

Sports & Entertainment Beat

Sports & Entertainment Spotlight: Celebrity-Backed Cannabis Brands Show Varying Degrees of Success, and the NFL and St. Louis, Missouri Settled Their Four Yearlong Lawsuit

By Joshua Bloomgarden on 12.3.21 | Posted in Sports & Entertainment Spotlight

Welcome back to the "Spotlight"! After taking a week long hiatus for Thanksgiving, I feel like a modern day Rip Van Winkle awaking from a tryptophan-induced coma to find myself in a world in which "All I Want for Christmas" by Mariah Carey is again reigning as a chart-topper, NFL telecasts increasingly featuring the fan-favorite 'steam-rising-from-the-300 pound lineman's head' shots, and my DVR starts getting populated with schmaltzy holiday movies. It's true, the holiday season and cold weather is upon us, so in the spirit of the season of giving, I invite you all to get cozy and take in the very first "Spotlight" of the very last month of 2021...

- *Celebrity-backed cannabis brands are showing varying degrees of success. One possible trend to look for as cannabis continues its path of de-stigmatization and comes into the mainstream: consumers may demonstrate stronger celebrity brand affinity. Or they may forget that celebrity brand exists altogether.*
 - *The NFL and St. Louis, Missouri settled their four yearlong lawsuit over the relocation of the Rams from St. Louis to Los Angeles for a whopping \$790 million. That alone is news, but the fine print in the settlement agreement gives the lawyers who represented St. Louis at least 35 percent of that amount. The sound you just heard was a horde of lawyers encouraging their home teams to go away.*
 - *Dwayne Johnson, Ryan Reynolds and Gal Gadot's action-comedy film, "Red Notice" makes viewership history. One wonders how they would have done had they gone with my suggested title, "Two Guys, a Girl and an Interpol Chase."*
 - *A testament to the fever pitch surrounding them, "NFT" has been crowned Collins dictionary's 2021 word of the year. The runner-up? 2020's unofficial winner: "WTF."*
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Endorsement Deals, Sponsorships & Investments

INFLCR Expands NIL Menu as Oklahoma, Florida Sign Up for Athlete Deals

November 30, 2021 via Sportico – Business (subscription may be required)

After the first few months of NIL, a number of athlete marketing companies have begun to adjust their offerings as the market develops. Software company INFLCR, for example, is introducing a product it says will double its revenue coming from schools that sign on.

Celebrities Are Endorsing Cryptocurrency. Hear Why One Actor is Calling Them Out

November 30, 2021 via CNN Top Stories

While A-list celebrities like Kim Kardashian and Matt Damon are being paid to promote crypto, one actor is publicly bucking the trend.

Crypto, Blockchain Provide Sport Sponsorship's Greatest Growth Opportunity, Not Sports Betting

November 30, 2021 via Sportico – Business (subscription may be required)

Come Christmas Day, the venue now known as Staples Center will be renamed Crypto.com Arena after the cryptocurrency and payment platform bought the naming rights to the longtime home of the Los Angeles Lakers, Kings, Sparks and (for now) Clippers for more than \$700 million.

UConn's Paige Bueckers Signs Endorsement Deal With Gatorade in Her Latest NIL Activity

November 29, 2021 via Greenwich Time Insider

Just four games into her sophomore season and Paige Bueckers continues to make history both on and off the court. Bueckers became the first college athlete to sign an endorsement deal with Gatorade, as announced by the company on Monday, November 29.

College Hunks Hauling Junk and Moving® Makes Historic Move, Sponsors Howard University Men's Basketball

November 29, 2021 via PR Newswire

College HUNKS Hauling Junk and Moving®, a national industry leader in moving and junk-removal, recently signed a historic endorsement deal with the Howard University Men's Basketball players.

Do Celebrity Weed Brands Sell?

November 28, 2021 via Benzinga

While some industry analysts agreed that a celebrity can provide a major boost to a brand, others in and around the industry are more skeptical about celebrity pot brands.

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How Cal and Stanford Athletes Are Raking in NIL Deals Without Superstar Status

November 26, 2021 via San Francisco Chronicle

Cal freshman Mia Mastrov felt overwhelmed. In addition to all the academic and athletic demands required of a basketball player at one of the nation's most prestigious universities, she was navigating numerous emails and social media messages from potential sponsors.

Which UMD Athletes Are Making The Most From Sponsorship Deals? It's Not Who You Might Expect

November 25, 2021 via Biz Journal - Accounting News

Most people assumed star football and basketball players would rake in the most money when the NCAA began allowing student athletes to profit off their name, image and likeness. That hasn't been the case at the University of Maryland, College Park, so far, according to Athletics Director Damon Evans.

Mark Ironside Is Helping Current Iowa Wrestlers With NIL Two Decades After His Own Career

November 24, 2021 via Des Moines Register - All News

Mark Ironside is busy at work inside his Iowa Style Apparel store here on the southwest side of town on a recent Friday morning. He's excited for many things now that wrestling season is back, but two things stick out.

Sports

MLB Lockout: Everything to Know About Baseball's First Work Stoppage Since 1994-95

December 2, 2021 via CBS Sports

At 11:59 p.m. ET on Wednesday, December 1, the collective bargaining agreement (CBA) -- the negotiated accord that governs almost every aspect of the working relationship between Major League Baseball players and team owners -- expired.

MMA Groups Battle in Court as Squared Circle Gives Way to Triangle

November 30, 2021 via Sportico – Law (subscription may be required)

You know the first rule: You don't talk about Fight Club. Yet a new federal lawsuit is forcing a conversation about fight club rings — namely, whether their unique designs are protected under intellectual property law.

NFL, St. Louis Agree to \$790 Million Settlement for Rams Relo Suit

November 24, 2021 via Sportico – Law (subscription may be required)

The four-year litigation between the NFL and St. Louis over the Rams' relocation is near

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resolution. The St. Louis Dispatch reported on Wednesday, November 24, that the parties have agreed to a \$790 million settlement following a mediation session.

UFC Posts Record Year to Date as Business Hits On All Cylinders

November 24, 2021 via Sportico – Business (subscription may be required)

Endeavor Group Holdings recently posted Q3 2021 financial results, reporting a profitable quarter that outpaced Wall Street expectations.

NBA's Enes Kanter Calls for 2022 Olympics To Skip China's 'Dictatorship': 'It Should Be Morals Over Money'

November 23, 2021 via Fox News - Latest News

NBA star Enes Kanter, who has spoken out many times in support of global human rights causes, called on the International Olympic Committee to vacate its plan to hold the 2022 Olympiad in Beijing, especially after the brief disappearance of Chinese tennis player Peng Shuai.

Film & TV

Disney Elects Susan Arnold as Board Chairman, Replacing Robert Iger

December 1, 2021 via The Wall Street Journal (subscription may be required)

Walt Disney Co.'s board of directors has elected Susan Arnold its new chairman, replacing Robert Iger, the longtime chief executive who is set to depart from the company later this month.

"Red Notice" Is Netflix's Biggest Movie of All Time, Says The Rock, Rivaling Avengers: Endgame's Opening Viewership

November 28, 2021 via Polygon

According to data provided by Netflix, Red Notice fever is sweeping the globe. The number one movie in 93 countries, from Bahrain to Bangladesh, Israel to Indonesia, Poland to Peru, Spain to Sweden, the United States to Uruguay, Venezuela to Vietnam, and many more, viewers poured in 129,100,000 hours into watching stars Dwayne "The Rock" Johnson, Ryan Reynolds, and Gal Gadot during the week of November 15 alone.

UK - Farrukh Dhondy and Bite-Sized Books Announce Publishing, TV & Film Agreement

November 24, 2021 via MENAFN - Top Stories

Acclaimed novelist, television executive and screen writer Farrukh Dhondy has signed publishing company, Bite-Sized Books to publish his latest book: Hawk and Hyena – What Ever Happened to The Serpent, and to commercialize the TV and film rights.

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Music Biz

Mötley Crüe Sell Entire Recorded Music Catalog to BMG

November 30, 2021 via Register Citizen

In the music industry, it's exceedingly common for artists to yearn for ownership over their original master recordings, but Mötley Crüe have found themselves in the enviable position of doing the opposite: The hair metal legends have inked a new deal to sell their entire recorded music catalog.

Adele Is No. 1 With a Huge Week, but Without a Million in Sales

November 29, 2021 via New York Times - All Sections

The music business is full of gigantic numbers. Investors are pouring billions of dollars into funds to buy up song copyrights. Licensing clearinghouses like ASCAP and BMI process trillions of plays each year to collect and pay royalties.

Adele Lands Huge £1 Million Amazon Christmas Deal – Amid Speculation Her Agent Boyfriend Could Manage Her

November 27, 2021 via Newsbinding - Top Stories

All-conquering Adele lands huge £1 million Amazon Christmas advert deal – amid speculation her American super-agent boyfriend could step in to help manage her.

Non-Fungible Tokens (NFTs)

Doconchain Announces New Celebrity NFT Marketplace Called 'The Famous'

November 26, 2021 via MarketWatch - All Company Press Releases News & Commentary

Doconchain announces a brand new entertainment-themed NFT collection in collaboration with long-standing partners.

Loud Market – the First Music NFT Marketplace

November 26, 2021 via Yahoo Finance - Top Stories

Loud Market Ltd has launched the world's first Music NFT marketplace for the buying and selling of music as crypto assets, on the 24th of November.

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Steve Aoki Teams Up With The Untamed Producer NSMG to Kick Off Their NFT Collection Frenzy

November 25, 2021 via Atlanta New Online

Steve Aoki, a Grammy nominated musician, NFT artist, and collector has recently teamed up with "The Untamed," a popular Chinese murder mystery drama. Together they have established a special NFT vault called The Steve Aoki Untamed Vault (#AokixTheUntamed).

NFT Wins Collins Dictionary's Word of the Year Award

November 24, 2021 via Crypto Briefing

Collins Dictionary has acknowledged the recent NFT boom in its 2021 Word of the Year list.