

Sports & Entertainment Beat

Sports & Entertainment Spotlight: The Banning of Olympic-Hopeful Sha'Carri Richardson Sparks Discussion Regarding Marijuana Policies

By Joshua Bloomgarden on 7.8.21 | Posted in Sports & Entertainment Spotlight

Laws — like people — are imperfect. They can be slow to adapt to evolving societal norms, and worse still, their application can yield unjust outcomes. Indeed, look no further than this past week's [developments involving Olympic-hopeful Track & Field athlete, Sha'Carri Richardson](#). Almost as quickly as Richardson could sprint, we saw her go from Gold Medal favorite to spectator after a drug test administered (after her first place finish in her U.S. Olympic trials) revealed that she had used marijuana, a substance banned by the U.S. Anti-Doping Agency and still officially illegal at the federal level. Never mind the facts that first, marijuana was legal in Oregon (the state in which she had used the drug) and a substantial plurality of states; second, she had used the drug as a means of coping with the trauma of learning of her biological mother's abrupt death; and lastly, the drug is not performance-enhancing. To the U.S. Track & Field team, the rules are the rules. Perhaps Richardson's plight will spur policy change — much like the years of collegiate athletes being declared ineligible for having received compensation, which have led to overdue name, image and likeness (NIL) reforms — but you cannot help but feel for Richardson for all she has lost, personally and financially. I know I will be pulling for her when her chance at Olympic glory hopefully comes back around in 2024 (approximately 150 *Spotlights*) from now.

With that, here's what else is making waves this week:

- With Portugal knocked out of the UEFA European Championship tournament, footballer Cristiano Ronaldo has plenty of time to take to Instagram, where a single post can “net” him a cool \$1.6 million. For those keeping track, that is about \$1.6 million more than my Instagram posts.
- On the heels of a settlement with music industry players for alleged copyright infringement, popular video game metaverse platform Roblox is trying to play the game legally by cutting a music licensing deal with Sony that should expand marketing potential for its artists.

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- A start-up NFT platform backed by “Shark Tank” veterans Mark Cuban and Ashton Kutcher attracted investments of \$13 million in its latest financing round. For his part, Mr. Wonderful appears to have sat this round out.
- One week after “NIL Day” in college sports, and we’ve already seen significant endorsement deal activity — from a [\\$2 million dollar deal to Hercy Miller](#) (rapper Master P’s son), to [one Miami-area business offering \\$6,000 deals to every player on the University of Miami Football Team](#). More to come.

As a friendly reminder, if there are topics you’d like to see featured, please feel free to contact me at josh.bloomgarden@foster.com.

Endorsement Deals, Sponsorships & Investments

[Constellation Buys Stake in Breaking Bad Stars’ Dos Hombres Mezcal](#)

July 6, 2021 via Forbes – Business (subscription may be required)

Bryan Cranston and Aaron Paul of Breaking Bad, the runaway TV hit that aired for five years until 2013, had real chemistry — both on screen and off. The two actors are now partners in Dos Hombres, a new brand of mezcal, a spirit distilled from the agave plant.

[‘There Is No Room for Fakeness and Lies and Manipulation’: Shawn Mendes and Nicholas Reichenbach Reveal What It Takes for a Business Partnership to Succeed](#)

July 1, 2021 via Entrepreneur Magazine

Creating celebrity partnerships is a fine art, and succeeding requires a careful pairing on both the celebrity and the brand. For some brands, perfecting this recipe means reaching out to celebrities and convincing them that your business aligns with their values. Canadian water brand Flow, on the other hand, uses a strategy where the celebrity comes to that conclusion by themselves.

[Cristiano Ronaldo Shoots to Top of Instagram Rich List](#)

June 30, 2021 via Financial Gazette (Zimbabwe)

Cristiano Ronaldo has shot to the top of Instagram’s annual rich list of celebrities who can charge the most for a sponsored post, with the footballer able to command as much as \$1.6 million (£1.2 million) to endorse a product on social media.

Film & TV

Tech Group in 'Significant' Development Deal With Asian Partner

July 5, 2021 via Tech Register - Top Stories

Nanoco Group has signed a development agreement for a project with a “very significant” Asian chemical company. The business, a University of Manchester spin-out developing materials used in the manufacture of monitors and TV screens, declined to divulge the value of the deal, but said, if successful, would increase its revenue expectations for fiscal year 2021 by approximately 10 percent, and a similar amount for 2022.

What Company Will Land a Stake in NFL Media Business?

June 30, 2021 via NY Business Journal- News

The National Football League will approach Disney, Fox, NBC and ViacomCBS about taking a stake in the league’s media business, which includes everything from NFL Network and NFL RedZone to digital platforms and rights to events including the draft and combined.

ViacomCBS International Studios and AGC Television Sign Multi-Year First Look Deal For Spanish-Language Content

June 30, 2021 via Forbes – Business (subscription may be required)

ViacomCBS International Studios (VIS), a unit of ViacomCBS, and AGC Television, the TV division of Stuart Ford's AGC Studios have signed a two-year first look deal for Spanish-language content.

Janine Nabers Strikes Overall Deal With Amazon, Sets Hacking Drama 'Syd' At Streamer

June 30, 2021 via Deadline - Hollywood Breaking News

Janine Nabers, who has written on HBO’s Watchmen and Netflix’s Away, has signed an overall deal with Amazon Studios. The playwright and television writer has also set up her first project in development, a tech drama called “Syd.”

Music Biz

Roblox Deal With Sony Will Create (legal) In-game Music Experiences

July 6, 2021 via Yahoo Finance - Top Stories

Roblox is rushing to strike official music deals in the wake of a \$200 million lawsuit over alleged copyright violations. TechCrunch reports that Roblox has unveiled a team-up with Sony Music that will bring more of the label's artists to the game platform.

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Apple Quickly Settles Copyright Infringement Lawsuit Over 'Amazing Stories'

July 2, 2021 via Digital Music News

Apple has settled the copyright infringement lawsuit that Oakland-based music-industry professional Darrell Jackson filed against it and other defendants about 14 months ago, over the use of a song entitled "Side Show" in the Apple TV+ anthology series Amazing Stories.

RCN Fails to Show Injury Against Music Record Labels for Emails

July 1, 2021 via Bloomberg Law - News Top Stories (subscription may be required)

Internet service provider RCN Telecom Services LLC lost its bid against a group of major record labels and a copyright enforcement agency after it failed to show an economic injury for being flooded with emails about potential copyright infringement by RCN subscribers.

Non-Fungible Tokens (NFTs)

How NFTs Work

July 6, 2021 via Bloomberg - Top Stories

Bloomberg's Eddie van der Walt explains non-fungible tokens.

A Tribe Called Quest Says They Never Authorized an NFT of Their Catalog — Slams Billboard, Royalty Exchange

July 5, 2021 via Digital Music News

A Tribe Called Quest DJ and producer Ali Shaheed Muhammad has pushed back against reports that the hip-hop group auctioned off a 1.5 percent recorded stake in its first five albums as an NFT, taking aim at both Royalty Exchange and Billboard in a fiery message.

Twitter Gave Away 140 Special Non-Fungible Tokens for Free for Some Reason

July 2, 2021 via Financial Express

Days after CEO Jack Dorsey auctioned his first tweet off as a special NFT for a hefty amount, Twitter has given away as many as 140 NFTs for free for some curious reason. The microblogging website did not host any auction and simply chose to give away the NFTs.

Mark Cuban and Ashton Kutcher Backed NFT Marketplace Mintable Secures \$13 Million Funding

July 2, 2021 via Business Leader

Mintable, a next-generation NFT minting platform and marketplace, announced the close of its oversubscribed series A funding round at \$13 million.

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Twitter Is Giving Away 140 Free NFTs to Followers — and They're Not Available Any Other Way

July 1, 2021 via Business Insider - India (businessinsider.in)

Twitter is giving away 140 NFTs for free to its followers in a giveaway campaign launched on June 30. According to Rarible, there are seven unique NFTs in editions of 20 up for grabs which include 'The Reply Guy', various renditions of the Twitter logo, 'Vitamin T' and others.

Pop Star Katy Perry Is Launching NFTs for Her Fans Through a Blockchain-based Video Streaming Platform

July 1, 2021 via Business Insider- The Money Game (businessinsider.com)

Singer Katy Perry said on Wednesday (June 30) she will offer NFTs with Theta Labs. She will have a minority share in Theta Labs via her talent agency, Creative Artists Agency.

Right of Publicity

University of South Dakota Volleyballer First to Sign Sponsorship Deal

July 5, 2021 via Uniontown Herald Standard

A University of South Dakota volleyball player has become the first college athlete in the state to sign a sponsorship deal after the NCAA cleared the way for college athletes to make money off their names and likenesses.

Here Are Some of the Ways NCAA athletes Are Embracing the New World of the 'NIL' Deal

July 4, 2021 via CNN - U.S. News

Suddenly allowed to profit from their name, image and likeness (or NIL), college athletes are unleashing a barrage of endorsement deal announcements. Potentially 460,000 NCAA student-athletes can now sign sponsorship deals.

North Carolina Governor Issues Executive Order on NIL

July 2, 2021 via Newsbinding - Top Stories

North Carolina Governor Roy Cooper has issued an executive order allowing college athletes to earn money off the use of their names, images and likenesses.

College Athletes Start Cashing In as New Rules 'Fundamentally Change' Landscape

July 2, 2021 via Business Google News

Student-athletes in various states are already profiting from their name, image, and likeness (NIL) after new state and national rules marked a massive shift in college sports.

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NCAA Athletes Have a New Tool to Make Cash: 'As easy as booking a trip on Expedia'

July 2, 2021 via Yahoo Finance - Top Stories

Before July 1, no NCAA athlete could be paid to endorse a product. Now college students' chance at thousands of dollars is just a click away.

These College Athletes Could Make Millions Now That a Recent NCAA Ruling Allows Them to Make Money Off Their Name and Likeness for the First Time

July 2, 2021 via Business Insider- The Money Game

As of July 1, over 400,000 college athletes can monetize their name, image, and likeness. The historic NCAA decision rescinds a rule that barred athletes from accepting sponsorship deals. Boost Mobile, Unilever and PetSmart are entering the "entrepreneurial revolution for college sports."

These Athletes Already Profiting From NCAA Rule Change

July 1, 2021 via New York Post - NYPD Blotter

At midnight, the deals began. By the morning, more were completed, and they continued into the evening. The first day of the name, image and likeness era was an eventful one for college athletes, who were finally able to profit after the NCAA.

NCAA Ruling Means EA Sports Can Pay Real Players to Be in College Football Game

July 1, 2021 via Business Google News

For college football fans wondering what the NCAA's new policy on athlete endorsements means for a video game series, the answer is — well, nothing specific yet.

NIL Tracker: Which College Athletes Are Signing Endorsement Deals?

July 1, 2021 via Sporting News - NCAA Football

The name, image and likeness era is here. For the first time, student-athletes are permitted to profit through NIL endorsement deals. The NCAA is permitting college athletes in states without NIL legislation to engage in NIL deals, too. Which student-athletes are taking advantage of early NIL deals? Sporting News takes a closer look.

The NCAA Has Opened the Door for College Athletes to Be Paid Through Endorsements, and Some Startups Have Already Helped Athletes Land Deals

July 1, 2021 via Business Insider - Australia

A handful of athletes have already signed lucrative endorsement deals on the first day of the policy going into effect.

NCAA Lifts Athlete Endorsement Rules as States Scramble to Court Players

June 30, 2021 via Politico - Top Stories

New laws in several states, including Alabama, Connecticut and Texas, take effect July 1 that will allow students to sign sponsorship deals and make money off their name and image.