

Sports & Entertainment Beat

## **Spotlight on Sports & Entertainment: College Conferences Shift, ESPN's B-E-T Move, and Lawsuits Galore**

By Joshua Bloomgarden on 8.11.23 | Posted in Sports & Entertainment Spotlight

Welcome back to the Spotlight! While the tumbleweed continues to blow across studio lots in Hollywood as a result of the impasse with SAG-AFTRA and WGA, the sports world continues to experience kinetic, disruptive activity. In the college sports landscape, time honored college conferences such as the PAC-12 are crumbling like a dry shortbread cookie as their member schools reconsolidate (like wet shortbread cookie dough) around mega conferences such as the Big Ten that enjoy multibillion dollar TV rights deals. Where the chips fall from here—particularly in relation to the role (if any) of the NCAA—is anyone’s guess. Two things are for certain: 1) with at least sixteen (not ten) colleges, maybe it is now time to think of a rebrand for the Big Ten conference); and 2) with apologies to many of my Foster Garvey colleagues, the true UW in the Big Ten remains Wisconsin (not University of Washington, despite its impending move to the Big Ten). Additionally, through a tie-up with Penn Entertainment, ESPN finally jumps into the sports gaming business. Now ESPN, whose parent company Disney is famous for the letters M-I-C-K-E-Y M-O-U-S-E, can add three more letters to its portfolio: B-E-T. As part of the deal, Penn Entertainment is paying Disney approximately 2X its market capitalization. Regardless of whether this turns out to be a moneymaking bet for Penn or Disney, rest assured your odds to make money are slimmer than—well, an over-rolled shortbread cookie.

**While I excuse myself for a snack, here are some other knowledge morsels on which to nibble:**

- Fan memorabilia company Fanatics and trading card company Panini America are in dueling lawsuits alleging unfair competition. To take on Panini, Fanatics’ legal strategy will undoubtedly involve a full court “press.”
- YouTube personality MrBeast filed a lawsuit against Virtual Dining Concepts alleging that the food quality at the virtual kitchens created for his MrBeast Burger brand injured his reputation. The court will decide whether the suit is a fry in the sky or whether he has a legitimate beef.

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- Universal Music and Google are said to be in talks related to the development of an AI-generated music tool. Japanese users will be advised not to thank the AI so as not to inadvertently infringe Styx's "Mr. Roboto."
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### Endorsement Deals, Sponsorships & Investments

#### LVCVA to spend \$2.25M to sponsor in-season NBA tourney

August 9, 2023 via *Las Vegas Review Journal*

#### With No New TV Deal Expected; Five More Schools Have Left The Pac-12

August 8, 2023 via *Forbes*

#### Southern California's Stone Brewing Creates First-Ever Official Beer for USC Athletics - Stone Fight On! Pale Ale

August 8, 2023 via *WILX-TV*

#### ESPN To Launch Branded Sportsbook With Penn Entertainment

August 8, 2023 via *Sportico*

#### How celebrity-owned agencies are managing the risks and rewards for brands

August 8, 2023 via *Advertising Age*

#### NFL Swaps Genius Sports Warrants for Cash in Deal Extension

August 7, 2023 via *Sportico*

#### Fanatics Strikes Back at Panini With Federal Trading-Card Lawsuit

August 7, 2023 via *Sportico*

#### Messi's Inter Miami Lands \$75 Million From Ares Management

August 4, 2023 via *Sportico*

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### Sports

#### Oregon St., Washington St. ponder next moves in realignment

August 9, 2023 via *Buffalo News*

#### Make NIL deals public to protect college athletes and sports | Raleigh News & Observer

August 6, 2023 via *Raleigh News Observer*

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**Spurs Replace AT&T With Frost Bank as Arena Naming Rights Partner**

August 3, 2023 via Sportico

**Sotheby's to Auction Wilt Chamberlain's 1972 NBA Finals Lakers Jersey**

August 3, 2023 via Sportico

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**Music**

**Google and Universal negotiating deal over AI-generated music tool**

August 9, 2023 via Evening Standard

**The 3 major music companies generated \$1bn more in the first half of 2023 vs. the first half of 2022**

August 9, 2023 via Music Business Worldwide

**Film and music industries on edge: AI's growing influence stirs fear of job displacement, copyright issues**

August 8, 2023 via Fox Rochester

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**Film & TV**

**'Barbie' joins \$1 billion club, breaks record for pic helmed by female director**

August 6, 2023 via NBC News

**YouTube star MrBeast sues Robert Earl's Orlando-based Virtual Dining Concepts**

August 3, 2023 via Biz Journal

**Hasbro to Sell eOne Film & TV Business to Lionsgate Official Press Release**

August 3, 2023 via TFormers