

## Sports & Entertainment Spotlight

# NFL Surprises, Pickleball Peaks, and Aoki's Whopper: This Week in Sports & Entertainment

By Joshua Bloomgarden on 9.15.23 | Posted in Sports & Entertainment Spotlight

Week one of the NFL season is in the books, leaving many teams, players and fans (whether it be New York Giants fans such as myself bemoaning a Sunday night beat down at the hands of the Dallas Cowboys, or Los Angeles Chargers fans frightened by the experience of sitting in the stands next to humanoid robots) trying to tear pages out. The week was also riddled with injuries—not all that surprising in the sport of football. However, New York Jets quarterback Aaron Rodgers' tearing his Achilles tendon was entirely unexpected particularly after an offseason of hype (chronicled on HBO's "Hard Knocks") and Super Bowl aspirations. Brands, sponsors and media companies who staked significant sums on the Jets bandwagon certainly got their money's worth with the Jets and Buffalo Bills' matchup on Monday Night Football earning the highest ratings for the program in history, but whether that value will hold over the course of the NFL season seems like a riskier proposition. Going forward, it's fair to wonder whether in negotiations, companies will be more attuned to the risk that a star player's injury could end up squandering their investments. After all, Inter Miami Football (Soccer) Club without Messi is messy. And the Jets without Rodgers may well be stuck at the gate.

- The two major pickleball leagues merge in a deal valued at \$50 million, signaling yet again that pickleball is ready for brinetime.
- Speaking of pickles, DJ Steve Aoki is the latest recording artist to wade into the fast food industry, joining forces with Burger King to create a "Whopper" track. When Aoki asked for creative control, Burger King said "have it your way."
- Tom Brady joins Delta Airlines as a strategic adviser for its workforce. Amongst Brady's likely tips: have multiple retirement parties and whatever you do, don't eat bread.

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### Endorsement Deals, Sponsorships & Investments

[Tom Brady joins Delta Air Lines as strategic adviser in first-of-its-kind multiyear partnership](#)

September 14, 2023 via Scoop.it

**SEC says NFTs sold by Mila Kunis's 'Stoner Cats'—a web series featuring Ashton Kutcher and Jane Fonda—are unregistered securities**

September 13, 2023 via Fortune Magazine

**Gauff's vast sponsorship rolodex likely to swell following U.S. Open win**

September 12, 2023 via Sports Business Journal

**Man United Signs Record Jersey Deal With Qualcomm's Snapdragon Brand**

September 12, 2023 via Sportico

**Lawsuit Alleges Shaquille O'Neal Received Nearly \$750K From FTX**

September 11, 2023 via Yahoo Finance

**James Dolan partners with rival to seek sponsorship cash for MSG empire — including Sphere in Las Vegas**

September 7, 2023 via New York Post

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## Sports

**Revenue-sharing with major college football players seems 'inevitable'**

September 13, 2023 via Honolulu Star Advisor

**Major League Pickleball and PPA Tour Unite With \$50M Backing**

September 13, 2023 via Front Office Sports

**WWE and UFC officially merge in \$21.4-billion deal**

September 12, 2023 via Los Angeles Times

**ESPN Draws Up 'Toy Story' Broadcast of Falcons-Jaguars Game**

September 11, 2023 via Sportico

**The 'Golden Age' of Sports Docs Has Become a Content Onslaught**

September 12, 2023 via Sportico

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**Music Biz**

**The incredible resilience of the music industry**

September 8, 2023 via *Financial Times*

**Burger King teams with D.J. Steve Aoki for VMA 'Whopper' track**

September 8, 2023 via *Nation's Restaurant News*

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**Film & TV**

**Netflix Acquires Rights to Israeli Border Police Series Starring Singer Shlomi Shabat**

September 12, 2023 via *Algemeiner News*

**Greenwich Entertainment Acquires NA Rights To 'Sorry/Not Sorry,' Doc About Louis C.K. Sexual Misconduct Scandal – Toronto**

September 11, 2023 via *Deadline*

**Ryan Reynolds' Streamer to Feature WNBA's Colson and Plaisance**

September 10, 2023 via *Sportico*