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# Sport

Your winning team





# The team for you

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Our sports team provides domestic and international support to some of the world's best. We are more than just lawyers. We give our clients technical and commercial insight based on our contacts and knowledge across the entire sports sector. Our practice brings together specialists across all disciplines to help our clients tackle the most complex industry issues.

## Well connected



Through our work for sports organisations and other players within the sports industry, we have built up a wide network of industry connections in multiple jurisdictions.

## Global offering



Clients benefit from our legal experts in 42 countries. This, along with long-standing relationships with local counsel in other jurisdictions, means that we are well placed to help our clients achieve their global aims. Our expertise and global reach means we are a one-stop service for all your needs.

## Thought Leaders



We release regular and timely insights into developments within the world of sport. Our Summer of Sports 2018 thought leadership piece covered a range of issues such as dealing with malpractice in sport, how technological developments will affect both the participation in, and viewing of, sport and complex image rights arrangements for sports stars. You will also find interesting articles at [cms.digitalbytes.law](http://cms.digitalbytes.law) and [cms.law-now.com](http://cms.law-now.com).



The sports group at CMS focuses primarily on commercial and corporate work for private investors and a diverse set of household names, including BT Sports and IMG Media. The practice displays further expertise on contentious matters for governing bodies and corporations.

*Legal 500, 2019*



CMS lawyers focus on their clients and on providing the best possible service.

*Chambers and Partners, 2019*



CMS provides the technical rigour, strategic excellence and long-term partnership to keep each client ahead.

*Chambers and Partners, 2019*



# Key practice areas

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## Media Rights

We have market leading expertise in every aspect of media rights, including content production, distribution and in particular, broadcast rights deals which has seen us act for some of the world's biggest sports media rights holders. We have helped clients to seal record breaking deals and we have significant expertise in new media. This means we are also at the forefront of the digital sports broadcasting revolution as the latest technologies redefine the way that rights holders and media companies engage and interact with their customers.



## Commercial Contracts

Our commercial lawyers negotiate contracts from every perspective within the industry. We advise on negotiating sponsorship agreements, brand licensing agreements, advertising agreements and player transfers.



## Rules and Regulations

Our work in the sector ranges from the drafting, implementation, interpretation and enforcement of a wide variety of sports governing bodies' rules and regulations, including advising on internal disciplinary procedures through to arbitration and judicial review cases. Our lawyers have advised on a number of high-profile disciplinary issues over the last few years. We also advise regularly on the construction and interpretation of the rules and regulations of sporting competitions and other associated regulatory matters.



## Event Organisation and Staging

Our experience in event organisation and staging means we can be with you every step of the way. We have experience in all aspects of event organisation, from stadium development and finance to catering contracts for the event itself.



## Intellectual Property and Brand Protection

Our intellectual property team offers market-leading advice to sports stars, sports teams and rights holders. Our experience ranges from helping individuals negotiate image rights transfers to helping multinational associations compile their virtual advertising policy. The team also has particular expertise in antipiracy strategy, advising rights holders on how to protect their valuable rights, including rights in sports data.



## Corporate

Our full service corporate group is able to assist clients with any corporate goal they are seeking to achieve. The firm has an established pedigree in advising on M&A transactions within sport, including extensive experience in acting for both Premier League clubs and investors in negotiating the legal, commercial and regulatory environment that football clubs operate within. Our team also advises on constitutional and governance issues affecting unincorporated associations, and on debt financing, where we have extensive expertise in debenture issues and receivables and player transfer financing deals.



## Merchandising, Licensing and Sponsorship

We are able to draw on our experience in the technology and intellectual property fields to help rights holders create sophisticated cross media sponsorship campaigns for both the sponsor and the rights holder. Our domestic and international reach means we are a true one-stop service for all your brand's needs.



## Real Estate

Our real estate team has acted on major stadium developments as well as developments of national sporting arenas. We have also acted for some of the most prestigious golf clubs in the UK on their developments.



# Key practice areas

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## Employment

Our team has advised on the contracts of some of the country's leading sports stars as well as for football clubs on key matters related to player and manager contracts. We have acted for both employer and employee, ensuring we know the commercial realities of the whole employment relationship.



## Reputation Management

Sports litigation tends to be extremely high profile, generating substantial media coverage. Our reputation management team is widely recognised as a leader in its field, particularly in relation to privacy issues, with expertise in all areas of law likely to affect the reputation of individuals and organisations in the sports sector.



## Dispute Resolution

Our sports litigation team has experience resolving disputes not only through the courts and major arbitration fora but also specific sports tribunals including the Court of Arbitration for Sport and FA Commissions of Inquiry. We have expertise in acting for clients and sporting associations in a variety of disputes, ranging from anti-doping to compensation disputes following cross border player transfers.



## Data Protection

We regularly advise clients as to their obligations in respect of data protection law and privacy issues. We have defended clients against investigations by the ICO and have particular expertise in advising clients on their use of data in marketing practices. We can advise you on all of your GDPR compliance requirements.



## Esports

We are at the forefront of the esports revolution. Esports sits at the intersection of many of our core areas of expertise, including sports, media, advertising, technology, video games and gambling. We can advise on the full range of issues, including player rights, media distribution, contractual matters and disputes, investment, IP and advertising.



## Tax/Image Rights

Our tax and intellectual property specialists have significant expertise in designing and establishing robust and tax-efficient image rights structures for sporting personalities, including those who are not domiciled in the UK.



# Highlights of our sports experience

## Media

### England and Wales Cricket Board

Advised the ECB on the £1.1bn sale of its broadcasting and media rights. Sky Sports and BBC were awarded new five-year media rights agreements for all of ECB's domestic and international matches played at home from 2020 to 2024.

### International Cricket Council

Acted for the ICC on its global media rights tender for 2017-2023 in respect of the major international cricket tournaments organised by the ICC. This process resulted in the ICC concluding cricket's biggest ever broadcast deal.

### TEAM

We have an ongoing relationship with TEAM which has included advising on bidding for the broadcasting rights to the UEFA Champions League and the UEFA Europa League.

### Global Sports Federation

Advising a global sports body on the launch of its own digital, multiplatform service.

### BT Sport

Represented BT Sport in the launch of its sports channels and advised BT on its landmark channel sharing deal with Sky, which includes BT Sport and Sky Sports.

### FIFA

Acted for FIFA on the global sale of media rights to the 2010 and 2014 FIFA World Cups.

## Commercial Contracts

### A Premier League Football Club

On various media related matters and commercial contracts.

### Wimbledon

Drafted the Venue Use Agreement for Wimbledon for the 2012 Olympic Games as well as several supplier contracts. We also drafted the agreement with IMG for the agency sale of the broadcasting rights to the Wimbledon tennis championships.

### Motor Racing

Negotiated and drafted driver contracts with top motor racing teams and associated junior teams.

## IP

### British Olympic Association (Team GB)

Two of our IP lawyers were seconded to provide legal support to Team GB for the 2018 PyeongChang Winter Olympics. We advised in relation to the enforcement of Team GB and the International Olympic Committee's IP rights, which primarily involved dealing with multiple infringements from non-sponsor brands. CMS also advised Team GB on its sponsorship and licensing arrangements, athlete image rights issues and ad-hoc data protection queries.

### UEFA

Conducted a review of virtual advertising regulations in each of UEFA's member jurisdictions and helped obtain a High Court blocking order against several Internet Service Providers to prevent access by their customers to streaming servers which deliver live streams of UEFA matches.

### Queensberry Promotions and BT

In their application for a live blocking injunction under s.97A of the Copyright Designs and Patents Act. The injunction required the UK's six largest ISPs to block access to illegal streams of the high-profile 'Wilder v Fury' boxing match in December 2018 as well as future QPL-organised boxing events to be broadcast on BT.



# Highlights of our sports experience

## Corporate

### Bank of Ireland

Advised Bank of Ireland on the acquisition by Perform Group, a digital sports media rights specialist, of the entire issued share capital of Goal.com, an internationally popular football website.

### Bydand Sports

Advised on its acquisition of a majority stake and investment in Hibernian Football Club, one of Scotland's leading top flight football clubs.

### The All England Lawn Tennis Ground

Advised on its acquisition of The Wimbledon Park Golf Club for a total consideration of approximately £65m

### Queen's Park Football Club

Advised on its sale of Scotland's national football stadium Hampden Park, and the entire issued share capital of The National Stadium plc, the company that formerly managed Hampden, to the Scottish Football Association.

### Reedtz Limited

Advised on the corporate, tax and regulatory aspects of the acquisition of Notts County Football Club, a founding member of the Football League and the oldest professional football club in the world.

### Several football clubs

Our lawyers have extensive experience in investment in and takeovers of some of English football's biggest clubs.

## Dispute Resolution

### SIS, Betfred and The Tote

In relation to a claim by The Racing Partnership related to data rights in respect of a number of racecourses in the UK.

### New Balance Athletic Shoes

Defending New Balance in a claim by the management companies of Belgian former Manchester United football player, Marouane Fellaini.

### Rockingham Motor Speedway Limited

Advised on disputes arising from the motorcycle speedway series and related issues.

### Seattle Sounders

Advised on training / transfer compensation following player transfers to Tottenham, Sunderland and other FAPL teams. This included the first ever claim for training compensation in the US which featured in Sports Illustrated.

### Tottenham Hotspur

Successfully protected confidential information that the club submitted as part of its bid for the Olympic Stadium from being disclosed under the Freedom of Information Act.

### Wembley Stadium

We have acted for Multiplex on a series of multi-million pounds disputes arising out of Wembley Stadium.

## Real Estate

### All England Lawn Tennis and Croquet Club

Secured planning permission for the new roof on Court 1 and worked on various other developments on the Wimbledon estate. We also advised on its £175m debt facilities with HSBC Bank Plc.

### Carnoustie Golf Course Hotel & Resort

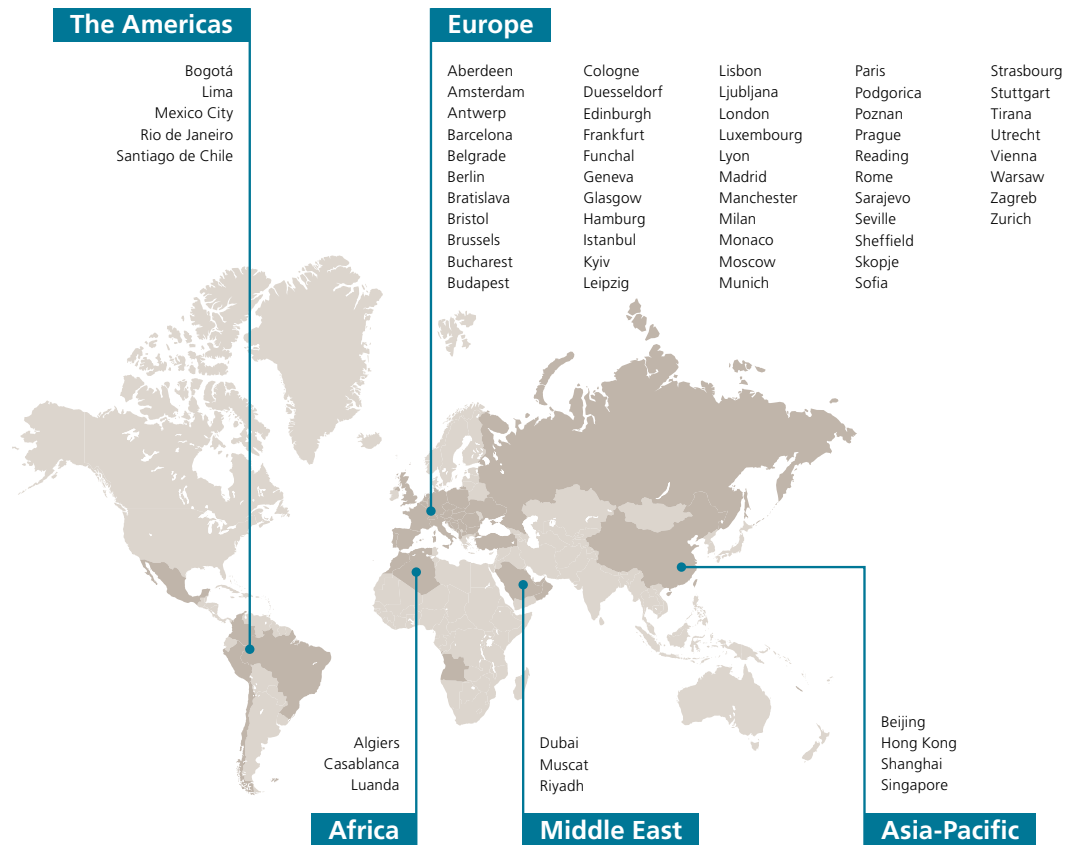
Advised on various agreements with the owners of the adjacent Carnoustie Golf Links course involving golf course access, branding and shared facilities.

### Various Golf Clubs

Acted for some of the most prestigious clubs in world golf including Muirfield in real estate matters, including in relation to the 2013 Open Championship.



# About CMS



- **72 offices**
- **67 cities**
- **> 1,100 partners**
- **> 4,800 lawyers**
- **> 8,000 total staff**
- **Combined annual turnover:**  
EUR 1.36bn (2018)
- **41 countries**

### European countries

Albania, Austria, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, France, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Luxembourg, Republic of North Macedonia, Monaco, Montenegro, the Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Russia, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Switzerland, Turkey, Ukraine and United Kingdom

### Outside Europe

Algeria, Angola, Brazil, Chile, China, Colombia, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Mexico, Morocco, Oman, Peru, Singapore and United Arab Emirates

[cms.law](http://cms.law)

## Get in touch



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