



Netflix's Impact on the World of Sports

July 2023



Overview

After its successful Formula One docuseries, 'Drive to Survive,' Netflix invested heavily in similar shows — "Full Swing" surrounding professional golf and "Break Point" focused on professional tennis.

We analyzed readership data for 'Drive to Survive' season 5, 'Full Swing' season 1, and 'Break Point' season 1 to understand how a docuseries can impact readership around a professional sport and learnings for comms teams in the sports and entertainment industries.

Memo analyzed nearly 10,000 articles published between November 1, 2022 - June 25, 2023, across major U.S. publications, local news, consumer outlets, and trades.

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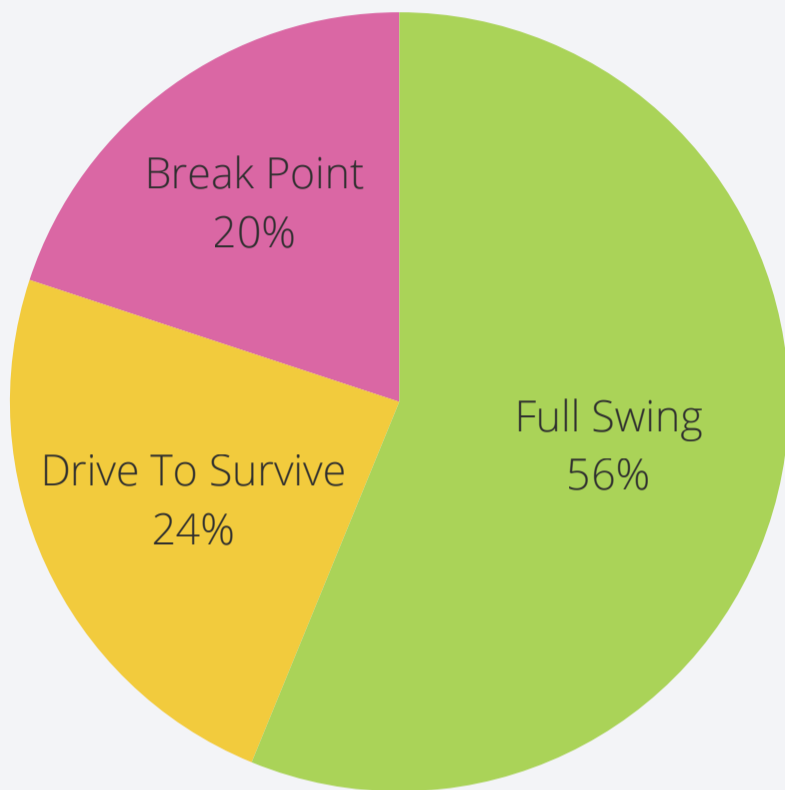
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Overall Readership by Docuseries

'Full Swing' was the most popular sports docuseries in the U.S., capturing 2x more readership than 'Break Point' or 'Drive to Survive' Season 5.

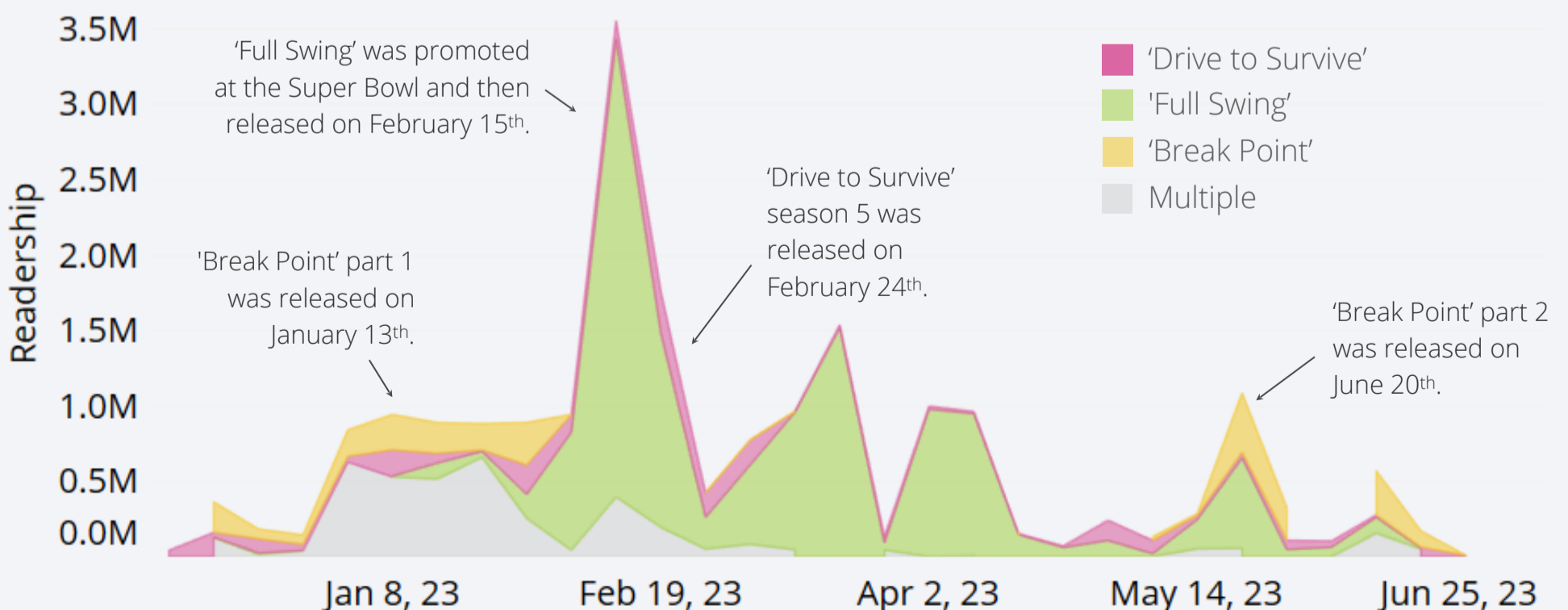
Share of Readership by Docuseries



Many articles mentioned multiple sports docuseries with 280 articles and 3.8 million readers overlapped across the three shows. Much of this coverage was published in January in anticipation of the content release.

'Full Swing' saw the highest readership spike around its premiere, likely due to a popular Super Bowl advertisement promoting the series.

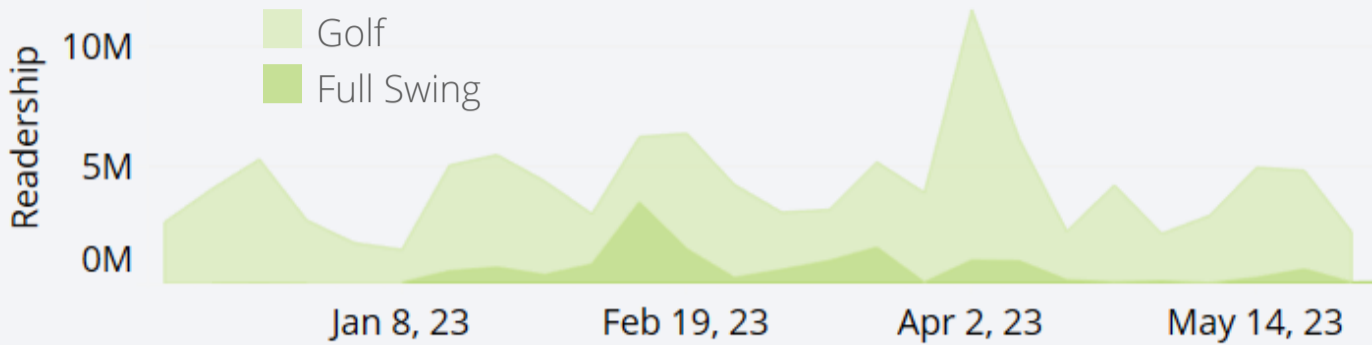
Docuseries Readership Over Time



The Benefits of Partnership

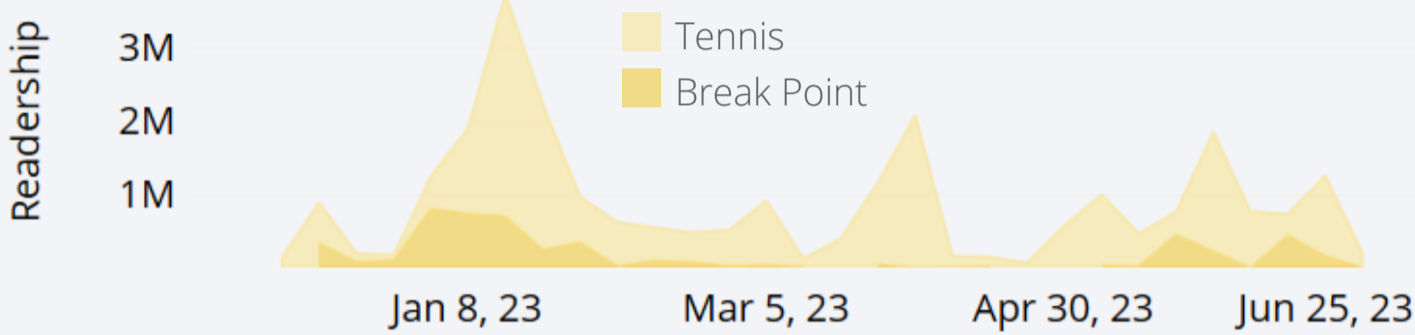
Sports leagues likely benefitted from **extra buzz** driven by the shows.

Golf Readership Over Time



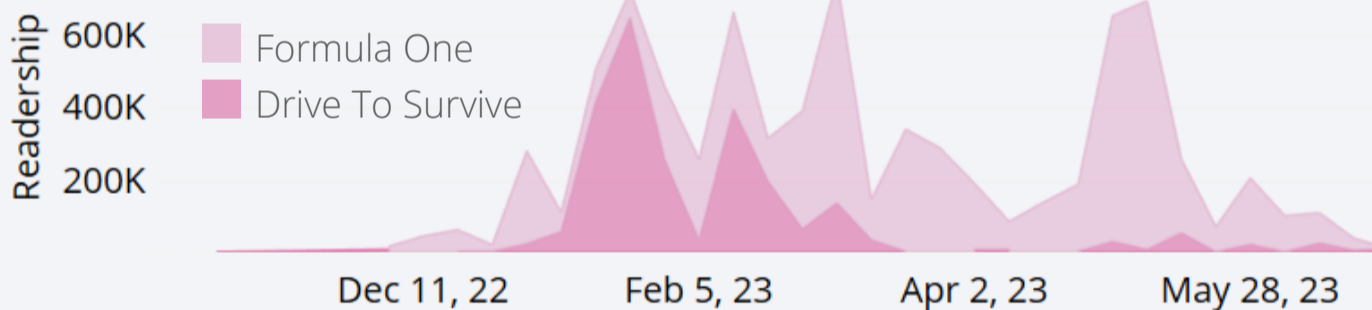
Netflix teased 'Full Swing' at the Super Bowl and released mid-season, 6 weeks before the Masters.

Tennis Readership Over Time



'Break Point' was released during the Australian Open. The tournament went on to generate the highest readership of 2023.

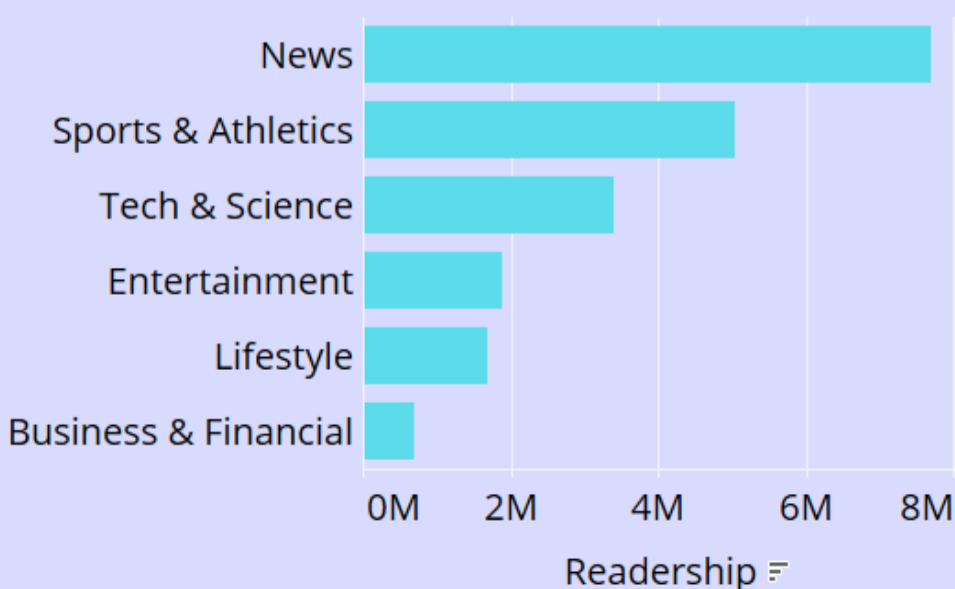
F1 Readership Over Time



'Drive to Survive' season 5 was released one month before the season began to re-engage and excite its audience base.

Netflix was able to use its docuseries shows to reach a **new audience**.

Docuseries Readership by Pub Type

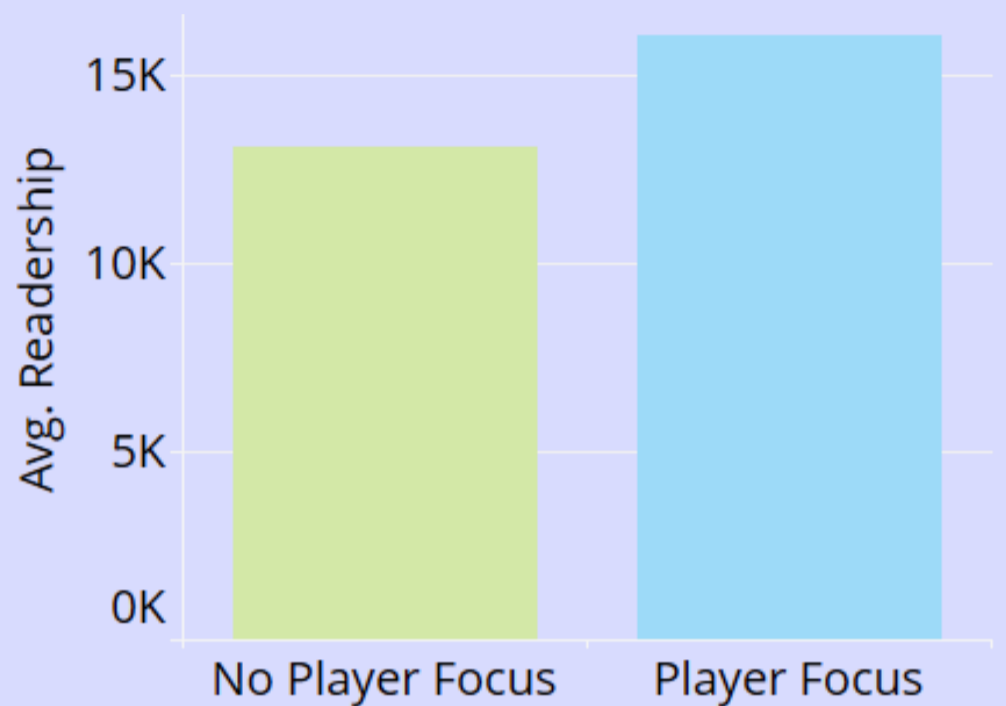


Netflix, which usually sees highest readership on News, Entertainment, and Lifestyle outlets, was able to get in front of a new audience. The three shows generated over 5 million readers on **Sports & Athletics** coverage.

The Personality Behind the Player

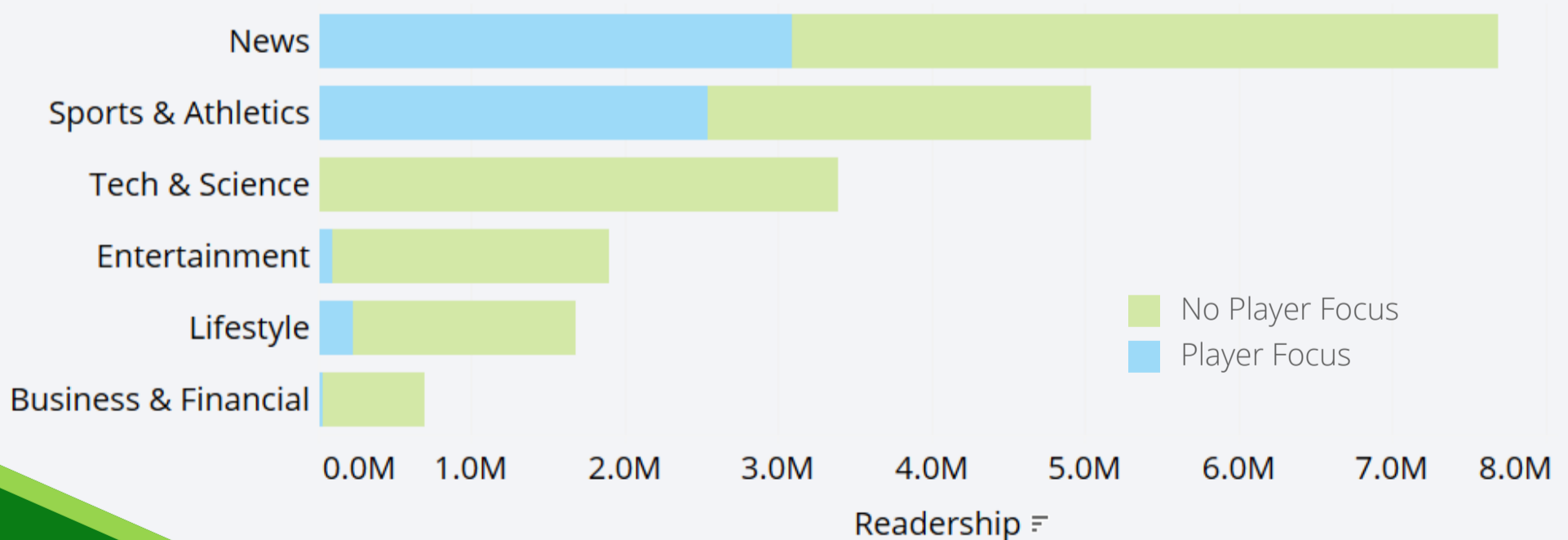
Readership trends suggest **fans are eager to learn more about athletes and who they are as people**. Docuseries articles focused on players drove an average readership 1.2x higher than articles about the documentary more broadly.

Average Readership by Player Focus



Sports fans are especially eager to learn more about their favorite athletes.

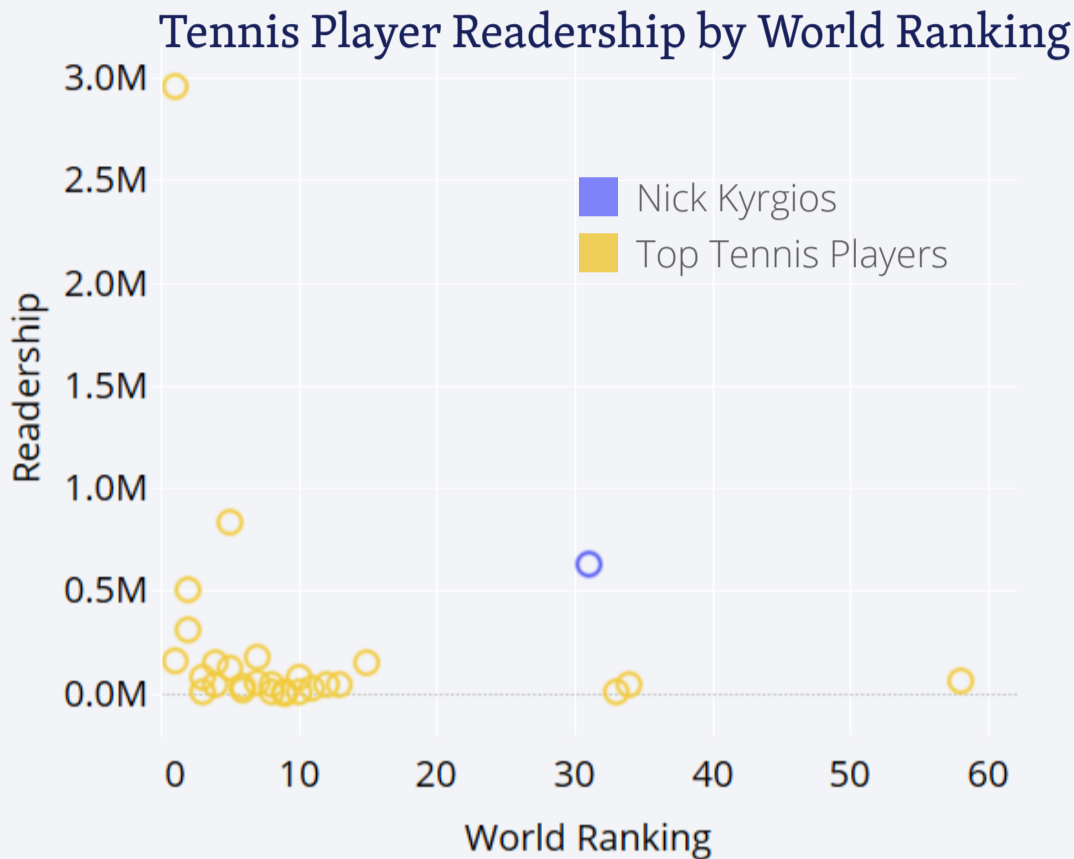
Readership by Publisher Type and Player Focus



Docuseries readership was highest in **News** and **Sports & Athletics** outlets. These audiences were especially interested in reading player-focused articles about their favorite athletes.

Player Spotlights

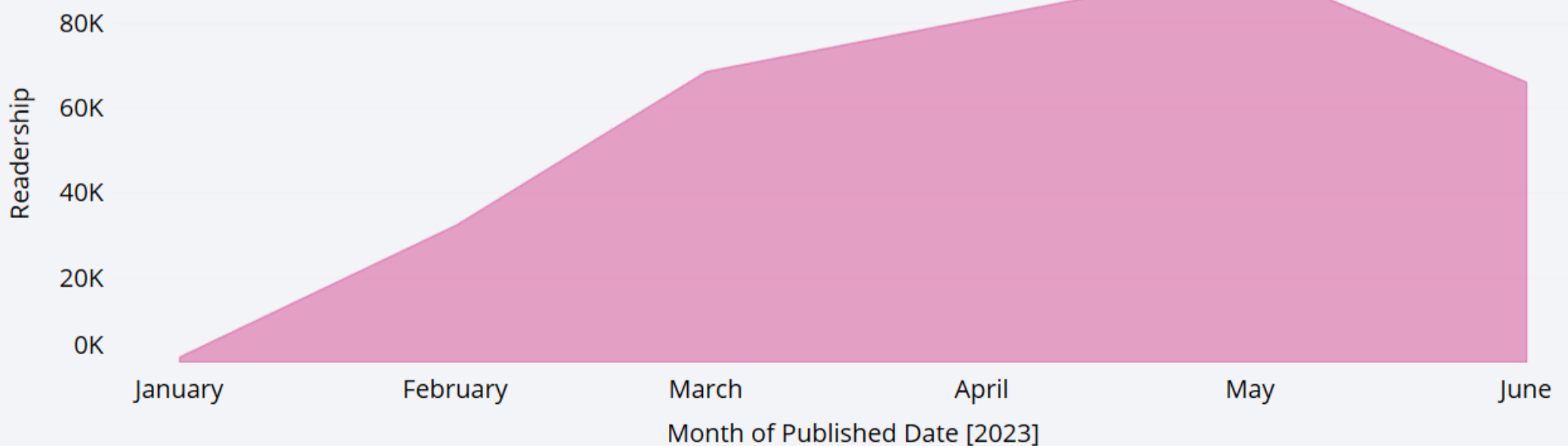
Athletes with unique personalities and takes on their sport are more interesting to readers than top performers.



Nick Kyrgios has become a fan-favorite, villain in the tennis world. Despite being ranked #33, Kyrgios captured the third-highest readership in tennis this spring. Nick Kyrgios was the star of 'Break Point and saw 6x more readership than any other player featured in the docuseries.

Joel Dahmen was one of the highest-ranked golfers showcased in "Full Swing" (128), but his fun-loving personality and personal story captured the attention of golf fans. Dahmen has not performed exceptionally well this year on the course, but his readership has steadily increased since "Full Swing" dropped.

Joel Dahmen Readership Over Time



Takeaways

- **Sports docuseries are mutually beneficial for streaming services and sports leagues.** Netflix increased its readership among sports fans, while sports leagues likely benefited from increased attention and interest ahead of big moments.
- **A 'Full Swing' Super Bowl advertisement likely helped the docuseries attract attention from American sports fans.** 'Full Swing' readership was significantly higher than 'Break Point' or 'Drive to Survive' season 5 in the U.S.
- **Sports fans want to learn more about their favorite athletes and understand them as people.** Articles saw higher readership when they focused on athletes and their stories.
- **Fans are interested in learning about athletes with interesting stories, not just the top players.** Nick Kyrgios (tennis) and Joel Dahmen (golf) saw high readership after being featured despite their professional rankings.

Accurate data leads to better decisions.

Only Memo reports readership direct from publications.



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memo.co

info@memo.co