

Sports

For over half a century, Weil has partnered with stakeholders across the dynamic sports industry to navigate risks and opportunities associated with the rapid expansion and growth of the sector. Our cross-disciplinary domestic and international platform has played a leading role in countless industry-changing engagements, including seminal antitrust cases that helped achieve free agency and fair competition across the industry, IP disputes that have yielded important rulings on athlete name, image, and likeness rights, and major deals and litigations that transformed the leagues we watch and the ways we interact with them.

Weil is uniquely situated to provide sports-industry clients with full-spectrum counsel on their most important, high-stakes matters:

- Longstanding and broad-based relationships with players' unions, pro athletes and their agents and marketing teams, and industry-adjacent stakeholders, including media, broadcast, sports betting, and entertainment companies.
- Deep industry expertise in important areas that feature most prominently in sports-related transactions and disputes, including antitrust and intellectual property law, employment and labor law, internal investigations, and acquisitions and dispositions of professional sports franchises.
- A robust international team that provides our clients with a combination of local-market knowledge and a high-level understanding of global economic, legislative, and legal opportunities and risks, which together enable us to advance our clients' short-term goals and long-term interests, particularly with the rapid expansion of cross-border investment and activity.

Some of our notable groundbreaking matters have included:

Washington State University and Oregon State University

Weil won a major victory before the Supreme Court of Washington State, on behalf of Washington State University and co-plaintiff Oregon State University, in a high-profile dispute regarding the future of the Pac-12 athletic Conference. The court's ruling ensures that our clients have sole control over the Pac-12 moving forward, following the announced departure of 10 members from the Conference, even as the departing members sought to continue serving on the Conference's board and influencing its governance and finances.

Following appellate briefing led by Weil, the court denied our adversaries' motions for discretionary review of a lower court's order that denied defendants' motions to dismiss and granted our clients' motion to preliminarily enjoin the 10 departing member universities from continuing to serve on the Conference's board. This is the third consecutive victory Weil has secured for its clients in this dispute, following earlier rulings in which the trial court granted our request for a temporary restraining order and a preliminary injunction.

Minor League Baseball Teams

Weil successfully represented a number of Minor League Baseball teams in connection with high-profile litigation, including a cert petition before the U.S. Supreme Court, adverse to Major League Baseball and several of its clubs regarding MLB's consolidation of the minor leagues, which could have resulted, absent a highly favorable settlement we reached while the appeal was pending, in a Supreme Court decision invalidating the MLB's longstanding "exemption" to the U.S. antitrust laws.

NBA All-Star Zion Williamson and Creative Artists Agency

Weil represents NBA All-Star Zion Williamson and his agency, Creative Artists Agency (CAA), in multi-jurisdictional litigation in North Carolina federal court and Florida state court against his former agent, Prime Sports Marketing (PSM). The disputes collectively implicate more than \$100M.

In North Carolina, Zion commenced a lawsuit seeking to declare the contract illegal and void, and PSM responded with counterclaims for breach of contract, fraud, unjust enrichment, and misappropriation of trade secrets. Weil helped obtain a complete trial court victory, with the court first holding that the contract was illegal and then subsequently dismissing all of PSM's counterclaims. PSM appealed, and the Fourth Circuit affirmed. In the first appellate precedent interpreting the Uniform Athlete Agents Act, the Fourth Circuit held that the contract was illegal and void and that the underlying claims lacked merit.

Meanwhile, in Florida, Weil helped secure an appellate victory for Williamson that lead to the dismissal of all claims brought against him by PSM in Florida. Weil also helped obtain a February 2023 summary judgment victory for CAA that dismissed all claims against them as well.

National Women's Soccer League Players Association

Weil protected athlete well-being by serving as counsel to the National Women's Soccer League Players Association in a landmark joint investigation into abuse, harassment, and misconduct in professional women's soccer.

CBS Sports

Weil represented CBS Sports in a wide range of high-profile sports media-related litigations, including, among others: multi-district antitrust class action litigation relating to the use of CBS Sports' NFL broadcasts in the "Sunday Ticket" subscription package; the "grant-in-aid" litigation resolved by the U.S. Supreme Court's Alston decision, as well as the ongoing In re College Athlete NIL Litigation, challenging the NCAA's rules prohibiting student-athletes from receiving compensation in exchange for the use of their names, images, and likenesses; a dispute with the Alliance of American Football (AAF) following AAF's chapter 7 bankruptcy filing; and a pair of major class actions filed by putative classes of current and former college athletes involving right of publicity issues.

DiracTV

Weil is counseling DIRECTV in connection with litigation and restructuring options surrounding its contractual relationship with Diamond Sports Group, a regional sports network affiliate of Sinclair Broadcasting Group that has encountered financial difficulty. Diamond operates 19 individual regional sports networks that serve as the TV home to more than half of all MLB, NHL, and NBA teams based in the United States.

Our notable areas of expertise include:

- **Litigation and Investigations:** Weil's Litigation team works collaboratively with clients to help achieve groundbreaking results. Drawing on our expertise in complex commercial litigation, high-stakes investigations, and global antitrust law, Weil routinely counsels clients throughout the industry, including professional sports franchises, superstar athletes, labor unions, and talent management firms in high-stakes commercial, employment, IP, and antitrust disputes in both state and federal jurisdictions, as well as in connection with sensitive investigations that play out in front of regulators and the press.
- **Corporate/Restructuring:** Weil provides market-leading legal services in acquisitions, strategic investments and transactions, reorganizations, and financings for clients across the global sports industry. Whether the need involves adapting to the dynamic sports media landscape or representing private capital in purchasing or investing in highly coveted global sports properties, Weil stands ready to counsel clients where it matters. Weil also has extensive experience advising clients on broadcasting rights, naming rights, sponsorship and other sports-related contractual arrangements that generate value for sports clients and their brand partners.
- **Tax and Executive Compensation:** Our global tax practice enables us to work with clients and private equity sponsors to navigate the challenges of domestic and international transactions. Weil's tax expertise enables us to understand the intricacies and nuances surrounding transactions involving global sports properties, as well as executive compensation matters that are critical to every sports transaction.

Related:

- › [Antitrust Litigation](#)
- › [Appeals and Strategic Counseling](#)
- › [Complex Commercial Litigation](#)
- › [Employment](#)
- › [Executive Compensation & Benefits](#)
- › [Intellectual Property/Media](#)
- › [Mergers & Acquisitions](#)
- › [Private Equity](#)
- › [Restructuring](#)
- › [Tax](#)
- › [Technology & IP Transactions](#)
- › [White Collar Defense, Regulatory and Investigations](#)

Key Contacts



Drew Tulumello
Partner
Washington, D.C.

+1 202 682 7100
drew.tulumello@weil.com



David Avery-Gee
Partner
London

+44 20 7903 1236
david.avery-gee@weil.com



Yehudah L. Buchweitz
Partner
New York

+1 (212) 310-8256
yehudah.buchweitz@weil.com

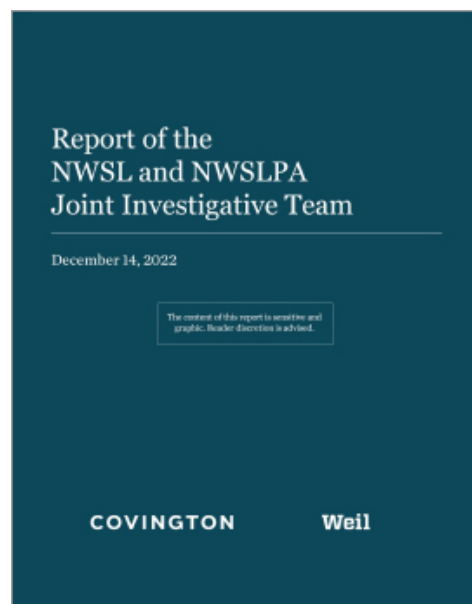


Arianna Scavetti
Partner
Washington, D.C.

+1 202 682 7291
arianna.scavetti@weil.com

Firm News & Announcements

- › **Greg Silbert and Twin Brother Featured by The American Lawyer for Pac-12 Appellate Victory**
Firm Announcement — January 26, 2024
- › **Weil Wins 'Momentous' Appellate Victory in Pac-12 Conference Governance Litigation**
Litigation Win — December 15, 2023
- › **Weil Wins Preliminary Injunction in Pac-12 Conference Governance Litigation**
Litigation Win — November 20, 2023
- › **Weil Secures Extensive Amicus Support of U.S. Supreme Court Cert Petition on Behalf of Minor League Baseball Teams**
Deal Brief — October 24, 2023
- › **Weil Asks U.S. Supreme Court to Overturn Major League Baseball Antitrust Exemption**
Deal Brief — September 18, 2023



[Read the report of the NWSL and NWSLPA Joint Investigative Team into abuse and misconduct toward NWSL players](#)

Firm News & Announcements

- › **Greg Silbert and Twin Brother Featured by The American Lawyer for Pac-12 Appellate Victory**
Firm Announcement — January 26, 2024
- › **Weil Wins 'Momentous' Appellate Victory in Pac-12 Conference Governance Litigation**
Litigation Win — December 15, 2023
- › **Weil Wins Preliminary Injunction in Pac-12 Conference Governance Litigation**
Litigation Win — November 20, 2023
- › **Weil Secures Extensive Amicus Support of U.S. Supreme Court Cert Petition on Behalf of Minor League Baseball Teams**
Deal Brief — October 24, 2023
- › **Weil Asks U.S. Supreme Court to Overturn Major League Baseball Antitrust Exemption**
Deal Brief — September 18, 2023

Latest Thinking

- › **Getting The Deal Through – Sports Law 2024**
Publication — By [Arianna Scavetti](#) and [Zach Schreiber](#) — PDF — October 2023

Awards and Recognition

- › **Arianna Scavetti Named a "Rising Star" in Sports & Betting**
Award Brief — Law360 2023
- › **Zach Schreiber Recognized as 2023 "10 Under 10" Honoree**
Award Brief — Conduct Detrimental: The Intersection of Sports and Law
- › **Weil Named a "Leading Firm" for Sports Law Nationwide**
Award Brief — Legal 500 2023
- › **Weil Named a "Leading Firm" for Sports Law Nationwide**
Award Brief — Chambers USA 2023
- › **Drew Tulumello Recognized as a 2021 "Sports Trailblazer"**
Award Brief — National Law Journal

Speaking Engagements

- › **The Business of NIL – A Sports Law Briefing**
Speaker(s): [Zach Schreiber](#)
June 14, 2023 — New York, NY — Weil Complex Commercial Litigation associate Zach Schreiber moderated a panel entitled "The Business of NIL," sponsored by UJA-Federation New York's Young Lawyers Division and Entertainment & Tech Council. The panel discussed the positives and challenges the new NCAA rule has brought to the field for athletes and professionals entrusted with navigating their rights and earning potential.
- › **Women's Soccer: Equal Pay, Coaching Misconduct, Age Restrictions, Expansion, and the Lawyer's Role in it All**
Speaker(s): [Arianna Scavetti](#)
May 12, 2023 — Weil Complex Commercial Litigation partner Arianna Scavetti was a panelist discussing professional women's soccer over the last few years, including equal pay, CBA negotiations, abuse, and expansion at the Sports Lawyers Association's (SLA) Annual Conference.
- › **50 years of Title IX – What's next?**

Speaker(s): [Arianna Scavetti](#)

March 23, 2023 — Weil Complex Commercial Litigation partner Arianna Scavetti was a panelist discussing the achievements of Title IX and how law and awareness can be used to lessen the gap between men's and women's sports at Penn Law's 10th Annual Entertainment and Sports Law Society (ESLS) Symposium.

› **Unions, Leagues, and the Collective Bargaining Process**

Speaker(s): [Zach Schreiber](#)

March 10, 2023 — New York, NY — Weil Complex Commercial Litigation associate Zach Schreiber moderated a panel entitled "Unions, Leagues, and the Collective Bargaining Process," as part of the Fordham Sports Law Forum 26th Annual Symposium.

Copyright © 2024 Weil, Gotshal & Manges LLP, All Rights Reserved. The contents of this website may contain attorney advertising under the laws of various states. Prior results do not guarantee a similar outcome. Weil, Gotshal & Manges LLP is headquartered in New York and has office locations in Boston, Brussels, Dallas, Frankfurt, Hong Kong, Houston, London, Miami, Munich, New York, Paris, Shanghai, Silicon Valley and Washington, D.C.