



SPORT CASE STUDIES

Exploitation of Rights to Sporting Events

The rights to high profile sporting events are a potential goldmine. However, the rights position is often complex and the manner in which rights are asserted and exploited often seems to be as much to do with historical custom and practice as it is the actual ownership of rights.

At the same time, with the present evolution of technology and the emergence of new platforms and opportunities, ever more sophisticated rights packages are being developed.

Whether acting for licensor or licensee, our approach with any sports-rights related transaction from the outset involves paying assiduous attention to detail of the rights themselves. Our experience has shown that a comprehensive and cohesive understanding of the property access rights, intellectual property rights and the web of underlying rights relating to any given event is key to effective rights exploitation and protection. Most importantly, it enables us to assist our clients in achieving maximum value from rights.

In a typical sport-rights transaction our work and expertise will commonly involve the following:

Analysis of Rights / Rights Packages - We bring a wealth of expertise to the analysis, strategic exploitation and packaging of rights - this is one of our specialisms. The bundling of rights has a fundamental effect upon the value or return which can be achieved on those rights.

Internet / Mobile / iDTV / Video-on-Demand / Interactive Functionality - Although in many cases the value of rights on these platforms is yet to be properly tested, these rights are increasingly forming either new and discrete bundles or important parts of mainstream rights packages. One of our areas of expertise is in understanding and providing for the potential impact of these 'new' rights and the subtleties of the relevant licensing arrangements. The development of interactive functionality on many platforms, especially for betting and gaming purposes, is a rapidly growing area in which we have significant experience.

Data and Ancillary Information - Through our work with various sports we are well aware that the management (including rights to collect and format) and the exploitation and sports data and related ancillary information often have a significant value in addition to audio, visual and interactive rights. Again, this is an area in which we have substantial expertise and experience.

Analysing Finance and Security arrangements - Being sure that appropriate financing and security arrangements are in place is just as important as understanding the rights themselves.

Archive Rights Management and Exploitation - Archive rights can represent a valuable source of revenue for sports bodies and businesses through the licensing of archive audio and/or visual material and data. As with current rights, accurately analysing and a command of the often complex claims to ownership is vital to effective exploitation.

International Rights Management and Distribution - In addition to advice on local exploitation of sports rights, we regularly advise on international rights distribution for betting and non-betting purposes. The international rights market for domestic sports is often as lucrative and important as the domestic market itself.