewsGizmodo

Emerging Sports

UMG and Roblox Strike Deal to Expand Commercial Opportunities for Artists on the Gaming Platform - Including Merch Sales via Shopify

December 19, 2025 via Music Business Worldwide

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