

Sports & Entertainment Beat

Sports & Entertainment Spotlight: Rihanna's Savage X Fenty Lingerie Brand is Reportedly on the Verge of a \$3 Billion IPO, and TikTok Debuts its Streaming Service SoundOn

By Joshua Bloomgarden on 3.17.22 | Posted in Sports & Entertainment Spotlight

This past week, I have realized my place is still on the blogosphere and not in the stands. That time will come. But it's not now.

I love my readers, and I love my supportive family. Without them, none of this is possible.

I'm coming back for my second year of the "Sports & Entertainment Spotlight." We have unfinished business.

LFG (as in Law: Foster Garvey—what else?!)

That's right folks, like Tom Brady, I'm back for another year (and that's pretty much where all Josh Bloomgarden/Tom Brady commonalities end). In any event, I'm feeling especially excited this time of year with Spring right around the corner, and March Madness in full swing. This year, I have a vested interest not only in the theatrics of the games (my brackets are probably being busted as you read this), but also in seeing how, for the first time, the name, image and likeness (NIL) rights of basketball players participating in the Women's and Men's basketball tournaments are leveraged in advertising and marketing opportunities throughout the tournaments. Undoubtedly, we will see buzzer beating highlights minted as non-fungible tokens (NFTs) and tournament heroes not only becoming household names and but collecting checks in the process.

Speaking of "madness," I would be remiss not to mention what seems like a daily march of plaintiffs to the courts to claim copyright ownership in chart-topping songs. (Bonus points to you if you found all the word play in that last sentence). Indeed, ever since the Marvin Gaye Estate's controversial "Blurred Lines" copyright infringement victory against Robin Thicke and Pharrell Williams (that many viewed as a misapplication of legal analysis that should have been focused on whether a melody was copied, rather than copying of a harmonic feel or rhythm of a song), songwriters and artists have been emboldened to try to get their share of the pie (and some publicity in the process). Just this past week, no sooner did Katy Perry prevail in her

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copyright suit, but Dua Lipa now finds herself in the middle of a copyright brouhaha, joining Ed Sheeran, Sam Smith and other top singers/songwriters – all for the most part against lesser-known artists or songwriters whose songs become publicized through their litigation. Perhaps out of these cases, there will come either judicial or legislative guidance that makes songwriters a little more self-assured that their contributions will not land them in court. Until then, these plaintiffs will continue to rack up streams (and legal fees) while spending a few minutes in the “Spotlight.”

Which reminds me, here’s what else made this week’s "Spotlight."

- Just in time to celebrate Women’s History Month, Rihanna continues to assert herself as an entrepreneurial force, with her Savage X Fenty lingerie brand reportedly on the verge of a \$3 billion IPO. Go ahead and “Take a Bow.”
- Social media platform (and unrelenting reminder that I am aging) TikTok debuts its streaming service SoundOn, enabling artists to upload and monetize music through the service.
- Not to be outdone, Instagram will soon debut NFTs on its platform — potentially enabling users to mint their own NFTs. So if anyone is in the market for NFTs featuring a darling Cavalier King Charles Spaniel, please contact me for details.

Endorsement Deals, Sponsorships & Investments

Top Brazil Soccer Club Inks With Sportfive to Expand U.S. Fan Base

March 15, 2022 via Sportico - Business (subscription may be required)

Brazilian soccer club Flamengo and global sports marketing agency Sportfive have announced a partnership to expand Flamengo’s market presence internationally, focusing on the North American market.

Celebrity net worth: Jennifer Lopez joins Richard Branson’s Virgin Voyages

March 14, 2022 via National Newspaper

Jennifer Lopez already wears many hats — as an actor, a singer and entrepreneur. But now, she has signed an agreement to take on a double role as an investor and chief entertainment and lifestyle officer for Virgin Voyages, the cruise line founded by British billionaire Richard Branson.

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Rihanna's Savage X Fenty eyes \$3B IPO, expanding empire, female entrepreneur status

March 11, 2022 via Yahoo Finance

Rihanna's lingerie company Savage X Fenty is reportedly eyeing an IPO that would value it at a whopping \$3 billion, according to Bloomberg, expanding her own empire and further entrenching her status among other female entrepreneurs.

Boston's ISlide jumps into college endorsement deals with both feet

March 10, 2022 via Biz Journal - Education

As the head of the Boston footwear company ISlide, Justin Kittredge has been making the rounds to college campuses to sign up a range of student athletes to new endorsement deals.

Simply Better Brands' No B.S. Skincare Brand Announces Sponsorship of UFC Champion Julianna Peña

March 10, 2022 via GlobeNewswire

Simply Better Brands Corp. (the "Company" or Simply Better Brands") is pleased to announce a sponsorship agreement and collaboration between Simply Better Brand's subsidiary, No B.S. Life, LLC ("No B.S. Skincare" or "No B.S.") and UFC Champion Julianna Peña.

College HUNKS Hauling Junk and Moving® Sponsors Stony Brook Men's Basketball Team

March 10, 2022 via 24-7 Press Release

College HUNKS Hauling Junk and Moving®, an industry leader in stress-free solutions for moving and junk-hauling needs, recently signed an endorsement deal with the Stony Brook Men's Basketball team.

Gonzaga's Drew Timme signs NIL deal with Dollar Shave Club

March 9, 2022 via Spokesman (subscription may be required)

Gonzaga's star forward signs name, image, and likeness (NIL) deal with Dollar Shave Club.

Cleveland Browns Defensive End Myles Garrett Signs MultiYear Endorsement Deal With Reebok

March 15, 2022 via Black Enterprise

Cleveland Browns Defensive End Myles Garrett has signed a multiyear endorsement deal with sports apparel giant Reebok. Sports Illustrated reports the deal makes the former Texas A&M product one of the brand's most visible and highest-profile athletes.

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NBA Fines Nets for Allowing Spectator Kyrie Irving Into Locker Room

March 15, 2022 via Sportico - Law (subscription may be required)

The NBA on Monday fined the Brooklyn Nets \$50,000 for allowing guard Kyrie Irving, who is unvaccinated against COVID-19, into the team's locker room at the Barclays Center during Sunday's game against the New York Knicks.

A bigger bracket? NCAA transformation could lead to changes

March 14, 2022 via Fox News

College sports leaders are working to transform the top tier of NCAA athletics, from how Division I should be governed to what should be required of schools to compete at the highest level.

MLB dodged a disaster by agreeing to end the lockout, but other risks remain

March 11, 2022 via CNBC - Business News

After nearly 100 days of an owner-imposed lockout, MLB agreed to a new five-year collective bargaining agreement with the MLB Players Association on Thursday. In the deal, players will see increased minimum salaries and a \$50-million bonus pool for young players.

Charles Oakley Seeks Appeals Court Dunk on James Dolan in MSG Suit

March 11, 2022 via Sportico - Law (subscription may be required)

It's been more than five years since retired New York Knicks star Charles Oakley was forcibly—and, Oakley insists, illegally—ejected from Madison Square Garden as he sat a few rows behind Knicks owner James Dolan.

Possible Flores Arbitration Clause Could Doom His NFL Case

March 10, 2022 via Sportico - Law (subscription may be required)

Part of the motivation for Brian Flores' high-profile civil rights lawsuit is to shed light on the opaque hiring and firing practices in the NFL, but there's a chance the suit could end in secret arbitration.

SBJ Football: Bucs-Chiefs ready for Germany? Not so fast

March 10, 2022 via Sports Business Journal

For decades, it was unusual to see team-altering moves in NFL free agency. Now for the third straight year, we've got a top-flight quarterback changing uniforms in March and instantly remaking the fall outlook.

Australia backs Russia sports ban

March 9, 2022 via Canberra Times Webnews

Australia is imploring all international sporting organizations to ban Russian and Belarusian athletes from competing and to prevent the two nations from bidding to host events.

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Film & TV

Soccer-Barcelona and Spotify agree sponsorship deal

March 16, 2022 via Yahoo Finance

Barcelona have signed a shirt and stadium sponsorship deal with audio streaming platform Spotify, the Spanish club announced on Tuesday.

In Media Rights Hunt, MLS Must Balance Hard Cash With Growth Prospects

March 15, 2022 via Sportico - Business (subscription may be required)

Having added four franchises since 2020 and with new clubs soon to take root in St. Louis and (presumably) Las Vegas, Major League Soccer is in the midst of a hyper-accelerated expansion phase that reflects Don Garber's outsized ambitions.

Apple Seeks Home Run with MLB Streaming Deal

March 13, 2022 via Tech Register - Top Stories

Apple has been "aggressively hunting" for deals to secure live sports rights to help build out its Apple TV+ streaming service, and it's starting to pay off.

NBC's Peacock Finalizing Deal to Stream MLB Games in New Sunday Time Slot

March 11, 2022 via Wall Street Journal (subscription may be required)

NBCUniversal's Peacock is finalizing a deal with Major League Baseball for exclusive rights to stream games in a new Sunday time slot, according to people familiar with the discussions, as the league looks to increase digital partnerships.

SBJ Unpacks: Joe Buck to join Troy Aikman at ESPN

March 11, 2022 via Sports Business Journal

Joe Buck is "expected to leave Fox Sports for ESPN," where he will become the voice of "Monday Night Football" alongside longtime partner Troy Aikman, sources tell the N.Y. Post's Andrew Marchand.

Jaime Camil Signs VIS First-Look Spanish-Language Development Deal For Paramount+

March 10, 2022 via Forbes (subscription may be required)

Jaime Camil, known in the U.S. for his role as the over-the-top Rogelio de la Vega in Jane The Virgin and internationally as the leading man in telenovelas such as La Fea Más Bella and Por Ella Soy Eva, has signed an exclusive first-look deal with Viacom International Studios (VIS).

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March Madness Ads Sell Out as Hype, Hoops Royalty Return to the Arena

March 9, 2022 via Sportico - Business (subscription may be required)

If you're a marketing exec at, say, an auto manufacturer, fast-food chain or insurance provider and are looking to snap up a last-minute commercial unit in the NCAA Division I Men's Basketball Tournament, you're pretty much out of luck.

Music Biz

Songwriter 'shocked' that Ed Sheeran 'copied' his song

March 14, 2022 via BBC News

By Mark Savage BBC Music Correspondent Musician Sami Chokri has described the "shock" he felt when he heard Ed Sheeran's Shape Of You and noticed its similarity to one of his songs.

'Music is so different now': Copyright laws need to change, says legal expert

March 13, 2022 via the Guardian

Songwriters such as Ed Sheeran face a future of drawn out legal battles because the way in which people consume music has changed so much in the past half a century, a leading legal expert has warned, as she urged courts to reconsider how they interpret copyright law.

Warner Music, Sony Music and more suspend operations in Russia

March 11, 2022 via Music Week

The major labels are taking action on their business activities in Russia. Universal Music Group announced on Tuesday that it would be closing its offices and suspending operations.

Katy Perry Wins Appeal Over 'Dark Horse' Copyright Lawsuit

March 11, 2022 via Wall Street Journal (subscription may be required)

Katy Perry won an appeal over a long-running copyright-infringement lawsuit, affirming that the musician and her record label don't have to pay \$2.8 million in damages.

Kobalt, Downtown Music Pull Out of Russia Over Ukraine Invasion

March 11, 2022 via Yahoo Finance - Top Stories

In what is rapidly becoming a mass music exodus out of Russia, and Downtown have become the on Thursday that they are suspending business activity in Russia due to the country's invasion of Ukraine.

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Music Industry No Longer Sees Radio Royalty Settlement Coming Outside Of Congress

March 10, 2022 via Inside Radio - News

Hopes are fading that a negotiating table is where the long-running battle between radio and the music industry over a performance fee for on-air music use will be settled.

TikTok Launches SoundOn, a Platform to Let Artists Directly Upload, Monetize Their Music on the App

March 9, 2022 via Register Citizen

Click here to read the full article. TikTok, which has had a measurable effect on music discovery, is now letting individual artists upload — and make money from — their songs directly in the app. TikTok touted SoundOn as an “all-in-one platform” for music marketing and distribution.

Ed Sheeran sings in court at 'Shape of You' copyright trial

March 9, 2022 via MENAFN - Top Stories

Ed Sheeran, a British singer-songwriter, hummed and sang in court on Tuesday; as he testified in a copyright case involving his 2017 mega-hit “Shape Of You.” The chart-topper is embroiled in a legal battle with grime singer Sami Switch and music producer Ross O'Donoghue.

Ukraine updates: Heineken, Universal Music join Russia exodus

March 9, 2022 via Vindicator

The latest developments on the Russia-Ukraine war as reported by The Associated Press worldwide: Dutch brewer Heineken, TV company Discovery and the Universal Music Group have joined the corporate exodus from Russia over the Ukraine invasion.

Non-Fungible Tokens (NFTs)

Facebook CEO Mark Zuckerberg planning to launch NFTs on Instagram

March 16, 2022 via Business Standard Tech World

As NFTs are all the rage these days, Facebook chief executive officer (CEO) Mark Zuckerberg is planning to let Instagram users mint non-fungible tokens (NFTs) on the social media platform.

Mark Zuckerberg says Instagram will enable NFT fashion, speaking to SXSW

March 16, 2022 via Advertising Age

Bloomberg Meta CEO Mark Zuckerberg said NFTs are coming to Instagram “over the next several months,” as the company formerly known as Facebook continues its push into metaverse-like products.

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UFC's Dana White sees NFTs as 'massive' revenue, fan engagement opportunity

March 15, 2022 via Las Vegas Review Journal

The Ultimate Fighting Championship punched its way into the NFT realm earlier this year, with the Las Vegas-based fighting league having high hopes for its potential.

IconFashion Reinvented NFTs with Fashion Dress Up and Viral TikTok #IconGirlChallenge

March 15, 2022 via Yahoo Finance - Top Stories

IconFashion, initiated by a young female minority Cheryl Yang, is a fashion driven Web3 project aims to celebrate women in the crypto and digital asset space.

Reese Witherspoon and Gwyneth Paltrow Push for Crypto Sisterhood

March 11, 2022 via Wall Street Journal (subscription may be required)

A star-studded movement encourages women to break into the world of crypto and NFTs. Actresses Gwyneth Paltrow, Reese Witherspoon and Mila Kunis have a new message of empowerment for women: They say it's time to embrace crypto.