

OLYMPIC AND NATIONAL GOVERNING BODY PRACTICE

OVERVIEW

Our Olympic and National Governing Body team has substantial experience in all aspects of the Olympic movement, in the United States, in the United Kingdom and around the world. In the United States, we serve as outside general counsel for national governing bodies (NGBs) and other professional and amateur sports organizations, including more than 20 National Governing Bodies in the Olympic movement. In the United Kingdom, over 400 of our lawyers have acted on over 130 legal projects for the Olympic Delivery Authority. We also regularly appear before the Court of Arbitration for Sport in Lausanne, Switzerland, representing several international sport federations headquartered in Switzerland, and regularly advise NGBs around the world. We regularly advise National Governing Body and International Federation clients on a multitude of legal and business issues relating to all aspects of their operations, including:

- **Safe Sport Matters** - instrumental in establishing the United States Olympic and Paralympic Committee's U.S. Center for Safe Sport, which is a ground-breaking organization which is responsible for hearing all allegations of sexual misconduct and related violations committed by coaches and other individuals in positions of authority involving any National Governing Body in the U.S. Olympic movement, drafting the policies and procedures for the Center for Safe Sport and the rules and guidelines for the handling, investigation and adjudication of complaints.
- **Strategic Infrastructure Matters** – advised various governmental and sport governing body clients with respect to the strategic planning required to support major events and important national sport infrastructure.
- **Corporate Governance** – advised NGBs on all aspects of corporate governance, including issues impacting membership, the Board of Directors and officers, as well as drafting and revising NGB bylaws and other corporate documents.
- **Athlete Eligibility Disputes** – successfully defended NGBs in a variety of Article IX claims brought by athletes asserting that the NGBs denied athletes their rights to compete in protected competitions, including victories for United States Rowing Association, USA Weightlifting, U.S. Bobsled and Skeleton Federation and U.S. Speedskating; represented the United States Olympic and Paralympic Committee in four athlete eligibility arbitrations leading up to the Tokyo Olympics, including three before the Court of Arbitration for Sport.

- **Challenges to NGB Status** – successfully defended against claims that NGBs, including the U.S. Taekwondo Union, U.S. Speedskating and USA Bowling, violated Section 9 of the USOPC Bylaws.
- **Television Agreements** – regularly negotiate television agreements on behalf of NGBs, including deals involving NBC, ABC, CBS, ESPN and CNBC.
- **Sponsorship and Licensing Matters** – handle all aspects of sponsorship and licensing agreements for NGBs, including deals with the following sponsors: General Motors, Visa, Qwest, Mutual of Omaha, Speedo, Adidas, Conoco-Phillips, ADT, Toyota and NIKE.
- **Relationships with Strategic Partners** – advise NGBs in their relationships with strategic partners, assisting NGBs with various aspects of their operations, including representation of USA Basketball in its marketing and operations contract with the National Basketball Association (NBA).
- **Olympic and World Championship Selection Procedures** – assist NGBs in the drafting and application of their Olympic selection procedures, as well as the selection procedures for other important events such as World Championships, World Cups and National Championships.
- **Athlete Agreements** – drafted numerous agreements between NGBs and athletes outlining each party's respective rights and duties to each other, such as athletes' potential obligation to display logos of NGB sponsors and the rights of NGBs to use athlete names and likenesses in marketing.
- **Employment Contracts** – drafted several employment contracts for NGBs, including, in particular, agreements with Executive Directors and members of the coaching staffs.
- **Other Legal Counseling** – regularly advise clients in connection with USOPC relations matters, general corporate and litigation work, trademark and copyright protection and other contractual relationships as well as the federal laws underpinning the Olympics, including with respect to a variety of PPP, construction, land, property and infrastructure regulatory issues.

In addition to NGBs, we also regularly represent a number of leagues, such as the Pacific Coast League of Professional Baseball Clubs, the Florida State League and the South Atlantic League (for each of whom we have served as outside general counsel), as well as various International Federations.

HELPING THE OLYMPIC DELIVERY AUTHORITY DELIVER THE 2012 LONDON OLYMPICS

Over 400 of our lawyers from 13 different legal disciplines acted on over 130 different legal projects for the Olympic Delivery Authority in the build-up to the 2012 London Olympic & Paralympic Games. Some of our work was as follows:

- Advised Olympic Delivery Authority (ODA) on the financing and delivery of the Olympic Park, including the Olympic Village, the International Media and Broadcast Centre, hard and social infrastructure, and both ODA and its successor London Legacy Development Corporation on all aspects of the planning, construction, delivery and disposal of the Olympic Village, for use during the Olympic Games for housing athletes, and legacy conversion for 1,379 affordable and 1,439 private homes, together with education and healthcare facilities.
- Advised on strategic issues relating to the establishment and subsequent dissolution of the ODA, and the transfer of assets and liabilities to London Legacy Development Corporation and other residuary bodies.

For more detail, please see the [Helping the Olympic Delivery Authority Deliver the 2012 London Olympics Brochure](#).

MEET THE TEAM



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Podcasts

Aug 03, 2021

BCLP Talks: The Olympic Movement

Join Steve Smith and Rich Young of BCLP as they, along with their guests, touch on current topics in the Olympic movement including, team selection, new sports, marketing and sponsorship, anti-doping and more, as well as address the legal challenges and opportunities that can arise.