

Plus: [How Army ended up with a football schedule \(after 200 rough drafts\)](#)

## SPORTS BUSINESS

**The Forbes 400** is the definitive ranking of the wealthiest Americans, and this year's list features 42 members who own controlling stakes in teams in major sports leagues. Together, they are worth \$271 billion, up 6% over the past 12 months despite the pandemic. [Who ranks where? See the full list here.](#)

After daily fantasy sports newcomer **Monkey Knife Fight** acquired **FantasyDraft**, some declared that the deal was primarily about gaining market share; others tied it to the merging of two customer lists. More likely, though, [it was driven by a legal issue.](#)

## FOOTBALL

The **NFL** is launching its season, and **SoFi Stadium** is ready for its debut. The lead designer of the new home of the **Rams** and the **Chargers** walks us through [its state-of-the-art features.](#)

**Army** has begun its football season, but it didn't have a schedule until the 11th hour. An athletic department official at West Point tells us that the program worked through [more than 200 versions](#)—you read that correctly—of its 2020 schedule.

## SOCCER

**Lionel Messi** has begrudgingly returned to **Barcelona**, and the business of Lionel Messi marches on as well, with [a pair of new endorsement deals](#) that boost his \$30 million-plus annual off-pitch earnings.

**Brazil** has [committed to equal pay](#) for its men's and women's national teams. The **USWNT** is still waiting for a similar offer, but two of its most integral members now have deals of their own: **Tobin Heath** and **Christen Press** [are joining Manchester United](#), continuing the flood into the **English FA Women's Super League** this summer.

## HOCKEY

The **NHL's** summer return from the pandemic meant adapting its sponsor relationships. [The league's chief brand officer explains.](#)

## AUTO RACING

**Cole Custer** is only the third rookie in the 16-year history of the **Nascar** playoffs to qualify for the postseason, and while he lacks in consistency, he's showing his value with sponsors and [creating a new era for Stewart-Haas Racing](#). On the other end of the aging curve, 42-year-old **Kurt Busch** suddenly [looks indispensable for Chip Ganassi Racing](#)—and he's in no hurry to retire.

## PRO BASKETBALL

At 40, **Udonis Haslem** remains the **Heat's** captain, but his role is more assistant coach than player: He's appeared in just one game in the **NBA** bubble. He recognizes Miami can't keep a roster spot for him forever and now has to wrap his mind around the [possibility of retiring on a Zoom call.](#)

## Featured Story



### Meet Vegas Dave, A Sports Gambling Hustler Who Just Sold History's Most Expensive Baseball Card

Last month, Dave Oancea made sports memorabilia history when he sold a one-of-a-kind Mike Trout rookie card for \$3.9 million in an online auction. He's not your typical memorabilia collector. Vegas Dave, as he's known to his millions of followers on social media, is a notorious gambling influencer, known for selling picks on which team will win a given game. But if you dig into his past and his picks, you'll find a shady hustler who sells a service that has little, if any, value for his customers. [See the full story here.](#)

## Hot Reads

[Cameron Maybin Pleased With Rapid Growth Of Players Alliance](#)

[Cubs Announce Partnership With DraftKings For Sportsbook At Or Near Wrigley Field](#)

## Upon Further Review

A few short months ago, Spencer "Hiko" Martin's successful *Counter-Strike: Global Offensive* career looked over; now, he's the [biggest celebrity in the world of Valorant](#). He's not the only esports star trying something new: Corentin "Gotaga" Houssein has abandoned competitive *Call of Duty* for an influencer life that, he tells us, [is much more lucrative](#). That assessment fits with our reporting. In our ranking this year of the top-earning gamers, the top ten made the vast majority of their millions by leveraging their massive online followings into endorsements, fees and sponsorships. [See the full list of the highest-paid gamers here.](#)

## The Last Word

**“This dude is willing to die out here, so I have to raise my level of play.”**

[Alex Oriakhi](#)

Kemba Walker has the Celtics on the verge of a berth in the conference finals, but NBA success was never guaranteed for a player generously listed at 6 feet. It took a killer instinct, put on display during UConn's improbable NCAA championship run in 2011 after a five-wins-in-five-days Big East tournament. *Former teammates like Alex Oriakhi and coaches including Jim Calhoun reflect on the origins of "Cardiac Kemba"; [read the full story here.](#)* Also check out our recent stories on [Jaylen Brown](#) and rookie [Tremont Waters](#).

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