

Sports & Entertainment Beat

Spotlight on Sports and Entertainment: Insights from the 4se Conference and Industry Shifts

By Joshua Bloomgarden on 5.24.24 | Posted in Sports & Entertainment Spotlight

Fresh off a much needed vacation, I spent part of this week at the 4se conference here in New York City (presented by Leaders Group and Sports Business Journal). My experience as the event was as good, if not better than last year's. For one thing, it was gratifying to focus on the business side of sports and entertainment with my still licking my fandom wounds from the Knicks' playoff exit.

For another thing, I geek out on the convergence of sports, entertainment, fashion and music and becoming even more conversant about the ecosystem in which our clients thrive—and I got to know a number of people who feel the same. Unsurprisingly, against the backdrop of artificial intelligence's emergence, the import of authenticity, loyalty and understanding consumers' and fans' emotions and desires was prominently highlighted.

What **was** most surprising what was not that the WWE has a writers room of 50 people (jarring enough to learn that pro wrestling is scripted!) but rather that there was not one Taylor Swift and/or Travis Kelce reference in any of the panel discussions (I guess they've had their 15 minutes...). In any event, I look forward to leveraging all that I learned about to make me a more well-rounded, business-minded lawyer and you, better-informed readers.

To that end, let's get to it, shall we?

- A landmark settlement was reached in the House v. NCAA case that will enable the member schools of the so-called "Power 5" NCAA sports conferences to pay their athletes directly—further blurring the line between college and professional sports. As I understand it, the primary difference is that spectators will still be able to afford a hot dog...I think.
- The U.S. Department of Justice filed a milestone antitrust suit against live events and ticketing juggernaut Live Nation—which seems like a slight overreaction to missing out on tickets to the Eras Tour.

- Scarlett Johansson pens a strongly-worded letter to push back at a strongly lettered-word (A.I.)'s use of a voice eerily similar to hers for OpenAI's ChatGPT assistant. Particularly after OpenAI had previously courted Johansson for her to lend her voice to the program (and was rebuffed), it doesn't take much intelligence – artificial or otherwise – to understand her gripe.
- Indiana Fever guard Caitlin Clark enters into a multiyear endorsement deal with Wilson Sporting Goods Co., becoming the first athlete since Michael Jordan to have her own line of signature basketballs. While Wilson's products are likely to bounce, the deal is undoubtedly lucrative enough to ensure that Clark's checks do not.

Endorsement Deals, Sponsorships & Investments

[NCAA, Power 5 agree to let schools pay players](#)

May 24, 2024 via ESPN

[Caitlin Clark, one day after injury scare, signs latest major endorsement deal](#)

May 21, 2024 via The Guardian

[NBA Sponsorship Revenue Hits Record \\$1.5B, Fueled by Tech Brands](#)

May 21, 2024 via Sportico

[WNBA is investigating whether Vegas tourism authority can sponsor Aces players for \\$100K each](#)

May 18, 2024 via Vegas Inc

Sports

[The NBA's Final Four May Not Be Exactly What the League Envisioned](#)

May 20, 2024 via Front Office Sports

[Inside the NBA is beloved because of its real authenticity and chemistry](#)

May 20, 2024 via Awful Announcing

[Taylor Declines A-Rod, Lore's 'Loser Pays' Offer In T-Wolves Arbitration](#)

May 19, 2024 via Sportico

Fanatics Sues Marvin Harrison Jr. for Refusing to Honor Contract

May 19, 2024 via Sportico

Music Biz

Spotify Accused in Suit of Cheating Songwriters Out of Royalties

May 17, 2024 via Claims Journal

Film & TV

OpenAI accused of mimicking Scarlett Johansson, tech company pauses ChatGPT voice

May 21, 2024 via Fox Business

OpenAI Inks Data Deal with Reddit; Sony Warns AI Giants over Use of its Artists; Amazon Prime Video Becomes US' Biggest Ad-Supported Streaming Platform

May 20, 2024 via ExchangeWire.com

Freestyle Digital Media Acquires Social Drama 'Global Harmony' and Thriller 'Ghost Trap'

May 17, 2024 via Variety

'Across The River And Into The Trees': Level 33 Entertainment Acquires WWII Drama Starring Liev Schreiber & Josh Hutcherson For U.S. And Canada Release

May 17, 2024 via Deadline