



SPORTS LAW

Protecting sports clubs,
organisations and individuals

hcr

harrison clark
rickerbys solicitors

A PASSION FOR PEOPLE

Our passion for people is at the heart of everything we do. It's the engine that keeps us ticking and inspires us to do our best. We're not satisfied unless we're making a real difference to people's lives, and we'll keep working hard to ensure we achieve the best outcome possible for you.

Winning advice

We act for a broad range of sports clubs, agents, athletes, governing bodies, organising committees, sponsors, and rights holders. Our advisory team are passionate about sport, so their legal expertise is grounded in an understanding of what you care about too – helping you move forward when faced with a potential issue, or opportunity for growth.

From grass roots to premiership, local to international, and from individuals to Olympic teams, we have the experience you need. We take your legal and compliance headaches away, so you can focus on getting back to winning, and doing what's right for you and your organisation.



The HCR team is proactive, thoughtful and efficient; they are very good at managing relationships, negotiating effectively and getting deals done.



Client quote





How we help sports clubs and organisations

Raising finance for growth

If your club needs to access additional funding, our banking and finance solicitors have the lending connections you need, and expertise to help make the borrowing process as smooth as possible. We can help you leverage your assets, finance property development and refinance existing debt.

We advised an English Football League club on its loan arrangements with the FA and Premier League.

We supported several premieriership rugby clubs to access government-backed emergency loan schemes during the pandemic.

Ensuring your contracts are watertight

Our commercial team will draft, advise on, and negotiate all types of sport-related contracts including player transfers, sponsorship agreements, image rights, endorsement and merchandising rights, and supplier contracts. We can help you commercialise an idea, and support the organisation of major matches and events.

We advised several Premiership rugby clubs on sponsorship, broadcasting, and licensing issues, including the 2021/2022 Commercial Regulations and Salary Cap Regulations.

We advised on, and provided legal reviews of, advertising and promotions relating to FIFA World Cups – particularly on the associated risks and liabilities.

For a high-profile legends T20 cricket tournament in the UAE, members of our team advised the rights holder and organiser on the arrangement and management of the event. This included drafting, advising and negotiating player contracts, an event management agreement, ticketing and sponsorship agreements, franchise and auction contracts, and brand ambassador contracts.



Gearing up for change, growth or sale

Our corporate team can support you with shareholders advice, advice on corporate governance including constitution, and corporate structures. If your club, business, or organisation is gearing up for a joint venture, merger, sale or acquisition, our due diligence process and expert corporate lawyers will ensure you are protected, and your liabilities minimised.

Our team advised on all steps in relation to the strategic joint venture of a sports management business.

We assisted with the creation of Sports Council Trust Company to hold all the National Sports Centres.

We advised a UK-based football agency on the acquisition of a football management agency.

We act for a charity established to help those who have suffered a sports-related spinal cord injury resulting in tetraplegia/quadriplegia. We assist them with corporate matters including, most recently, the appointment and removal of directors from the board.

We advised a county cricket club on corporate governance matters relating to its annual general meeting and the interpretation of its constitution.

In your corner

If you get into a dispute, for example with a player, governing body, supplier, or the shareholders, we'll be by your side. Our dispute resolution team regularly act on sporting matters and always try to keep the issue out of court – saving you time, money and stress.

Our team has acted for British Dressage members for nearly a decade. We've acted on behalf of Olympic athletes and owners of top competition horses in a number of disputes, including numerous professional negligence claims against veterinary surgeons.

We assisted a minority shareholder and joint partner in a Formula 1 team to successfully bring an unfair prejudice shareholder and director misfeasance dispute.

Working with



“

An extremely formidable team that helped get us what we wanted when we wanted it. I certainly would not want to be on the other side of the table to them!

”

Client quote



Keeping your team where you need them

We're your people-experts. We advise on player transfers and immigration, day-to-day employment challenges, and projects including staff recruitment or disputes.

We advised a county cricket club on a safeguarding matter regarding a casual coach. The matter included involvement by the English Cricket Board.

We advised another county cricket club on an Employment Tribunal matter that involves immigration law.

We've arranged multiple visas for international players.

Staying on the right side of the regulations

Not only do help keep your club compliant on health and safety, trading standards, and food safety – we can also help you to maximise your premises license, by providing strategic advice on how to make best use of your space and facilities.

When a county cricket club undertook development of their ground, we successfully obtained a premises licence, enabling them to extend their business from a match venue to an events venue, delivering many opportunities for growth.

We helped a Premier League football club to obtain a concert seating permit, which prevented £200,000 in lost revenue per night.

We helped establish The National Sports Medicine Institute (NSMI) and the Anti-Doping structure with King's College, London.

Supporting the emerging esports scene demands a blend of specialist legal skills including intellectual property, data and cyber security, privacy, gaming and financial regulation, media, sponsorship, promotion, and venue hire. We're supporting several players to secure favourable contracts, as well as ascertaining the financial hygiene of reward arrangements.

We acted for a group of Premier League footballers and their agents, in relation to an international investigation led by HMRC into elite player remuneration and transfers.

We'll help you protect your interests – if it comes to needing incident response, an investigation into a breach, advice on handling prosecution or enforcement action, or preparation for trial, we'll be by your side at every step. We can provide strategic media and PR advice, minimising any fall out from club or player activity. Our clients include major food and drink chains, hotels, sports clubs and well-known sports men and women – when the need arises, we're your problem solvers.

Our specialists regularly review the financial hygiene of player transfers and support compliance with the Financial Conduct Authority's rules in relation to loans, investments, and other financial activity.



Maximising your property and land

We advise on all aspects of the commercial property lifecycle; from acquisition, development, and funding through to asset management and disposal and everything in between. We have specialist commercial property, real estate dispute resolution, planning, and construction solicitors – so we can help you maximise your real estate position, wherever you are in the cycle.

We've worked on many projects involving sports facilities; from publicly procured sports halls for universities, and international swimming pools, to new cricket pavilions and 3G pitches.

We advised on construction contracts for development at a county cricket club involving a new hotel and conference venue to make it a year-round venue.

We advised an elite German sports car company and secured a hire agreement for their use of a famous British GP circuit.

Avoiding troubled waters

If your club or organisation gets into financial difficulty, our restructuring and insolvency team can help you avoid troubled waters by offering a lifeline. We help safeguard jobs and protect company directors. We can provide advice on what you need to do to protect yourself against insolvency proceedings and can defend you should you face disqualification proceedings.

We acted for a leading sports club when it was facing multiple winding up petitions from HMRC.

We acted for the administrators that were put in place at a London football club.



Global connections

With extensive experience working in overseas markets and on international agreements, our teams have built meaningful relationships with legal partners all around the world. Having advised on global sporting matters and major events for decades, our specialists are well connected and positioned to support you wherever you are.

Our team advised the organiser on its operational involvement in the FIH20 Grand Prix in the UAE.

Our team provided extensive legal support relating to the inaugural Dubai Tour, the first stage of the Union Cycliste International Asian Tour calendar.

Our team have acted for an international racing circuit for several years. We have drafted, advised, and negotiated various agreements including broadcasting, TV hosting rights, and sponsorship agreements – as well as advising on issues relating to hosting FIA events and Formula 1 Grand Prix.

We have advised stakeholders in relation to international mega-events, including FIFA World Cups, Commonwealth Games, and Expo 2020 Dubai. We are experienced in supporting sponsorships, licensing, ticketing, broadcasting, contract management, and regulations.





How we help sports professionals

Protecting you now

We support sports clubs, people, players, and third parties on a variety of challenges. We draft and negotiate sponsorship agreements, as well as endorsement or merchandising contracts. We also deal with, or help prevent, disputes and intellectual property or image rights.

If you get into trouble, we'll be by your side.

We've drafted high value football player transfer and loan agreements.

We acted for a Premier League footballer to unwind an overseas trust company structure and simplify it into a UK structure.

If you're buying or selling your home, our specialist residential property team can help make your move as smooth as possible. We know you'll want a swift transaction with minimal fuss.

Protecting your future

When you've worked hard to grow your personal wealth, it's important to have advisors that can help you protect and manage it effectively, and ensure it is passed on through generations or dealt with as decided by you. Our experts work with private individuals and family offices, to help you get the most from your assets, now and in the future. We draft wills and trusts and help individuals with their estate planning – minimising your tax liabilities along the way.

We've supported well-known sports people to avoid personal bankruptcy.

We regularly provide advice to sports men and women on personal legal matters that, if mishandled, could bring their clubs into disrepute. Matters include criminal offences such as driving offences and claims of assault.

Protecting your family

We advise on issues affecting every kind of family – including divorce, matters involving children, pre-nuptial and post-nuptial agreements and international family law. We can also help with immigration matters if you are looking to move your family to the UK.

We've acted for several high-profile footballers and other sports professionals in their divorces and family matters.

“

The lawyers are extremely friendly and make it easy to pick up the phone, whatever the question. They are an outstanding firm.

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Client quote





How we've helped others

Collaboration at British Blind Sport

We act for a UK charity that enables people who are blind or partially sighted to participate in sport and recreational activities. Our advice was in relation to the International Blind Sport Association (IBSA) World Games 2023, which is being hosted in Birmingham in August 2023. The World Games are the largest high-level international event for athletes with visual impairments, attracting over 1,000 competitors from over 70 nations.

Our work involved significant planning in relation to all aspects of hosting the Games, including drafting various commercial documentation, covering issues from the collaboration with other bodies and entities also involved in the organisation and running of the Games, through to sponsorship, delegation, underwriting, the sharing of intellectual property and event management.

On our client's side

Our client, a national governing body, received a complaint about the interpretation of its articles of association and the electoral procedure taken in relation to the appointment of a senior committee member at its annual general meeting.

We provided advice on the interpretation of the articles of association, suggested correspondence with the members of the client (including the complainant), to clarify the process and explain that the actions taken had been done in accordance with the relevant articles, and advised on additional steps to be taken to ensure that subsequent actions were all in accordance with the provisions of the articles.

Racing ahead

Our client needed advice and guidance on creating and negotiating a number of commercial agreements with a global car manufacturer on the supply of racing cars for use in an exclusive racing event.

We advised on a range of legal issues and prepared bespoke agreements for the client to use with the manufacturer which protected their interests in obtaining the racing cars, and also supplying these for use to individuals.

The client was able to hold the exclusive race event with the knowledge that they were protected both with their supplier and their customers.

“ I appreciate their responsiveness, their honesty in relation to billing, and the quality of their work. The work is done at a high standard, ” equal to any top City firm.

Client quote



Meet our team, part of your team



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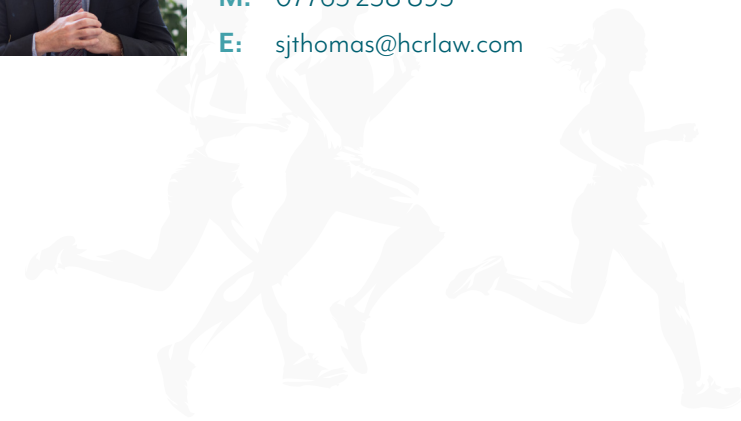
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