

Sports & Entertainment Spotlight

Sports & Entertainment Spotlight: Major League Baseball Makes History, Becoming the First Major Professional Sports League to Enter a Sponsorship Deal with a CBD Brand

By Joshua Bloomgarden on 10.13.22 | Posted in Sports & Entertainment Spotlight

Welcome back to the "Spotlight!" If you are just waking up from last week's snooze-fest of a Thursday Night Football game between the Denver Broncos and the Indianapolis Colts, you have come to the right place. Allow me to bring you up to speed on some world developments over the past seven days. Kanye "Ye" West went on an antisemitic tirade for an audience of tens of millions, but not to worry, folks – Elon Musk (who is, by the way, back on course to acquire Twitter) spoke to Ye to express his concerns. Musk then went on to chat with Russian President Vladimir Putin about ending the war in Ukraine.

Everything's fine.

On a brighter note, I had the pleasure of attending the Sports Business Journal World Congress of Sports (Editor's note: this marks just the first time in recent history that "pleasure" and "Congress" have been used in the same sentence), at which sports executives, league commissioners and other key figures discussed topics ranging from pickleball, to NIL, to eSports, to the ascendance of women's sports, to sports betting, to collectibles, to streaming and everything in between. And although the "r" word (recession) loomed as something of a headwind, the consensus (another word not often associated with "Congress") was that the sports industry is uniquely suited to weather the economic storm. Later, I "attended" an excellent virtual discussion between Prof. Michael McCann and ESPN College Game Day's Rece Davis regarding NIL in college sports just a year in and where things figure to go from here.

For a nightcap, I finished it all off with a New York Yankees home playoff victory. Suffice it to say, over the next few weeks, I hope not to be getting nearly as much sleep as the well-rested Mets fans, and continue watching my Yankees deep into the October spotlight.

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- Major League Baseball makes history, becoming the first major professional sports league to enter a sponsorship deal with a CBD brand, radiantly naming Charlotte's Web as its official CBD sponsor. One can only wonder whether this move Wilbur-ing other leagues to the table.
- Private Equity stays bullish on music copyrights, with Brookfield chipping in a mere \$2 billion to give Primary Wave a war chest from which to continue its acquisition of various artists' song catalogs. \$2 billion has a lot of zeroes, but that pales in comparison to the number of Spotify streams that it will take to recoup that investment.
- An early embracer of NFTs, DJ Steve Aoki's revenue from NFTs has outpaced his earnings from music royalties – this presumably coming before the bottom fell out of the NFT market. Just goes to show you that the early bird catches the worm, but the early worm gets eaten.

Endorsement Deals, Sponsorships & Investments **Major League Baseball Strikes Sponsorship Deal With CBD Maker Charlotte's Web** *October 12, 2022 via CNBC* A MLB logo is seen before a game between the Oakland Athletics and the Los Angeles Angels at Angel Stadium of Anaheim on May 22, 2022 in Anaheim, California.

Celebrity Net Worth: Dua Lipa Invests in London-Based Beauty Brand *October 10, 2022 via National Newspaper* In our fortnightly celebrity investment and wealth round-up, Serena and Venus Williams back a social investing start-up and Miley Cyrus cashes in on the recent global property boom.

OSSAA Releases Name, Image, Likeness Guidelines for High School Student Athletes *October 5, 2022 via KFOT Oklahoma City News* The Oklahoma Secondary School Activities Association (OSSAA) has released its name, image and likeness (NIL) guidelines for high school student athletes following last year's revision of the state's Uniform Athlete Agents Act.

Sports **Warhol-Prince Supreme Court Case May Transform Sports Marketing** *October 12, 2022 via Sportico (subscription may be required)* A case before the U.S. Supreme Court about a restyled image of Prince could have profound consequences for photographs of athletes and teams.

LIV Golf Denied Ranking Points as Lawsuit Claims Come to Life *October 6, 2022 via Sportico (subscription may be required)* In a move with ramifications for the ongoing antitrust litigation between LIV Golf and the PGA Tour, the Official World Golf Ranking announced it will not award points to upcoming LIV events.

MLB Generates Another Set of Consumption Records for MLB.TV *October 6, 2022 via Sport Business (subscription may be required)* Adoption continues to grow for league's out-of-market streaming service.

Music Biz **Twitter Suspends Kanye West Account For Anti-Semitic Comment** *October 10, 2022 via The Street Journal* This weekend, after Elon Musk, the C.E.O. of SpaceX and Tesla, entered the center of a content moderation issue started by Kanye West, now known as Ye, Elon Musk's unsettling, immature vision for Twitter was on full show.

Music Creators North America Welcomes Increased Transparency on Streaming Rate Deal *October 10, 2022 via Complete Music Update* The Music Creators North America organization has welcomed the decision by the U.S. National Music Publishers

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Association and Digital Media Association.

Brookfield Bets \$2 Billion on Music in Deal With Primary Wave *October 6, 2022 via Wall Street Journal (subscription may be required)* Brookfield Asset Management Inc. is joining with independent publisher Primary Wave Music in a \$2 billion deal to invest in music copyrights, the companies said.

Film & TV **'Netflix, Google, Apple' – How Upcoming TV deal Could Drastically Impact Crawley Town, Sheffield United, Ipswich Town, Portsmouth and all EFL Clubs** *October 12, 2022 via Hastings Observer* Lifting the Saturday 3pm blackout for Crawley Town and the rest of the English Football League is an option ahead of the sale of its next television and media rights.

Why Amazon is a Contender to Land NBA Media Rights *October 11, 2022 via Advertising Age* Amazon is off to a strong start with the NFL's "Thursday Night Football."

Saudi-Backed LIV Golf Searches for U.S. Broadcaster *October 7, 2022 via Financial Times* A new golf league that is funded by Saudi Arabia is attempting to find a top-tier broadcaster to air its games in the U.S. as it tries to disrupt the sport's established tour.

Non-Fungible Tokens (NFTs) **Damien Hirst Just Burned 1,000 of His Paintings and Will Soon Burn Thousands More** *October 12, 2022 via Tech News Tube* British artist Damien Hirst is among the many art-world giants who have set fire to their work, having burned 1,000 of his artworks Tuesday.

What Makes an NFT Valuable? *October 12, 2022 via Cryptopolitan* When it comes to investing in digital assets, there's no question that non-fungible tokens (NFTs) are gaining in popularity.

CNN In Hot Water With Investors After Canceling Its Weird NFT Project *October 12, 2022 via Futurism* CNN was an early corporate adopter of non-fungible tokens (NFTs) — and now, in an on-the-nose reversal, has joined the many that have dropped their crypto-fied projects as the market continues its months-long slump.

Grammy-Nominated DJ Steve Aoki Told Us He's Made More Money From NFTs Than Royalties. Here's How He Says He's Profited \$10 Million — and How Web3 Can Disrupt the Multi-Billion-Dollar Music Industry *October 11, 2022 via Markets Insider* Steve Aoki, one of the best-known DJs in the world, told Insider how he "dived head first" into Web3.