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## Athletes Unlimited Softball, Lacrosse Bring the Action to ESPN This Summer

By [Shlomo Sprung](#)

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The Worldwide Leader's networks and ESPN+ streaming platform will carry 160 Athletes Unlimited games across its lacrosse and softball competitions.

[Athletes Unlimited](#) and [ESPN](#) signed a two-year rights agreement for its [softball](#) and lacrosse leagues that will see 160 live women's sports events broadcast across its linear and streaming platforms, the organizations announced Wednesday.

More than half of those games — 90 in total — will be shown on linear, with 34 games on ESPN or ESPN2 and 56 on ESPNU. The rest will air on

ESPN+, with the right to broadcast games internationally in Canada on TSN and across ESPN Latin America, among other channels.

“We are proud to collaborate with ESPN to solidify Athletes Unlimited Softball and Athletes Unlimited Lacrosse as two of the major pro sports leagues in the US,” said Jon Patricof, Athletes Unlimited’s CEO and co-founder. “This deal establishes our presence as a major force in the pro sports landscape in the US, while serving as yet another reminder of ESPN’s commitment to women’s sports.”

Athletes Unlimited Softball will debut a new two-week competition from June 13-25 called AUX Softball, which will feature 18 games in San Diego just days after the completion of the College World Series. Each game will be on ESPN linear, including an ESPN game on June 13 and an ESPN doubleheader on June 23 on the 50th anniversary of Title IX, where players will be given more opportunities for more playing time and compensation. Those college stars will be eligible to be drafted on May 4 as part of an event that will stream live as part of the ESPN W Summit in New York.

Those selected will be eligible to play in AU’s championship softball season in Chicago from July 29 to Aug. 28.

“ESPN is excited to expand its relationship with Athletes Unlimited and be part of their innovative approach to women’s professional sports,” said Burke Magnus, ESPN’s President of Programming and Original Content. “We are looking forward to showcasing these world class softball and lacrosse athletes as part of our longstanding commitment to women’s sports.”

The agreement will also see a four-part documentary series on ESPN+ called *Going Pro: Athletes Unlimited Lacrosse*, following four AU Lacrosse players as they compete as pros for the first time. Britt Brown, Mira Shane, Ella Simkins, and Izzy McMahon will focus on the lessons learned and their experiences across their respective rookie seasons.

<https://boardroom.tv/athletes-unlimited-softball-lacrosse-espn/>