

Skadden has one of the pre-eminent sports law practices in the country. We have successfully handled high-stakes matters for, among others, the National Basketball Association, the National Hockey League, the National Football League, Major League Baseball, the National Collegiate Athletic Association, the PGA TOUR, the United States Tennis Association and the Arena Football League, including litigation, antitrust, intellectual property, corporate, transactional, labor, insurance, player health safety, anti-doping and league governance issues. We also have represented numerous individual major league teams and their owners in general litigation, player disputes, mergers, acquisitions, stadium financings, venue leases, sponsorship agreements, corporate financings and project finance work.

Our attorneys have a thorough understanding of the legal challenges that can arise in the sports world and the best approaches for addressing those issues. We serve as a principal outside counsel to both the NBA and NHL and have been involved in nearly every major legal decision affecting these leagues for more than two decades. Additionally, we have played a principal role in many of the most high-profile disputes on behalf of professional and amateur sports organizations and teams.

Skadden's hallmark across disciplines is our ability to handle the most challenging issues our clients face, including many first-of-their-kind matters. Our sports practice is no different. In the litigation area, we are representing the NHL in multidistrict litigation brought by a putative class of retired players for personal injuries arising from concussive and sub-concussive injuries sustained while playing in the league, and the NCAA in federal antitrust class actions by Division I football and basketball players challenging amateurism rules barring compensation for student athletes. Our attorneys also successfully advised the NCAA, the NBA, the NHL, the NFL and MLB in lawsuits against New Jersey Gov. Chris Christie to prevent New Jersey's authorization and licensing of gambling on athletic events.

Much of our corporate work draws on the extensive and relevant experience of our attorneys across multiple practices firm-wide, including M&A (team sales and joint ventures across multiple sports), banking (team sales and financings for the NHL), capital markets (Williams Invest Holdings' €250 million initial public offering — the first-ever IPO by a Formula One racing team), intellectual property and technology (MetLife's 25-year agreement to name the Meadowlands Stadium in New Jersey — one of the largest stadium-rights deals in U.S. sports history), real estate (the lease for the NHL's new headquarters and a new studio lease for the MLB Network), corporate restructuring (the Dallas Stars' and Phoenix Coyotes' bankruptcies) and project finance (particularly the construction of new stadiums and arenas), among other areas.

Ranked in the top tier for Sports Law by *Chambers USA* and *U.S. News — Best Lawyers* "Best Law Firms," named a Chairman's Club law firm — part of the "dominant tier in sports law" — in the *SportsBusiness Journal*'s 2016 "Power Players: Outside Counsel" feature and named among *Law360*'s Sports Groups of 2015 and 2016, our practice covers the full range of matters industry-wide. Additional representative experience includes:

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**Litigation and Counseling**

- The dismissal with prejudice of a federal complaint against the PGA TOUR brought by 168 caddies at the TOUR's golf tournaments alleging that by requiring caddies to wear bibs that often include the tournament sponsor's corporate logo, the TOUR violated antitrust laws, the Lanham Act and the caddies' rights of publicity
- The dismissal of antitrust claims brought against the NFL and its Member Clubs challenging the use of hundreds of photographs of NFL games and events and the NFL's license agreement with the Associated Press
- The National Basketball Association in defense of a wrongful death lawsuit brought on behalf of a former G-League player
- The NCAA in a federal antitrust lawsuit challenging the NCAA's amateurism rules
- The National Hockey League in a federal Lanham Act lawsuit involving the rights to the Stanley Cup trademarks
- The NFL in a putative federal personal injury class action against the NFL filed by 10 retired players who alleged that the league and its teams improperly provided prescription medications to players
- Filed Seventh, Ninth and D.C. Circuit *amicus* briefs for the NFL, MLB and the PGA TOUR in connection with cases involving whether over-the-air broadcasts can take advantage of the compulsory license available to cable systems under the Copyright Act
- The NHL in a federally consolidated class action brought by consumers of online fantasy sports-betting websites FanDuel and Draft Kings alleging purported federal RICO and state law violations
- Madison Square Garden in securing a denial of a preliminary injunction against MSG's implementation of a ticket limit policy
- The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill in a class action brought by former student-athletes involving academic irregularities
- The NBA and Commissioner Adam Silver in securing the dismissal of an appeal of former Los Angeles Clippers owner Donald Sterling's lawsuit challenging a fine and lifetime ban
- Numerous arbitrations regarding alleged violations of league rules and collective bargaining agreements
- Filed Eighth Circuit *amicus* brief for the NHL and MLB on behalf of the NFL in a case involving former NFL players seeking to recover for the use of their likenesses in prior game footage or highlights. The Eighth Circuit adopted our position on copyright pre-emption
- Secured an arbitration ruling that upheld the NHL's rejection of a 17-year, \$102 million contract between Ilya Kovalchuk and the New Jersey Devils — the first time in 25 years that an arbitrator upheld a major sports league's rejection of a contract as a circumvention of its collective bargaining agreement
- Purported class action challenging the NHL's broadcast territories and blackout rules
- The NBA and NHL in separate litigations involving lockouts of their respective player unions
- A lawsuit relating to sanctions imposed by the PGA TOUR against golfer Vijay Singh under its anti-doping program
- Defeated a preliminary injunction application brought against the Professional Rodeo Cowboys Association (PRCA) by the Elite Rodeo Association (ERA) and its athlete-owners, alleging that the PRCA board adopted bylaws denying membership to owners of competing rodeo associations
- The dismissal of a breach of settlement agreement suit against the NBA and four teams originally from the American Basketball Association and the settlement of a related federal action
- Golfer Rory McIlroy in Oakley's lawsuit challenging his Nike endorsement agreement
- Numerous cases and counseling relating to team relocation matters, including the Seattle Sonics' move to Oklahoma City, Oklahoma
- An independent review of Rutgers University's men's basketball program
- The NBA, the NFL, the NHL and MLB as *amici* in a Ninth Circuit appeal involving the unauthorized internet transmission of television broadcasts
- The dismissal of tort, contract and RICO claims against the NFL in connection with the New England Patriots' alleged videotaping of New York Jets coaches and players during a game
- Numerous insurance coverage disputes involving NBA teams' salary obligations to disabled players
- Wrongful termination and ERISA claims against the NFL by independent drug examiners
- Breach of contract claims over marketing rights to the Copa América soccer tournament brought by Traffic Sports against the South American football confederation and football federations of 10 South American countries
- Litigation surrounding the operation of the New York Rangers website
- An MLB club in salary arbitration

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**Corporate**

**M&A**

- Bruce Sherman as lead investor of a consortium that includes Derek Jeter and Michael Jordan in the acquisition of the Miami Marlins
- The Walt Disney Company in establishing its partnership with Major League Baseball and the National Hockey League to form the streaming media company BAMTech, and its subsequent acquisition of a controlling interest in BAMTech
- Wes Edens, owner of the Milwaukee Bucks, in his joint investment in Aston Villa Football Club
- The current owners of the Minnesota Vikings in the purchase and financing of the team
- The PGA TOUR in the formation of a new online tee-time reservation joint venture with stockholders of EZLinks Golf, Inc. called EZLinks Golf LLC and later acquisitions by EZLinks and related debt and equity financings
- The NHL in its acquisition and subsequent sale of the Phoenix Coyotes
- Anheuser-Busch, Inc. in the sale of the St. Louis Cardinals, Busch Memorial Stadium and several parking facilities
- Fox in the purchase and later sale of the Los Angeles Dodgers, Dodger Stadium and related assets
- Goldman Sachs Group in its acquisition and later disposition of stakes in the Yankees Entertainment and Sports Network (YES)
- Various clients in bids to acquire professional sports teams, including the Buffalo Bills and Baltimore Ravens
- Various clients in the purchase or sale of minority interests in teams and related assets, including in the NFL, the NBA, MLB, the NHL and MLS
- Ascent Entertainment Group, owner of the Denver Nuggets, the Colorado Avalanche and an arena, in its acquisition by Liberty Media
- Chelsea Limited and Roman Abramovich in their acquisition of Chelsea FC
- TEAM8 in its joint venture with the USTA and Tennis Australia, among others, to form the Laver Cup
- Morgan Stanley & Co. Inc. in connection with the acquisition and subsequent sale of the Seattle Mariners
- Williams Invest Holdings Ltd. in the acquisition of a minority stake in U.K. Formula One race car team Williams Grand Prix Engineering
- Joint venture by Group Lotus and Art GrandPrix to create GP2 and GP3 car racing teams

- Sport Service Deutschland's acquisition of a 90 percent stake in Germany-based hockey team the Frankfurt Lions
- Churchill Downs in its acquisition of various race courses

**League and Team Financing**

- The NHL in numerous team sales and/or financings: Phoenix Coyotes; New York Islanders; Florida Panthers; New Jersey Devils and Prudential Center; Atlanta Thrashers and its relocation to Winnipeg, Manitoba; Dallas Stars; St. Louis Blues; Minnesota Wild; Nashville Predators
- Various banks, including, among others, Bank of America, Goldman Sachs, Fleet National Bank, Sumitomo Mitsui Banking Corp. and NationsBank, in connection with league, team and facility financings in the NFL, the NBA, MLB, the NHL and MLS
- League financings for the NHL
- The NHL in implementing a currency hedging program in connection with the league-wide financing facility, which will permit participating clubs to convert certain Canadian dollar revenue streams into U.S. dollars
- The Miami Marlins in various corporate matters, including a capital raise

**Other Corporate**

- Chelsea FC plc in player contracts, media and entertainment agreements, stadium lease issues, financings and intellectual property matters as well as ownership issues and agreements with soccer leagues
- FirstEnergy's and the Cleveland Browns' naming rights deal
- The Los Angeles Clippers in an arena license agreement for their NBA G-League team
- The Arena Football League with advice concerning collective bargaining issues and other matters
- Disability insurance programs for the NBA and NHL

**Stadium and Arena Financing**

- Project financings involving numerous stadiums and arenas, including the lenders, in the financing and/or refinancing of:
  - Arrowhead Stadium (Kansas City Chiefs)
  - FedEx Field (Washington Redskins)
  - MCI Center (Washington Wizards and Washington Capitals)
  - Comerica Park (Detroit Tigers)
  - Invesco Field at Mile High (Denver Broncos)