

Sports & Entertainment Beat

Sports & Entertainment Spotlight: Songwriters Notch a Big Win Against Music Streaming Services as the Copyright Royalty Board's Decision To Increase Streaming Royalties Was Upheld

By Joshua Bloomgarden on 7.7.22 | Posted in Sports & Entertainment Spotlight

Welcome back to the "Spotlight," and as a University of Wisconsin alum, allow me to be among the first to welcome the USC Trojans and UCLA Bruins to the preposterously named Big Ten conference (it hasn't had 10 member universities since the first Gulf War) in what appears to be part of a massive realignment in college athletics, wrought in part by the weakening of the NCAA. From the USC and UCLA perspective, the move makes a lot of (dollars and) sense. These schools will not only have greater exposure through the Central and Eastern time zones, allowing them to cast a wider net for recruiting, but they will also stand to be the beneficiaries of a Big Ten media rights pot that could approach \$1 billion. From my perspective, I love the idea of having visiting football players accustomed to the cushy climate of Southern California visiting my Badgers at Camp Randall Stadium in subzero temperatures (On, Wisconsin!). What could it mean more broadly for college athletics? it appears more and more as if the "powerhouse" schools in college athletics are coming together in two or three self-sufficient mega conferences, pushing the floundering NCAA further out of the spotlight. More on that as the situation unfolds, but until then, take a gander on what's in the "Spotlight."

- Songwriters notch a big win against music streaming services as the Copyright Royalty Board's decision to increase streaming royalties from 10.5 percent and 15.1 percent was upheld. Seems fair, given that multi-streaming services make disproportionate profits from the use of the songwriters' works. But don't worry about the multi-billion dollar streaming services, they will be fine (and presumably pass the additional costs onto consumers). "Inflation," am I right?!?!
- With the planet under constant strain (in the environmental sense and so many other ways), celebrities such as Kim Kardashian, Lady Gaga and Nicole Kidman are increasingly looking to launch sustainably focused, plant-based brands. And as it turns out, the phrase "vegan beauty" does not refer to the application of lipstick and mascara to a block of tofu.

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- Snoop Dogg, who has been an early adopter of NFTs, cryptocurrency and all things the metaverse can be for the entertainment industry, views the recent crypto plunge as a healthy development that “weeded out the bad apples.” Seems credible since if there’s one thing Snoop knows about, it’s getting weeded out.

Endorsement Deals, Sponsorships & Investments **What Celebrity Cannabis Brands Have Been The Most Successful So Far?** *July 5, 2022 via The Fresh Toast* A celebrity’s connection with cannabis and its consumers is essential. If buyers sense inauthenticity, sales may be hard to come by.

A-List Celebrities Are Jumping on the Vegan Beauty Trend *July 4, 2022 via Plant Based News* Savvy celebrities are jumping on the growing vegan beauty bandwagon. In the last few years, a number of A-listers have invested in or launched their own hair, cosmetic, or skincare brands, tapping into their loyal fan bases as multi-interest consumers.

One Year After Senate NIL Hearing, a Federal NIL Law Remains Elusive *July 2, 2022 via Sportico (subscription may be required)* As NIL enters its second year, the NCAA faces an uphill climb in attracting the support of Congress for NIL action.

Sports **Ryan Reynolds’ Wrexham Not Alone in Soccer Bargain Buys** *July 6, 2022 via Sportico (subscription may be required)* The recent sale of English Premier League club Chelsea F.C. set the EPL record for most money ever paid for a team, at \$5.24 billion for the club and its stadium.

Oh, the Places You’ll Go in the Ever-Expanding Big Ten *July 5, 2022 via Chicago Sun Times* Here’s something for young people starting out in the advertising or public-relations world to remember: The word “ten” is not a number. It’s a brand. It doesn’t come between nine and 11. It comes right alongside money.

NBC Sports Focuses NIL Pilot Program on ‘the Other 99 Percent’ *July 5, 2022 via Washington Post* In the year since the NCAA allowed college athletes to profit from their name, image and likeness, a handful of stars — including Alabama quarterback Bryce Young and Connecticut point guard Paige Bueckers — signed deals reportedly worth around seven figures.

Biden’s Title IX Rewrite Expands Colleges’ Reach Amid Due Process Protests *July 1, 2022 via Sportico (subscription may be required)* As Title IX turned 50 years old last week, the U.S. Department of Education released for public comment a proposal for far-reaching regulatory changes.

Music Biz **How Is The Music Industry Changing With Web 3.0 and NFT?** *July 6, 2022 via Crypto News Australia* In 2022, when Web 3.0, Music NFT, and blockchain technologies become more accessible, the music industry might experience a significant transformation. In the music business, song ownership and fair pay discrepancies have long been prevalent.

Universal Music Acquires ‘Cosmik Debris’ Guitarist Frank Zappa’s Catalogue *July 1, 2022 via Gulf News* Universal Music Group on Thursday announced an agreement to acquire rock guitarist and composer Frank Zappa’s catalogue of music, recordings and film archive for an undisclosed fee.

Songwriters, Rejoice: Spotify Appeal Fails to Stop Composers Getting Improved 15.1 Percent Streaming Royalty Rate in the U.S. *July 1, 2022 via Music Business Worldwide* On July 1, the Copyright Royalty Board (CRB) has maintained its decision to increase the headline rate paid to songwriters in the United States from on-demand streaming services between the years 2018 and 2022.

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Napster Outlines New Web3 Music Ecosystem *June 29, 2022 via Yahoo Finance*
 Napster Music Inc., the music streaming service, announced the publication of its "Litepaper V1" which outlines its plans to apply Web3 technology to its existing business and millions of users in order to improve how music makers, rights holders and fans can interact.

Film & TV **Big Ten Is Likely to See Bigger TV Deal With Addition of USC and UCLA** *July 1, 2022 via BNN Bloomberg Canada (subscription may be required)* The decision by UCLA and USC to join the Big Ten further consolidates power within two college conferences and escalates the rivalry between their two biggest media partners, Fox and ESPN.

The Only Way the ACC Survives: Renegotiating its ESPN TV Deal *July 1, 2022 via Augusta Free Press* Remember that 20-year ESPN deal that the ACC announced with much fanfare back in 2016? It's a millstone around our necks. ACC member schools will be bringing in barely half what schools in the Big Ten and SEC get from their TV deals by the end of the decade.

Amazon, Apple May Crash NBA Rights Party, but TV Won't Leave *July 1, 2022 via Sportico (subscription may be required)* When thinking about escalating rights fees and the near-mythical sums the networks are forking over for sports properties that draw fewer viewers than even the dopiest network sitcom, there are two things worth keeping in the back of your mind: 1) It's not your money. 2) No matter how bad the deal may seem on paper, there's almost no way it will turn out to be the worst sports-rights investment of all time, as that dubious distinction in all likelihood will never be wrested away from CBS' 1990-1993 pact with Major League Baseball.

Amazon Is 'Poised to Sign' for Champions League TV Rights in the U.K. *June 30, 2022 via Daily Mail Football* The tech giant is one of a number of broadcasters, including BT Sport, that is poised to sign a media rights deal with UEFA, the governing body for professional football in Europe.

Non-Fungible Tokens (NFTs) **Travis Barker and Limewire Team Up to Launch First NFT Collection** *July 6, 2022 via CelebrityAccess* LimeWire, the former file-sharing platform recently relaunched as a collectibles marketplace, has released a superstar list of artists releasing NFTs on its platform.

Paris Hilton to Madonna, Mixed Fortunes of Celebrities Who Leapt on NFT Craze *July 3, 2022 via News International* Film, music and sports stars have all flocked to the NFT market to buy pictures of apes, endorse corporate partners or even launch their own art collections.

Rap Star Snoop Dogg Believes Crypto Industry Will Bounce Back — Crash 'Weeded Out Bad Apples *June 30, 2022 via Crypto News Australia* The rapper Snoop Dogg spoke about the crypto crash in an interview with CNBC and explained that he believes the cryptocurrency economy will bounce back.