

## Sports & Entertainment Spotlight

# Comebacks, Courts & Collabs: A Wild Week in Sports & Entertainment

By Joshua Bloomgarden on 5.9.25 | Posted in Sports & Entertainment Spotlight

Welcome back to the Spotlight! While I appreciate your valiant efforts in coming back to this space, that comeback pales in comparison to the two comebacks the underdog New York Knicks have had against the defending NBA Champion Boston Celtics – somehow clawing back from 20 point deficits in consecutive games to seize a 2-0 lead in the 2<sup>nd</sup> round of the NBA Playoffs. The games have been nothing short of captivating, yet immensely trying. What started out with questions in my mind about how the Knicks could possibly survive this series has been replaced by questions about whether I can survive the ups and downs of this series. Regardless, these NBA Playoffs have provided some of the most compelling moments in recent memory—the TV ratings have certainly backed up that assertion. So, for all the concerns about who will be the stewards of the league now that LeBron James is reaching the end of his career, it's clear that the present and the future are bright as ever, with chances for athletes to build their own brands and author their own success stories. Speaking of comebacks, I'll be out recharging next week but will return the week of 5/19—hopefully you will do the same.

- Country music star Chris Stapleton's Tennessee whiskey brand, "Traveller" becomes the first official whiskey of Major League Baseball. Given the name, it's unlikely that the NBA will follow suit.
- Nine-time NBA All-Star guard Russell Westbrook comes aboard as a founder of Eazewell, a startup company that uses artificial intelligence to ease grieving loved ones' burdens with funeral planning. Humanity will have dodged a bullet if artificial intelligence sticks only to *that* sense of the words "funeral planning..."
- Rihanna's multibillion dollar beauty brand Fenty Beauty, becomes the latest such brand to secure sponsorship in the WNBA, partnering with the defending WNBA Champions New York Liberty. As part of the sponsorship, the brand's logos will be included on the team's pregame warm-up apparel, while other in-game activations are contemplated. No word on whether the team will be creating a co-branded umbrella...ella...ella

For inquiries and/or unabashed compliments, please feel free to contact me at [josh.bloomgarden@foster.com](mailto:josh.bloomgarden@foster.com) or add me on LinkedIn.

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#### Endorsement Deals, Sponsorships & Investments

##### [Judge Dismisses Most Charges Against FTX's Celebrity Boosters](#)

May 8, 2025 via *Slash Dot*

##### [Traveller Whiskey becomes the first official whiskey of MLB](#)

May 8, 2025 via *MLB*

##### [Rihanna's Fenty Signs First WNBA Team Deal With New York Liberty](#)

May 7, 2025 via *AdWeek*

##### [NBA star Russell Westbrook launches AI-enabled funeral planning startup](#)

May 7, 2025 via *NBC 10 Philadelphia*

##### [Wells Fargo Center will become the Xfinity Mobile Arena on Sept. 1 after new naming rights deal](#)

May 6, 2025 via *LancasterOnlin*

##### [Unrivald Sports Gets \\$120M From Dick's for Youth Buildout](#)

May 6, 2025 via *Sportico*

##### [2025 Met Gala Signals The Rise Of Sports In High Fashion](#)

May 5, 2025 via *Forbes*

##### [Rory McIlroy's new deal with asset management firm could lead to €1bn of sports investments](#)

May 4, 2025 via *Irish Independent*

##### [Take-Two Shares Drop on GTA's 'Perfect Track Record of Delays'](#)

May 2, 2025 via *Sportico*

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#### Sports

##### [NCAA, Plaintiffs Revise Roster Limits to Save House Settlement](#)

May 7, 2025 via *Sportico*

##### [As NIL comes to high school sports, its impact is being hotly debated](#)

May 7, 2025 via *Baltimore Sun*

**Big Ten athletic director teases potential addition of women's flag football**

May 6, 2025 via *SB Nation*

**Soccer Fans Face U.S. Visa Worries as World Cup Tickets Go on Sale**

May 6, 2025 via *Sportico*

**How NIL is widening the basketball gap between Power Five schools and mid-majors**

May 4, 2025 via *The Statesman*

**With NFL support, NCAA interest and Olympics ahead, a D3 league offers a glimpse into the future of women's flag football**

May 3, 2025 via *SB Nation*

**Trump considering executive order to regulate NIL after meeting with Nick Saban: report**

May 2, 2025 via *Fox News*

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**Music Biz**

**Concord Theatricals Acquires Major Competitor Broadway Licensing Global**

May 8, 2025 via *Deadline*

**Mainstream & Margins: Why music royalties are still broken — and what might fix them**

May 7, 2025 via *Stanford Daily*

**Signed: Andrea Bocelli Inks 5-Year Deal With AEG Presents, Mark Ambor Belongs With Capitol**

May 6, 2025 via *Billboard*

**A&R admin platform Connex launches with Universal Music**

May 3, 2025 via *Music Week*

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**Film & TV**

**NBA TV Ratings Surge**

May 6, 2025 via *Front Office Sports*

**NBA on NBC will use AI to bring back original promo voice Jim Fagan**

May 6, 2025 via *Awful Announcing*

**Aspiring screenwriters struggle to break into shrinking industry. 'It shouldn't be this hard'**

May 5, 2025 via *Coastline Pilot News*

**Trump's 100 Percent Tariff on Movies: 8 Key Questions the Industry Is Now Pondering and Dreading**

*May 5, 2025 via HollywoodReporter*

**Belichick's CBS Circus Shows Why Celebs Seek Interview Contracts**

*May 2, 2025 via Sportico*