

Sports & Entertainment Beat

March Madness: Breaking Records, New Frontiers, and Union Moves in College Sports

By Joshua Bloomgarden on 3.8.24 | Posted in Sports & Entertainment Spotlight

If it's March, that means I'm ever-confused about what type of outerwear I am supposed to wear outside, my allium bulbs (or as I like to call them: "Bloomgarden's garden blooms") are awakening and making their journey up from beneath the ground (I see you, my precocious little beauties) and college sports are front and center. However, while most years, it is not until later in the month that history books are written through the NCAA Basketball Tournaments, this year we have some super important entries.

First, Iowa Hawkeyes basketball star Caitlin Clark broke the NCAA all-time scoring record set by "Pistol" Pete Maravich, and as an encore, entered into an exclusive endorsement agreement with trading card and collectibles company Panini—becoming the first female athlete to do so. On the (digital) football field, EA Sports' NCAA Football video game—the first of its kind in the NIL era—boasts over 10,000 players who have opted in to appearing in the game (and receiving the modest license fee of \$600 for doing so). And going back to the hardcourt, in a move that could have major implications not just in college basketball, but for the entire collegiate athletic programs landscape (did I mention my bulbs?), as the Dartmouth Men's basketball team voted to unionize, rendering themselves employees of Dartmouth and allowing them to negotiate the terms of their employment (including wages, hours and benefits). So there you have a few tidbits of trivia as you roll into the cold/coolish/cool/not quite warmish weekend to tend to your respective gardens.

- Peyton Manning's Omaha Productions is said to be courting two football coaches with legendary careers—Bill Belichick and Nick Saban – to host an alternate broadcast of Monday Night Football tentatively called the "GOATcast." If the production goes forward, it will undoubtedly bring some interesting insights (not to mention confused farmers) into the fold.
- A prominent player in music catalog acquisition, Hipgnosis Songs Fund announced that an independent valuation of the fund found its value to be overstated by 26% (about \$690 million). Clearly someone in the mix had a pocket watch swinging in their eyes.

- LeBron James' media empire is not only spinning off its "The Shop" television series to launch as a line of men's grooming products, but is also going to debut a United Kingdom version of the series to be hosted and produced by actor Idris Elba, or as I like to call it, "The Shoppe."
 - McDonald's is nearing a deal to be a title sponsor for France's top tier football league, Ligue 1. Perhaps that will help temper French arrogance over their cuisine.
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Endorsement Deals, Sponsorships & Investments

[Iowa's Caitlin Clark becomes first female athlete to have exclusive deal with Panini](#)

March 6, 2024 via USA TODAY

[Reports: McDonald's close to becoming French soccer league title sponsor for next three seasons](#)

March 5, 2024 via ABC News

[Kylie Jenner risks ANOTHER row with Kylie Minogue after failing to trademark her own name](#)

March 4, 2024 via The Sun

Sports

[Report: Peyton Manning Wants Bill Belichick as TV Teammate](#)

March 8, 2024 via Inside Hook

[Dartmouth Basketball Team Votes to Unionize in College Sports First](#)

March 5, 2024 via Sportico.com

[College athletes are getting closer to becoming employees. What would happen next?](#)

March 4, 2024 via Athletice

Music Biz

Hipgnosis Songs Fund's assets are now valued at \$690 million less than they were before. Blackstone must be licking its lips.

March 4, 2024 via Music Business Worldwide

Music Is TikTok's Past. Sounds May Be Its Future

March 2, 2024 via Wired

Film & TV

LeBron James Spins Out 'The Shop' to Become Consumer Brand

March 5, 2024 via Bloomberg

ESPN NHL Announcers to Wear VR Headsets for Upcoming Broadcast

March 5, 2024 via Sportico

'Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles' Filmmaker Jeff Rowe Enters First-Look Deal With Paramount Animation (EXCLUSIVE)

March 5, 2024 via Variety

Sacre Bleu! Just For Laughs Files For Bankruptcy. Now What For Big Comedy?

March 5, 2024 via New York Post

Pac-12 commissioner Teresa Gould says there's "great interest" in Oregon State and Washington State media rights

March 1, 2024 via Awful Announcing