

Adam Lewis KC

“Exceptional knowledge of sports law, strong work ethic, tactical thinker, and a team player.”

– LEGAL 500, 2024

Year of call: **1985**
Appointed to silk: **2009**
Degree: **MA (Cantab)**
Languages: **French (working knowledge), Norwegian (working knowledge)**



Adam Lewis KC is widely recognised as the leading sports lawyer at the Bar.

He has been involved in most of the key disputes of recent years acting for participants, clubs, leagues, governing bodies and commercial partners in matters involving the full range of sporting, disciplinary, regulatory and commercial issues raised in all sports. He is co-editor of the leading sports law textbook, now in its 4th edition.

Recent work includes acting for many national and international governing bodies that have faced quasi-public law and competition law challenges to their attempts to enforce their rules regulating amongst other things financial fair play, salary caps, ownership, intermediaries and participation in unsanctioned competitions. Adam has also advised extensively on rule changes designed to improve the operation and regulation of several sports including football, rugby, golf and cricket. These have recently included the Premier League, UEFA, The FA, the EFL, World Rugby, Premier Rugby Limited, the WRU, PGA European Tour and the ECB. Adam has also been involved in a significant number of cases arising out of Russia's invasion of Ukraine in early 2022, and in relation to continuing issues arising out of the aftermath of the Covid 19 pandemic.

Significant recent work includes:

- Premier League v Manchester City: acting for the league in disputes concerning potential breach by the club of the league's financial regulations
- ECB Disciplinary Procedures: acts for the England & Wales Cricket Board in review
- PGAET and LIV Golf: acted for the European Tour over creation of an unsanctioned competition
- Newcastle United v Premier League: acted for the league in various proceedings over proposed sale of the club
- World Rugby and World 12a: acted for World Rugby in relation to proposed new competition format, based on the IPL
- Premier League and European Super League: acted for the league in relation to aborted attempt to create a new, European Super League

- Premier Rugby v Saracens: acted for Premier Rugby in proceedings against Saracens for breach of the salary cap
- Chaired Independent Review of Integrity in Tennis

Adam Lewis was named Sports Silk of the Year 2023 at the Legal 500 Awards. Adam is recognised by both of the main independent legal directories as the leading sports law counsel at the Bar. Recent comments include:

- "Exceptional knowledge of sports law, strong work ethic, tactical thinker, and a team player."- Legal 500, 2024
- "Adam Lewis KC has an extremely sharp and fierce intellect. His written work deals with new and complex areas."- Chambers and Partners, 2023
- "Adam Lewis KC is a leader in his field."- Chambers and Partners, 2023

Previous comments include:

- "Adam is a go to barrister for sports law and his knowledge of all areas is outstanding."- Legal 500
- "A leading light in the sports sector."- Legal 500
- "Adam Lewis QC is widely regarded as the leading sports barrister in the UK, whose dedicated focus has led to him having an unrivalled knowledge and experience in the sector."- Chambers UK

EXPERIENCE

Sport

Adam Lewis has for some time been widely recognised as the leading expert on sports law at the Bar, and is ranked as the only Star Individual in this area by Chambers UK 2021. He has acted in many of the leading cases. He co-edits the principal textbook, Lewis and Taylor, Sport: Law and Practice, 4th Edition Bloomsbury Professional 2021 and in 2016 also published Lewis, Taylor, De Marco and Segan, Challenging Sports Governing Bodies, Bloomsbury Professional. He teaches on the BASL De Montfort Sports Law Course. He regularly sits as Chair on various sports tribunals, and as an arbitrator in a wide range of sports matters.

He served in 2017 and 2018 as the Chair of the Independent Review of Integrity in Tennis, leading a panel comprising Beth Wilkinson, a former US Attorney and trial lawyer, and Marc Henzelin, a Swiss trial lawyer and judge. In 2019 and 2020 he undertook an independent internal investigation in relation to a sports governing body's actions and processes in dealing with a potential breach of its rules by staff. Adam was appointed to the Sports Resolutions Panel for 2024-2027.

He has used his experience in the fields of Arbitration, Civil Liberties and Human Rights, EU and Competition, and Public and Regulatory, to develop the content and application of the law in the context of Sport.

"Adam Lewis KC is a leader in his field."

— CHAMBERS AND PARTNERS, 2023

He regularly advises, acting for participants, clubs, leagues, governing bodies and commercial partners, and acts on their behalf before the courts and tribunals (national and the Court of Arbitration for Sport) and regulatory authorities. He has acted matters arising in the full range of sports. His sports law work equally covers the full range of issues arising from the legality of governing bodies' rules and actions to regulatory, disciplinary and drugs related work to, and from player/club disputes to the commercial exploitation of sport through broadcasting, sponsorship and merchandising. His specialism extends to all of the arbitration, human rights, EU and competition, and administrative law aspects of sports law.

Cases

Premier League v Manchester City, Financial Regulations and access to documents, and the investigatory process

Commercial Court (Moulder J [2021] EWHC 628 (Comm); [2021] EWHC 711 (Comm) and [2021] EWHC 2077 (Comm)), Court of Appeal ([2021] EWCA Civ 1308)

Acts for the Premier League in ongoing disputes with Manchester City in relation to potential historic breach by the Club of the PL Financial Regulations, access by the Premier League to Club documents, and the investigatory process. There were two arbitration hearings in 2020, hearings before the Commercial Court in Spring 2021 and a hearing before the Court of Appeal in Summer 2021. The Arbitral Tribunal decided it had jurisdiction and rejected a challenge on bias grounds, and subsequently ordered production of documents by the Club. The Club's challenges to the Arbitral Tribunal's approach before the Commercial Court failed. The matter continues with an ongoing Section X Arbitration and the Premier League investigating whether the documents produced reveal a historic breach by the Club of the PL Financial Regulations.

Agents v The FA: FIFA Regulation of Intermediaries

Current

Acts for The FA in relation to agents' case that The FA should not implement imminent new FIFA rules on the regulation of football intermediaries, on the basis that the regulations are unlawful.

PFA v The FA: PFA funding

Current

Acts for The FA in relation to the PFA's funding.

ECB: Review of disciplinary process

Current

Acts for the ECB in relation to the review of its disciplinary processes and the drafting of any appropriate changes.

Brishtel v UEFA

CAS 2022

Acted for UEFA in CAS proceedings brought by expelled officials of the Belarus Football Federation challenging the decision of UEFA not to change on review the discretionary decision of the UEFA Ethics and Disciplinary Inspectors not to open disciplinary proceedings against the Belarus Football Federation or its officials.

PGAET and LIV Golf

2022 PGAET Disciplinary proceedings

Acted for PGAET in the context of LIV Golf's creation of an unsanctioned competition, and the disciplinary proceedings brought against several players as a result of their playing LIV events rather than PGAET events, when their requests for permission to do so had been refused. LIV, and the players, challenge the need for permission and the refusal of it as unlawful.

Football Union of Russia v The FA: exclusion following invasion of Ukraine

CAS 2022

Acted for the FA in FUR's challenge in CAS to UEFA's and The FA's exclusion of Russian international teams from participation in international competitions (one being about to be held by the FA in England) following Russia's invasion of Ukraine.

Burnley FC v Premier League, movement of players following invasion of Ukraine

PL Rules Section X Arbitration 2022

Acted for the Premier League in its successful defence of an arbitration brought by Burnley FC challenging the Premier League's decision not to implement in full FIFA regulations permitting players at Russian Clubs to move following the invasion of Ukraine, because to do so would advantage some Clubs and disadvantage others.

Chelsea Football Club: licence under Government sanctions imposed following the invasion of Ukraine, to allow completion of fixtures

2022

Acted for the Premier League in the context of the Government sanctions on the Club's owner following the invasion of Ukraine. Absent licence from the Government to allow the Club to complete its fixtures, the Premier League competition would have been fundamentally undermined.

UEFA v The FA: England v Germany

2022

Acted for The FA in defence of disciplinary proceedings opened by UEFA against the FA into crowd behaviour at the 2022 match between England and Germany. The charges were dropped.

The FA v A Player

2022

Acted for the FA in an appeal against a Regulatory Commission's finding a disciplinary case not proven, to obtain amongst other things an authoritative Appeal Board ruling, which was made, that the balance of probabilities test does not involve any requirement that the more serious the charge, the more cogent must be the evidence to prove it.

Premier League: compliance with Financial Regulations

2022

Acted for the Premier League in the context of investigations into several Clubs' compliance with the Financial Regulations during season 2021/2022, and complaints by other Clubs that they had not complied.

Premier League: satisfaction of Club ownership requirements

2022

Acted for the Premier League in the context of an investigation into whether Club ownership requirements were satisfied in a particular case.

Premier League: VAR decisions

2022

Acted for the Premier League in the context of a Club's complaint as to the consequences of incorrect VAR decisions.

World Rugby and World 12s

2022

Acted for World Rugby in the context of World 12s' request for sanction of a new competition format with 12 players and shorter matches to be played each August, where franchises would bid for players on the model of the IPL.

Premier League: Match postponements, disciplinary proceedings and rule changes due to Covid-19

2022

Acted for the Premier League in several cases in relation to the grant or refusal of match postponements, disciplinary proceedings, and the possibility of rule changes, all in the light of the continuing aftermath of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Newcastle United v Premier League, St James Holdings Ltd v Premier League

Premier League Section X Arbitration and Commercial Court (Pelling J [2021] EWHC 349 (Comm)), and Competition Appeals Tribunal (Case No)

Acted for the Premier League in an arbitration brought by Newcastle United challenging the PL Board decision that if the proposed acquisition of the Club by a consortium led by the Public Investment Fund of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia proceeds, the KSA would become a “Director” of the Club, such that it would fall to be assessed against the PL Owners and Directors Test. The Club’s challenge to the chair of the Arbitral Tribunal on bias grounds failed before the Commercial Court. Prior to the hearing of the arbitration, legally binding assurances were provided that meant that the KSA did not fall to be assessed against the OADT.

Premier League and European Super League

Spring 2021, continuing Spanish proceedings, current

Advised and acted for the Premier League in response to the threatened but aborted establishment of the European Super League, unsanctioned by football’s governing bodies, in Spring 2021. The response of amongst others the Premier League caused its member clubs that were involved to withdraw from the project. Proceedings continue in Spain and a reference has been made to the European Court. Continues to advise in relation to the subsequent consequences of the events.

Premier League, Big Picture: proposed restructuring and funding

Current

Advises and acts for the Premier League in the context of the continuing consequences of the failed late 2020 and early 2021 Big Picture proposals for the restructuring and funding of the Premier League and EFL. The response of amongst others the Premier League headed off the proposals at that point, but the issues that gave rise to them remain. Similarly advised the Premier League in relation to the attempt to set up the European Super League in 2021.

UEFA v The FA, Euros Final

UEFA Disciplinary Proceedings. October 2021

Acted for The FA in its defence of UEFA charges brought following events at the Euros Final in summer 2021. The tribunal imposed a sanction of one match behind closed doors and a further such match suspended, as opposed to the three matches behind closed doors sought by the independent disciplinary inspector.

EFL v Derby County, Breach of Financial Regulations

Independent Disciplinary Proceedings, Summer 2021

Advised and acted for the EFL in relation to Derby County’s breach of the EFL Financial Regulations in disciplinary proceedings ending in summer 2021.

Club v Agent, dual representation contract

Arbitration. 2022.

Acted for an agent in the context of an attempt to commence arbitral proceedings against him, claiming breach of duties under a dual representation contract

Premier Rugby Limited, Salary Cap Disciplinary Proceedings

Possible Disciplinary Proceedings. 2022

Advised and acted for PRL in relation to possible charges against clubs for breach of the Salary Cap Regulations. Previously acted for PRL in the similar case against Saracens.

UK Sport, Paris Cycle Funding

Spring 2021.

Acted for UK Sport in relation to a sport's challenge to the funding granted to it in the Paris Cycle. The sport suggests that UK Sport has misapplied the criteria to it with the result that it falls into a different category to that into which it believes it should fall.

Sporting v Player, Lille and FIFA

Court of Arbitration for Sport. Summer 2021

Acted for Lille defending Sporting's appeal to the Court of Arbitration for Sport against the FIFA decision in respect of a player.

SIAC Sports broadcasting rights arbitration

Arbitrator, SIAC Arbitration. 2020 to 2022.

Sat as sole arbitrator in a dispute between an overseas broadcast rights holder and its overseas commercial partner. The matter settled before trial, following interim applications and procedural issues.

Club v UEFA: Covid-19 pandemic exception to FFP rules

2022

Acted for a Club in relation to the proper application and legality of the UEFA Covid-19 pandemic exception to the FFP Rules, which allows clubs to write off a loss in defined periods, but does not afford the equivalent benefit to prudent clubs, thereby placing them at a disadvantage in terms of permissible expenditure and possible compliance over the entire reporting period.

Club v EFL, EFL Covid-19 loan

Arbitration. Current

Advised and acted for the EFL in relation to proceedings brought by a Club to challenge the structure of the loan facility made available to League Clubs as a result of the damage suffered due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

Club v Welsh Rugby Union

2021

Acted for and advised the WRU in the context of threatened competition law proceedings by a rugby club in respect of the participation arrangements and distribution of funding, including in the light of the Covid-19 pandemic

World Rugby calendar adaption and player release

Autumn 2020

Advised World Rugby in the context of the adaptation of the international windows in the calendar in the light of the Covid-19 pandemic, and in relation to player release as a result.

Premier League Related Party Transactions and Profitability and Sustainability Rules

Current

Advises the Premier League in relation to possible changes to the provisions in respect of Related Party Transactions for the purposes of the Profitability and Sustainability Rules

EFL, Financial Regulations revision

Current

Advises the EFL on possible revisions to the EFL Financial Regulations.

EFL, Professional Footballers' Association, Salary Cap

Current

Advises and acts for the EFL in relation to the PFA's objections to the adoption of a League 1 and League 2 Salary Cap.

Premier Rugby Limited, Intermediaries

Current

Advises PRL in relation to changes to the Intermediaries Regulations

World Rugby, LNR Competition Law challenge to Regulation 9 Player Release

Complaint to European Commission. Current

Complaint to European Commission. Current

Advises and acts for World Rugby in the context of the LNR's complaint to the European Commission that WR Regulations on player release infringe competition law

Premier League, Restart: response to Covid-19 pandemic, disputes with several clubs

2020 and 2021, current

Advised and acted for the Premier League throughout 2020 and 2021 and continues to do so in the context of its ongoing reaction to the continuing Covid-19 pandemic. At the outset, major concerns were the basis on which the 2019/2020 competition should be completed and the 2020/2021 competition pursued. Issues included whether the 2019/2020 season could and should be played out, and how, and if not, the basis on which it should be resolved in terms of winner, European places and relegation, the creation of protocols for safe play and the consequences of positive tests, and changes to the Premier League Rules to address the situation. Whatever course were adopted would provoke reaction from diverse groups with different interests, and threats of action on various bases including competition law, but a fine line was successfully taken, to date avoiding the litigation threatened.

Club v Premier Rugby Limited, Coach Movement

Arbitration. Spring 2021

Acted for PRL in a challenge to the PRL decision on the movement of a coach from one Club to another.

World Rugby, Regulation 8 Player Eligibility

2021

Advised World Rugby on possible revisions of Regulation 8 in relation to the eligibility of players to play for a Union.

Player v Club, Contract Dispute

Autumn 2020

Advised Club on a dispute as to the proper interpretation of contract and rectification.

Olympiacos v Panathinaikos and Euroleague

Court of Arbitration for Sport. 2020.

Acted for basketball club Olympiacos in a dispute with Panathinaikos and Olympiacos' appeal to the Court of Arbitration for Sport against Euroleague's decision not to discipline Panathinaikos for breach of its rules.

Premier Rugby Limited response to Covid-19 pandemic

2020

Advised Premier Rugby Limited in the context of its reaction to the Covid-19 pandemic, and in particular the creation of protocols for safe play and the consequences of positive tests.

Rugby Six Nations media rights.

2020

Advised the Six Nations in relation to adaption of the basis on which their media rights are marketed, and other issues.

Tonga Rugby League v International Rugby League

Court of Arbitration for Sport, Summer 2020

Advised and acted for the International Rugby League in its defence of an appeal brought by the Tonga Rugby League to the Court of Arbitration for Sport against its expulsion.

Sports Governing Body independent internal investigation.

Chair of Inquiry. Winter 2019 and Spring 2020.

Conducted an independent internal investigation in relation to a sports governing body's actions and processes in dealing with a potential breach of its rules by staff.

FIFA v Chelsea Football Club

Court of Arbitration for Sport, 2019

Acted for the Club in its successful appeal before the Court of Arbitration for Sport against the two lower instance FIFA decisions and transfer ban in respect of the signing of young players, and at the earlier stages.

Premier Rugby Limited v Saracens

Sport Resolutions arbitration. 2019

Acted for Premier Rugby Limited in its proceedings against Saracens for breach of the salary cap. Saracens defended on the basis that it was not in breach of the salary cap and in any event the entire salary cap was contrary to competition law. Saracens failed in the defences and the independent panel, chaired by Lord Dyson, fined Saracens £5.3million and deducted the club 35 points. The relevant rules were adapted to provide for a further deduction if in a season following a finding of breach, a club failed to submit to an audit of compliance. Saracens was consequently deducted a total of 70 points and was relegated at the end of the 2019/2020 season when it was eventually completed.

World Rugby v Scottish Rugby Union

Disciplinary proceedings, Autumn 2019

Advised World Rugby in the context of disciplinary proceedings against the SRU in respect of its reaction to the rescheduling of its match against Japan at the Rugby World Cup 2019.

Club v Club

Autumn 2019

Advised and acted for a football club in its dispute with another club over the transfer of a player.

FC Nantes, Cardiff City FC and Emiliano Sala

Court of Arbitration for Sport, 2019

Advised Cardiff City FC on the transfer position after the death of Emiliano Sala.

RusAF v IAAF

Court of Arbitration for Sport, 2019

Acted for the IAAF in the Court of Arbitration for Sport arbitration commenced by RusAF to challenge the IAAF's decision not to reinstate RusAF to full unsuspended membership pending the satisfaction of various conditions imposed on such reinstatement. The Russian organisation was suspended following the McLaren Report concluding that there had been organised evasion of the anti-doping rules in Russia.

International Canoe Federation v International Surfing Association

Court of Arbitration for Sport, 2019

Acted for the International Canoe Federation before the Court of Arbitration for Sport in a dispute with the International Surfing Association. CAS issued an award in relation to the governance of the sport of Stand-Up Paddleboard, rejecting the International Surfing Association's claim to an exclusive right to govern the sport at world level but allowing it a role at Olympic level.

Premier League v Scout and Club

Disciplinary proceedings. 2019.

Acted for the Premier League in disciplinary proceedings against a scout and football club in the context of the Youth Development Rules.

Club v Agent

Arbitrator, FA Rule K arbitration. 2019.

Sat as an FA Rule K sole arbitrator on a dispute between a football club and an agent.

Racecourse

2019

Advised a Racecourse in relation to rights over races.

World Rugby, Belgium and Spain

Advised World Rugby in relation to a dispute over qualification to the Rugby World Cup 2019.

Premier League Profitability and Sustainability Rules

2019

Advised the Premier League in relation to its Profitability and Sustainability Rules.

Rugby Football Union v Ashley Johnson

Defended the Wasps rugby player Ashley Johnson on a charge of breaching the anti-doping rules. The breach was found to have been inadvertent and only a short suspension was imposed. Also advised and acted in a number of other doping cases that are confidential.

Exeter City AFC v Chelsea FC

Appeared for Chelsea on Exeter's application to the Professional Football Compensation Committee for training compensation in respect of the defender Ethan Ampadu.

Christophe Mongai v Alex Song

Acted for the player Alex Song in the Court of Arbitration proceedings brought against him by his former agent.

Chris Froome and UCI, WADA, and Amaury Sport Organisation

Acted for Chris Froome in the context of the delay of the UCI and WADA in clearing the cyclist following an abnormal result. The cyclist was not charged because there was no basis for doing so, but the delay in reaching this conclusion led to the organisers of the Tour de France threatening to withdraw his entry to the 2018 race, raising the possibility of appeal to a French sports tribunal.

Jersey Football Association v UEFA

Court of Arbitration for Sport

Acted for UEFA in the Jersey Football Association's attempt to overturn UEFA's refusal of membership to it.

FIFA v FA

Acted for The FA in its defence of FIFA disciplinary proceedings in respect of the wearing of the poppy by England players, which FIFA asserted was the wearing of a political symbol. Following two disciplinary hearings and appeal by The FA to CAS, which was not heard, FIFA changed its rules and allowed the wearing of the poppy in November 2017.

The FA v Agent

Advised the FA in its prosecution before the Regulatory Commission of an agent charged with misconduct.

UK Sport funding and British Bobsleigh and Skeleton Association

Advised UK Sport on the process for revision of sports' funding for the Olympics, including in particular in the context of the objections of the British Bobsleigh and Skeleton Association to the conditions imposed on funding

Previously advised on the Tokyo and Rio Funding Cycles.

International Cricket Council

Advised the ICC on the application of the ICC Code of Ethics.

Polo Player and Hurlingham Polo Association

Advised a Polo player on the legality and reasonableness of the Hurlingham Polo Association's changes to playing equipment rules.

Arsenal Football Club policing

Advised Arsenal Football Club in the context of the provision of special police services to the Club by the Metropolitan Police.

National Association and Media Rights

Advised a national sports association on the reorganisation of the sale of media rights. The matter involved a number of issues including completion law.

Independent Review of Integrity in Tennis

Chair of Inquiry, 2017 and 2018

Appointed as the Chair of the three person Independent Review of Integrity in Tennis, a major international review of the nature and extent of the threats to integrity arising in the sport, how they were addressed by the sport, and of how best to deal with them in the future, through changes to the rules, the mechanisms for enforcement, relationships, independence, resources, transparency, and education. The review also had to deal with various historical allegations, which the press had suggested indicate that tennis' approach in the past and presently was inappropriate. A very large number of witnesses all around the world were heard. An Interim Report followed by a Final Report were issued in 2018.

Tyson Fury

Advised the boxer Tyson Fury in relation to agency matters. Also advised in relation to a number of other boxers.

Club v Manager

Advised a premier league club on a dispute with its former manager.

National Association

Advised a national sports association on the compliance of its disciplinary structure with the common law and human rights law.

National Association

Advised a national sports association on the restructuring of its league.

Lagardère

Advised Lagardère on contractual entitlement under a sponsorship marketing agreement

Kieron Westwood v Sunderland AFC Ltd

(FA Rule K arbitration – 2016)

FA Rule K sole arbitrator of a dispute between club and player.

Tokyo Funding Cycle

2016 - 2017

Advised and acted for UK Sport on the process for revision of sports' funding for the Tokyo Funding Cycle. Various sports were at risk of losing funding, and the process had to afford all of them an opportunity to put their case and to challenge any decisions.

Fulham FC v Derby FC

(2017)

Advised Fulham in relation to a dispute between clubs over a player transfer.

Football Association of Serbia v UEFA

Court of Arbitration for Sport

Acted for UEFA in the Football Association of Serbia's attempt to overturn UEFA's admission of the Kosovan Football Federation to UEFA before CAS. The hearing has taken place, the award is awaited.

AFC Fiorentina v Chelsea FC

(FIFA DRC 2016, CAS current)

Acted for Chelsea in a dispute with Fiorentina over the loan of a player. Chelsea succeeded before the DRC and the case is now before CAS.

Football arbitration

Sat as single FA Rule K arbitrator on a dispute between player and club.

Also acting for a club on a further current player club FA Rule K arbitration.

Governance of Sports Governing Bodies

Advised several sports governing bodies on changes to governance structures in the light of relevant recent developments in particular in relation to the compliance of regulatory and disciplinary procedures with human rights and public law standards.

UK Sport Funding

Advised UK Sport on funding structures for the Tokyo Cycle. Previously advised on the Rio Cycle.

QPR v Football League, Financial Fair Play Rules

FL Arbitration

Legality of the Championship Financial Fair Play rules on competition and free movement grounds.

Gibraltar Football Association v FIFA

(CAS, 2000-2016)

Also previously GFA v UEFA. Long running litigation culminating in the GFA being admitted to membership of both UEFA and FIFA.

Italian Canoe Federation and CONI, British Canoeing and BOA v International Canoe Federation, Russian Canoe Federation and Russian Olympic Committee, Danish Canoe Federation and Danish Olympic Committee, French Canoe Federation and French Olympic Committee

(CAS, 2016)

Acted for the International Canoe Federation in its successful defence of a challenge to its application of its rules to the selection of teams for the Rio Olympics.

Aston Villa v FA

(FA Rule K arbitration, 2016)

Legality of application of player immigration rules.

Ipswich Town Football Club v Chief Constable of Suffolk Constabulary

(High Court, 2016)

Legality of decision to refuse to police.

Adam regularly advises Arsenal on policing and previously advised Wembley and acted for Wigan in Greater Manchester Police v Wigan AFC (Court of Appeal, Chancery Division 2008).

Mutu v Switzerland

(European Court of Human Rights, 2015)

Legality of the Swiss Supreme Court's upholding of a CAS award and rejection of complaints as to the appearance of independence in the context of a closed list and compulsory arbitration.

Gopperth and Wasps v RFU

(RFU disciplinary proceedings, 2015)

Sanction for on field offence.

Akram v Dalian FC

(CAS, 2015)

Appeal against a FIFA DRC decision refusing player compensation for alleged breach of contract and granting compensation to the club.

Rochemback v Dalian FC

CAS, 2015

Appeal against a FIFA DRC decision refusing player compensation for alleged breach of contract and granting compensation to the club.

Indian Hockey Federation v International Hockey Federation and Hockey India

(CAS, 2015)

Defence of proceedings brought before CAS by the Indian Hockey Federation challenging the International Hockey Federation's decision to accept Hockey India, and not to accept the Indian Hockey Federation, as a member.

Cardiff City v Crystal Palace

(FA Rule K Arbitration, 2015)

Dispute between clubs arising out of obtaining of team sheet.

Football League v Rotherham

FL Disciplinary Proceedings, 2015

Disciplinary proceedings against Rotherham for the fielding of an ineligible player.

Hull City v FA

(FA Rule K Arbitration, 2015)

Challenge to the governing body's refusal to allow its application to change its official name to Hull Tigers for the 2014/2015 season.

UKAD v Rhys Williams

National Anti-Doping Panel, 2015

Defence of anti-doping proceedings.

Cellino and Leeds United FC v Football League

(FA Rule K Arbitration, 2015)

Threatened FA Rule K proceedings in relation to the decision of the Football League Professional Conduct Committee.

Jocar v Samuel Eto'o

(Central London County Court, 2015)

Defence of an attachment of earnings application by former agents.

World Rugby (ex IRB) – player release and calendar

European Commission and national proceedings

Club's Complaint to the European Commission and commencement of national proceedings challenging the sport's international player release rules and calendar on competition law and free movement grounds.

MTC Limited v Sir Bradley Wiggins

(Queen's Bench Division, 2015)

Commercial dispute with a former agent.

Premier Rugby Limited Legality of Salary Cap Regulations

(PRL Arbitration, 2015)

Challenge on competition law grounds to legality of regulations.

UEFA Financial Fair Play: CFCB counsel

UEFA regulatory proceedings, 2015

Appointed to assist the UEFA Club and Financial Control Body in the administration of the UEFA financial fair play rules, dealing with competition and free movement law issues and assisting in 2014 and 2015 in the settlement of cases with infringing clubs.

UK Sport eligibility for funding

2015

Advised UK Sport in relation to its rules on eligibility for funding of athletes that have been convicted of a doping offence, amongst other things in the light of the requirements of the 2015 World Anti-Doping Code.

I-CAP v Soul Electronics, re Fabregas

(Queen's Bench Division, 2015)

Acted for I-CAP in its efforts to recover sums due to it in respect of Cesc Fabregas' endorsement of earphones manufactured by Soul.

Arsenal FC agency dispute

(2015)

Agency dispute, where the named agent of a player was no longer an employee of the agency company.

Sheikh Hazza Bin Sultan Bin Zayed Al Nahyan v Federation Equestre International

CAS, 2014

Appeal against the international federation's decision that the rider bore responsibility for a prohibited substance in a horse that he rode in an endurance competition.

Lucinda Turner v British Equestrian Federation

(Sport Resolutions Arbitration, 2014)

Defence of anti-doping proceedings brought by the BEF.

British Swimming v UK Sport

(Sport Resolutions Arbitration, 2014)

Defence of British Swimming's challenge to its decision to withdraw funding from Synchronised Swimming.

ICC v Jadeja

(ICC Arbitration, 2014)

Defence of disciplinary proceedings brought by the ICC in relation to an incident between two players.

Bruce Baker v British Boxing Board of Control

(Queen's Bench Division, 2014)

Defence of injunction proceedings brought to restrain the governing body from suspending the manager and promoter, and on its application for a stay under section 9 Arbitration Act 1996.

West Ham v Football Association

Sport Resolutions Arbitration, 2014

Defence of proceedings brought by the Club appealing the suspension of the Player Andy Carroll.

British Darts Organisation

(2014)

Advised BDO on rules requiring players finishing high in the preceding year's tournament to play in the following year's tournament.

Welsh Rugby Union, Welsh Regional Organisations, European Rugby Cup

2014

Acted for the WRU in the context of the relationship between the Union and the Regional Organisations and in the context of the reorganisation of the European cross border club competitions administered by ERC, in the light of the desire of English Clubs and Premiership Rugby Limited to create a Rugby Champions Cup instead. The issues included European competition and free movement questions. Settled.

Matthew King v London Marathon Limited

(Queen's Bench Division, 2014)

Defence of discrimination proceedings brought against LML by former Rugby League Player Matthew King following its conclusion that it was not permissible for him to compete in the London Marathon using a motorised wheelchair.

FA Intermediaries Regulations

(European Commission, current)

Football agents' Complaint to the European Commission and threat to commence domestic proceedings challenging the legality of The FA Intermediaries Regulations on competition and free movement grounds.

BBBC v Eddie Hearn

(BBBC, 2013)

Acted for the promoter in the context of a complaint by Frank Warren that he has breached BBBC rules.

Maidstone FC v Football Conference

(2013)

Acted for Maidstone in its efforts to secure permission to use an artificial pitch should it be promoted to the Conference at the end of the 2013/2014 season.

Fenerbahce v UEFA, Besiktas v UEFA

(CAS, 2013)

Legality of reliance on criminal convictions when the convicted party claims that the convictions had been obtained in breach of his human rights and when an appeal to the relevant Supreme Court is pending.

Chelsea v Juventus and Livorno (Mutu)

FIFA DRC and CAS

Also Chelsea v Juventus and Livorno (CAS, 2014, on appeal from FIFA DRC). Club's attempt to secure payment from Juventus of CAS' award against Mutu to the Club of €17 million in compensation for breach of contract, which was upheld by the Swiss Federal Tribunal.

Leyton Orient FC v Football Association Premier League

FA Rule K arbitration, 2013

Ability of arbitral tribunal to order joinder.

Martin Murray v Hatton Promotions Limited

(2013)

Acted for the boxer in a management dispute with Hatton Promotions.

Sports Governing Body Disciplinary Processes

(2013)

Advised a number of sports governing bodies in relation to the structures and practices of disciplinary processes and their compliance with human rights law, following the Court of Appeal decision in Kaur.

World Professional Billiards and Snooker Association v Stephen Lee

Sport Resolutions, 2013

Sat as the Sport Resolutions appointed tribunal to hear matchfixing allegations against the snooker player Stephen Lee.

Fenerbahce v UEFA

(CAS, 2013)

Defended the Club's appeal against exclusion from the Champions League for matchfixing.

Besiktas v UEFA

(CAS, 2013)

Defence of the Club's appeal against exclusion from the Europa League for matchfixing.

FC Metalist v UEFA

(CAS, 2013)

Advised in relation to its defence of the Club's appeal against exclusion from the Europa League for matchfixing. Also advised UEFA in relation to various satellite proceedings brought by clubs contending that the excluded clubs should have been excluded earlier, allowing the claimant clubs into the competition.

Sky Lantern v BHA and Elusive Kate

(British Horseracing Association, 2013)

Acted for Sky Lantern's interests in BHA proceedings, opposed by Elusive Kate's interests.

Doncaster Rovers Belles v The FA

(FA Rule K Arbitration, 2013)

Defence of a challenge brought to the FA's decision not to include Doncaster Rovers Belles in the highest division for women's professional football.

UEFA v The FA

UEFA disciplinary proceedings, 2013

Acted for The FA in defence of disciplinary proceedings brought against it by UEFA over calendar clashes.

Japan Olympic Committee and Koji Murofushi v International Olympic Committee

(CAS, 2013)

Acted for the JOC and the athlete Koji Murofushi in his CAS appeal against the IOC's exclusion of him from the IOC Athletes' Commission for improper campaigning.

USADA v Armstrong, Bruyneel, Lezema and Marti

AAA, 2013

Acted for Bruyneel in USADA's anti-doping proceedings against the remaining defendants after Armstrong chose to withdraw).

Amir Khan and Frank Warren

(2013)

Advised in the context of a dispute between Amir Khan and Frank Warren.

UK Sport criteria for funding

2013

Advised UK Sport on the revision of its criteria for the funding of athletes.

Withholding of player services

2013

Advised on EU competition law in the context of a threat of withholding of player services.

R (Leyton Orient FC) v London Legacy Development Corporation and West Ham

Queen's Bench Division, Administrative Court, 2013

Acted for Leyton Orient in the club's judicial review proceedings challenging the LLDC's decision not further to consider Leyton Orient for a co-tenancy of the stadium along with West Ham. Previously acted for Leyton Orient in R (Tottenham Hotspur FC and Leyton Orient FC) v Newham Council, OPLC, Mayor of London, and Secretary of State for Culture Media and Sport (High Court Judicial Review, 2011); Leyton Orient FC v Football Association Premier League (FA Rule K arbitration, 2013).

Arbitration

Adam Lewis frequently appears before arbitrations and sits as an arbitrator and Chair of disciplinary tribunals, chiefly in the context of Sport. He appears regularly before the Court of Arbitration for Sport in Lausanne and Shanghai, and before domestic arbitral tribunals. He sits as an FA Rule K arbitrator and as a Sport Resolutions arbitrator.

He served in 2017 and 2018 as the Chair of the Independent Review of Integrity in Tennis, leading a panel comprising Beth Wilkinson, a former US Attorney and trial lawyer, and Marc Henzelin, a Swiss trial lawyer and judge. In 2019 and 2020 he undertook an independent internal investigation in relation to a sports governing body's actions and processes in dealing with a potential breach of its rules by staff.

He is a contributor to Arbitration in England, Julian Lew et al, 2013 Wolters Kluwer, and was previously an editor of the Arbitration section in Halsbury's Laws.

He has been involved in a number of cases in the last three years testing the parameters of arbitration, including:

Cases

Premier League v Manchester City, Financial Regulations and access to documents, and the investigatory process

Commercial Court (Moulder J [2021] EWHC 628 (Comm); [2021] EWHC 711 (Comm) and [2021] EWHC 2077 (Comm)), Court of Appeal ([2021] EWCA Civ 1354)

Acts for the Premier League in ongoing disputes with Manchester City in relation to potential historic breach by the Club of the PL Financial Regulations, access by the Premier League to Club documents, and the investigatory process. There were two arbitration hearings in 2020, hearings before the Commercial Court in Spring 2021 and a hearing before the Court of Appeal in Summer 2021. The Arbitral Tribunal decided it had jurisdiction and rejected a challenge on bias grounds, and subsequently ordered production of documents by the Club. The Club's challenges to the Arbitral Tribunal's approach before the Commercial Court failed. The matter continues with an ongoing Section X Arbitration and the Premier League investigating whether the documents produced reveal a historic breach by the Club of the PL Financial Regulations.

Football Union of Russia v The FA: exclusion following invasion of Ukraine

CAS 2022

Acted for the FA in FUR's challenge in CAS to UEFA's and The FA's exclusion of Russian international teams from participation in international competitions (one being about to be held by the FA in England) following Russia's invasion of Ukraine.

Burnley FC v Premier League, movement of players following invasion of Ukraine

PL Rules Section X Arbitration 2022

Acted for the Premier League in its successful defence of an arbitration brought by Burnley FC challenging the Premier League's decision not to implement in full FIFA regulations permitting players at Russian Clubs to move following the invasion of Ukraine, because to do so would advantage some Clubs and disadvantage others.

Brishtel v UEFA

CAS 2022

Acted for UEFA in CAS proceedings brought by expelled officials of the Belarus Football Federation challenging the decision of UEFA not to change on review the discretionary decision of the UEFA Ethics and Disciplinary Inspectors not to open disciplinary proceedings against the Belarus Football Federation or its officials.

UEFA v The FA: England v Germany

2022

Acted for The FA in defence of disciplinary proceedings opened by UEFA against the FA into crowd behaviour at the 2022 match between England and Germany. The charges were dropped.

Newcastle United v Premier League, St James Holdings Ltd v Premier League

Premier League Section X Arbitration and Commercial Court (Pelling J [2021] EWHC 349 (Comm)), and Competition Appeals Tribunal (Case No)

Acted for the Premier League in an arbitration brought by Newcastle United challenging the PL Board decision that if the proposed acquisition of the Club by a consortium led by the Public Investment Fund of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia proceeds, the KSA would become a “Director” of the Club, such that it would fall to be assessed against the PL Owners and Directors Test. The Club’s challenge to the chair of the Arbitral Tribunal on bias grounds failed before the Commercial Court. Prior to the hearing of the arbitration, legally binding assurances were provided that meant that the KSA did not fall to be assessed against the OADT.

Club v Agent, dual representation contract

Arbitration. 2022.

Acted for an agent in the context of an attempt to commence arbitral proceedings against him, claiming breach of duties under a dual representation contract

SIAC Sports broadcasting rights arbitration

Arbitrator, SIAC Arbitration. 2020 to 2022.

Sat as sole arbitrator in a dispute between an overseas broadcast rights holder and its overseas commercial partner. The matter settled before trial, following interim applications and procedural issues.

Sporting v Player, Lille and FIFA

Court of Arbitration for Sport. Summer 2021

Acted for Lille defending Sporting’s appeal to the Court of Arbitration for Sport against the FIFA decision in respect of a player.

Olympiacos v Panathinaikos and Euroleague

Court of Arbitration for Sport. 2020.

Acted for basketball club Olympiacos in a dispute with Panathinaikos and Olympiacos’ appeal to the Court of Arbitration for Sport against Euroleague’s decision not to discipline Panathinaikos for breach of its rules.

Tonga Rugby League v International Rugby League

Court of Arbitration for Sport, Summer 2020

Advised and acted for the International Rugby League in its defence of an appeal brought by the Tonga Rugby League to the Court of Arbitration for Sport against its expulsion.

Premier Rugby Limited v Saracens

Sport Resolutions arbitration. 2019

Acted for Premier Rugby Limited in its proceedings against Saracens for breach of the salary cap. Saracens defended on the basis that it was not in breach of the salary cap and in any event the entire salary cap was contrary to competition law. Saracens failed in the defences and the independent panel, chaired by Lord Dyson, fined Saracens £5.3million and deducted the club 35 points. The relevant rules were adapted to provide for a further deduction if in a season following a finding of breach, a club failed to submit to an audit of compliance. Saracens was consequently deducted a total of 70 points and was relegated at the end of the 2019/2020 season when it was eventually completed.

FIFA v Chelsea Football Club

Court of Arbitration for Sport, 2019

Acted for the Club in its successful appeal before the Court of Arbitration for Sport against the two lower instance FIFA decisions and transfer ban in respect of the signing of young players, and at the earlier stages.

FC Nantes, Cardiff City FC and Emiliano Sala

Court of Arbitration for Sport, 2019

Advised Cardiff City FC on the transfer position after the death of Emiliano Sala.

RusAF v IAAF

Court of Arbitration for Sport, 2019

Acted for the IAAF in the Court of Arbitration for Sport arbitration commenced by RusAF to challenge the IAAF's decision not to reinstate RusAF to full unsuspended membership pending the satisfaction of various conditions imposed on such reinstatement. The Russian organisation was suspended following the McLaren Report concluding that there had been organised evasion of the anti-doping rules in Russia.

International Canoe Federation v International Surfing Association

Court of Arbitration for Sport, 2019

Acted for the International Canoe Federation before the Court of Arbitration for Sport in a dispute with the International Surfing Association. CAS issued an award in relation to the governance of the sport of Stand-Up Paddleboard, rejecting the International Surfing Association's claim to an exclusive right to govern the sport at world level but allowing it a role at Olympic level.

Club v Agent

Arbitrator, FA Rule K arbitration. 2019.

Sat as an FA Rule K sole arbitrator on a dispute between a football club and an agent.

Chris Froome and UCI, WADA, and Amaury Sport Organisation

Acted for Chris Froome in the context of the delay of the UCI and WADA in clearing the cyclist following an abnormal result. The cyclist was not charged because there was no basis for doing so, but the delay in reaching this conclusion led to the organisers of the Tour de France threatening to withdraw his entry to the 2018 race, raising the possibility of appeal to a French sports tribunal.

Christophe Mongai v Alex Song

Acted for the player Alex Song in the Court of Arbitration proceedings brought against him by his former agent.

Exeter City AFC v Chelsea FC

Appeared for Chelsea on Exeter's application to the Professional Football Compensation Committee for training compensation in respect of the defender Ethan Ampadu.

FIFA v FA

Acted for The FA in its defence of FIFA disciplinary proceedings in respect of the wearing of the poppy by England players, which FIFA asserted was the wearing of a political symbol. Following two disciplinary hearings and appeal by The FA to CAS, which was not heard, FIFA changed its rules and allowed the wearing of the poppy in November 2017.

International Cricket Council

Advised the ICC on the application of the ICC Code of Ethics.

Jersey Football Association v UEFA

Court of Arbitration for Sport

Acted for UEFA in the Jersey Football Association's attempt to overturn UEFA's refusal of membership to it.

Polo Player and Hurlingham Polo Association

Advised a Polo player on the legality and reasonableness of the Hurlingham Polo Association's changes to playing equipment rules.

Rugby Football Union v Ashley Johnson

Defended the Wasps rugby player Ashley Johnson on a charge of breaching the anti-doping rules. The breach was found to have been inadvertent and only a short suspension was imposed. Also advised and acted in a number of other doping cases that are confidential.

The FA v Agent

Advised the FA in its prosecution before the Regulatory Commission of an agent charged with misconduct.

UK Sport funding and British Bobsleigh and Skeleton Association

Advised UK Sport on the process for revision of sports' funding for the Olympics, including in particular in the context of the objections of the British Bobsleigh and Skeleton Association to the conditions imposed on funding

Previously advised on the Tokyo and Rio Funding Cycles.

Football Association of Serbia v UEFA

Court of Arbitration for Sport

Acted for UEFA in the Football Association of Serbia's attempt to overturn UEFA's admission of the Kosovan Football Federation to UEFA before CAS. The hearing has taken place, the award is awaited.

AFC Fiorentina v Chelsea FC

(FIFA DRC 2016, CAS current)

Acted for Chelsea in a dispute with Fiorentina over the loan of a player. Chelsea succeeded before the DRC and the case is now before CAS.

Football arbitration

Sat as single FA Rule K arbitrator on a dispute between player and club.

Also acting for a club on a further current player club FA Rule K arbitration.

QPR v Football League, Financial Fair Play Rules

FL Arbitration

Legality of the Championship Financial Fair Play rules on competition and free movement grounds.

Italian Canoe Federation and CONI, British Canoeing and BOA v International Canoe Federation, Russian Canoe Federation and Russian Olympic Committee, Danish Canoe Federation and Danish Olympic Committee, French Canoe Federation and French Olympic Committee

(CAS, 2016)

Acted for the International Canoe Federation in its successful defence of a challenge to its application of its rules to the selection of teams for the Rio Olympics.

Gibraltar Football Association v FIFA

(CAS, 2000-2016)

Also previously GFA v UEFA. Long running litigation culminating in the GFA being admitted to membership of both UEFA and FIFA.

Aston Villa v FA

(FA Rule K arbitration, 2016)

Legality of application of player immigration rules.

Rochemback v Dalian FC

CAS, 2015

Appeal against a FIFA DRC decision refusing player compensation for alleged breach of contract and granting compensation to the club.

Mutu v Switzerland

(European Court of Human Rights, 2015)

Legality of the Swiss Supreme Court's upholding of a CAS award and rejection of complaints as to the appearance of independence in the context of a closed list and compulsory arbitration.

Indian Hockey Federation v International Hockey Federation and Hockey India

(CAS, 2015)

Defence of proceedings brought before CAS by the Indian Hockey Federation challenging the International Hockey Federation's decision to accept Hockey India, and not to accept the Indian Hockey Federation, as a member.

Hull City v FA

(FA Rule K Arbitration, 2015)

Challenge to the governing body's refusal to allow its application to change its official name to Hull Tigers for the 2014/2015 season.

Cellino and Leeds United FC v Football League

(FA Rule K Arbitration, 2015)

Threatened FA Rule K proceedings in relation to the decision of the Football League Professional Conduct Committee.

Cardiff City v Crystal Palace

(FA Rule K Arbitration, 2015)

Dispute between clubs arising out of obtaining of team sheet.

Akram v Dalian FC

(CAS, 2015)

Appeal against a FIFA DRC decision refusing player compensation for alleged breach of contract and granting compensation to the club.

UKAD v Rhys Williams

National Anti-Doping Panel, 2015

Defence of anti-doping proceedings.

Premier Rugby Limited Legality of Salary Cap Regulations

(PRL Arbitration, 2015)

Challenge on competition law grounds to legality of regulations.

West Ham v Football Association

Sport Resolutions Arbitration, 2014

Defence of proceedings brought by the Club appealing the suspension of the Player Andy Carroll.

Sheikh Hazza Bin Sultan Bin Zayed Al Nahyan v Federation Equestre International

CAS, 2014

Appeal against the international federation's decision that the rider bore responsibility for a prohibited substance in a horse that he rode in an endurance competition.

ICC v Jadeja

(ICC Arbitration, 2014)

Defence of disciplinary proceedings brought by the ICC in relation to an incident between two players.

Lucinda Turner v British Equestrian Federation

(Sport Resolutions Arbitration, 2014)

Defence of anti-doping proceedings brought by the BEF.

Chelsea v Juventus and Livorno (Mutu)

FIFA DRC and CAS

Also Chelsea v Juventus and Livorno (CAS, 2014, on appeal from FIFA DRC). Club's attempt to secure payment from Juventus of CAS' award against Mutu to the Club of €17 million in compensation for breach of contract, which was upheld by the Swiss Federal Tribunal.

Bruce Baker v British Boxing Board of Control

(Queen's Bench Division, 2014)

Defence of injunction proceedings brought to restrain the governing body from suspending the manager and promoter, and on its application for a stay under section 9 Arbitration Act 1996.

British Swimming v UK Sport

(Sport Resolutions Arbitration, 2014)

Defence of British Swimming's challenge to its decision to withdraw funding from Synchronised Swimming.

World Professional Billiards and Snooker Association v Stephen Lee

Sport Resolutions, 2013

Sat as the Sport Resolutions appointed tribunal to hear matchfixing allegations against the snooker player Stephen Lee.

USADA v Armstrong, Bruyneel, Lezema and Marti

AAA, 2013

Acted for Bruyneel in USADA's anti-doping proceedings against the remaining defendants after Armstrong chose to withdraw).

Leyton Orient FC v Football Association Premier League

FA Rule K arbitration, 2013

Ability of arbitral tribunal to order joinder.

Japan Olympic Committee and Koji Murofushi v International Olympic Committee

(CAS, 2013)

Acted for the JOC and the athlete Koji Murofushi in his CAS appeal against the IOC's exclusion of him from the IOC Athletes' Commission for improper campaigning.

Fenerbahce v UEFA, Besiktas v UEFA

(CAS, 2013)

Legality of reliance on criminal convictions when the convicted party claims that the convictions had been obtained in breach of his human rights and when an appeal to the relevant Supreme Court is pending.

Fenerbahce v UEFA

(CAS, 2013)

Defended the Club's appeal against exclusion from the Champions League for matchfixing.

FC Metalist v UEFA

(CAS, 2013)

Advised in relation to its defence of the Club's appeal against exclusion from the Europa League for matchfixing. Also advised UEFA in relation to various satellite proceedings brought by clubs contending that the excluded clubs should have been excluded earlier, allowing the claimant clubs into the competition.

Doncaster Rovers Belles v The FA

(FA Rule K Arbitration, 2013)

Defence of a challenge brought to the FA's decision not to include Doncaster Rovers Belles in the highest division for women's professional football.

Besiktas v UEFA

(CAS, 2013)

Defence of the Club's appeal against exclusion from the Europa League for matchfixing.

BBBC v Eddie Hearn

(BBBC, 2013)

Acted for the promoter in the context of a complaint by Frank Warren that he has breached BBBC rules.

EU & Competition

Adam Lewis' practice covers both EU and domestic Competition law including anti-competitive practices, mergers, the state aid rules, free movement, public procurement, VAT and trade and customs law, and the application of sector-specific EU legislation. He has in particular been involved in a large number of recent cases where complainants have sought to use the competition law rules as a basis for challenge to sports governing bodies' regulatory rules and actions.

Adam Lewis began to develop his EU and Competition law specialism before he started practice at the Bar. Between 1985 and 1987 he worked at in particular Wilmer Cutler & Pickering (now Wilmer Hale), a United States law firm with an established Competition and EU law practice and a Brussels office. In 1991 and 1992 he worked for the European Commission in the Cabinet of the European Commissioner responsible for Competition and Financial Institutions. Thereafter he was based in Brussels, working exclusively on competition and EU law related matters in a firm that is now merged with White & Case.

Particular cases in the last three years include:

“A smart, knowledgeable, hardworking, and very user-friendly silk.”

– LEGAL 500, 2018

Cases

Newcastle United v Premier League, St James Holdings Ltd v Premier League

Premier League Section X Arbitration and Commercial Court (Pelling J [2021] EWHC 349 (Comm)), and Competition Appeals Tribunal (Case No)

Acted for the Premier League in an arbitration brought by Newcastle United challenging the PL Board decision that if the proposed acquisition of the Club by a consortium led by the Public Investment Fund of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia proceeds, the KSA would become a “Director” of the Club, such that it would fall to be assessed against the PL Owners and Directors Test. The Club’s challenge to the chair of the Arbitral Tribunal on bias grounds failed before the Commercial Court. Prior to the hearing of the arbitration, legally binding assurances were provided that meant that the KSA did not fall to be assessed against the OADT.

Premier League and European Super League

Spring 2021, continuing Spanish proceedings, current

Advised and acted for the Premier League in response to the threatened but aborted establishment of the European Super League, unsanctioned by football’s governing bodies, in Spring 2021. The response of amongst others the Premier League caused its member clubs that were involved to withdraw from the project. Proceedings continue in Spain and a reference has been made to the European Court. Continues to advise in relation to the subsequent consequences of the events.

Premier League, Big Picture: proposed restructuring and funding

Current

Advise and acts for the Premier League in the context of the continuing consequences of the failed late 2020 and early 2021 Big Picture proposals for the restructuring and funding of the Premier League and EFL. The response of amongst others the Premier League headed off the proposals at that point, but the issues that gave rise to them remain. Similarly advised the Premier League in relation to the attempt to set up the European Super League in 2021.

Club v UEFA: Covid-19 pandemic exception to FFP rules

2022

Acted for a Club in relation to the proper application and legality of the UEFA Covid-19 pandemic exception to the FFP Rules, which allows clubs to write off a loss in defined periods, but does not afford the equivalent benefit to prudent clubs, thereby placing them at a disadvantage in terms of permissible expenditure and possible compliance over the entire reporting period.

Premier League Related Party Transactions and Profitability and Sustainability Rules

Current

Advise the Premier League in relation to possible changes to the provisions in respect of Related Party Transactions for the purposes of the Profitability and Sustainability Rules

Premier Rugby Limited, Intermediaries

Current

Advises PRL in relation to changes to the Intermediaries Regulations

Club v EFL, EFL Covid-19 loan

Arbitration. Current

Advised and acted for the EFL in relation to proceedings brought by a Club to challenge the structure of the loan facility made available to League Clubs as a result of the damage suffered due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

EFL, Financial Regulations revision

Current

Advises the EFL on possible revisions to the EFL Financial Regulations.

World Rugby, LNR Competition Law challenge to Regulation 9 Player Release

Complaint to European Commission. Current

Complaint to European Commission. Current

Advises and acts for World Rugby in the context of the LNR's complaint to the European Commission that WR Regulations on player release infringe competition law

Premier League, Restart: response to Covid-19 pandemic, disputes with several clubs

2020 and 2021, current

Advised and acted for the Premier League throughout 2020 and 2021 and continues to do so in the context of its ongoing reaction to the continuing Covid-19 pandemic. At the outset, major concerns were the basis on which the 2019/2020 competition should be completed and the 2020/2021 competition pursued. Issues included whether the 2019/2020 season could and should be played out, and how, and if not, the basis on which it should be resolved in terms of winner, European places and relegation, the creation of protocols for safe play and the consequences of positive tests, and changes to the Premier League Rules to address the situation. Whatever course were adopted would provoke reaction from diverse groups with different interests, and threats of action on various bases including competition law, but a fine line was successfully taken, to date avoiding the litigation threatened.

EFL, Professional Footballers' Association, Salary Cap

Current

Advises and acts for the EFL in relation to the PFA's objections to the adoption of a League 1 and League 2 Salary Cap.

World Rugby, Regulation 8 Player Eligibility

2021

Advised World Rugby on possible revisions of Regulation 8 in relation to the eligibility of players to play for a Union.

Club v Welsh Rugby Union

2021

Acted for and advised the WRU in the context of threatened competition law proceedings by a rugby club in respect of the participation arrangements and distribution of funding, including in the light of the Covid-19 pandemic

World Rugby calendar adaption and player release

Autumn 2020

Advised World Rugby in the context of the adaptation of the international windows in the calendar in the light of the Covid-19 pandemic, and in relation to player release as a result.

World Rugby (ex IRB) – player release and calendar

European Commission and national proceedings

Club's Complaint to the European Commission and commencement of national proceedings challenging the sport's international player release rules and calendar on competition law and free movement grounds.

QPR v Football League, Financial Fair Play Rules

FL Arbitration

Legality of the Championship Financial Fair Play rules on competition and free movement grounds.

UEFA Financial Fair Play: CFCB counsel

UEFA regulatory proceedings, 2015

Appointed to assist the UEFA Club and Financial Control Body in the administration of the UEFA financial fair play rules, dealing with competition and free movement law issues and assisting in 2014 and 2015 in the settlement of cases with infringing clubs.

FA Intermediaries Regulations

(European Commission, current)

Football agents' Complaint to the European Commission and threat to commence domestic proceedings challenging the legality of The FA Intermediaries Regulations on competition and free movement grounds.

Premier Rugby Limited Legality of Salary Cap Regulations

(PRL Arbitration, 2015)

Challenge on competition law grounds to legality of regulations.

W.H. Newson Holdings Ltd and Others v IMI Plc and Others and Comap S.A

Chancery Division, 2015

Follow on damages case, permission to appeal obtained.

Gibraltar Betting and Gaming Association v Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport and the Gambling Commission

Administrative Court, 2014

Defence to the GBGA's challenge on Article 56 and rationality grounds to legislation and guidance introducing point of consumption regulation of internet gambling in the UK provided by operators outside the UK.

Welsh Rugby Union, Welsh Regional Organisations, European Rugby Cup

2014

Acted for the WRU in the context of the relationship between the Union and the Regional Organisations and in the context of the reorganisation of the European cross border club competitions administered by ERC, in the light of the desire of English Clubs and Premiership Rugby Limited to create a Rugby Champions Cup instead. The issues included European competition and free movement questions. Settled.

Clix Connex Limited v PhonePayPlus and OFT

(Administrative Court, 2014)

Impact of EU Information Society and Digital Economy legislation on PPP's ability to require prior permission for "Information, Connection and Signposting Services" paid for over premium rate telephone lines.

R (Leyton Orient FC) v London Legacy Development Corporation and West Ham and R (Tottenham Hotspur FC and Leyton Orient FC) v Newham Council, OPLC, Mayor of London, and Secretary of State for Culture Media and Sport and Leyton Orient FC v Football Associa

(Administrative Court, 2013)

Whether procurement process breached the EU principles of transparency and equality of treatment and whether Newham Council's involvement in the bid breached EU state aid rules.

National Association

Advised a national sports association on the compliance of its disciplinary structure with the common law and human rights law.

National Association and Media Rights

Advised a national sports association on the reorganisation of the sale of media rights. The matter involved a number of issues including completion law.

National Association

Advised a national sports association on the restructuring of its league.

Public & Regulatory

Adam Lewis acts in a wide range of Public law matters, both for and against public bodies. He has developed a particular expertise in the application of public law principles at the boundary between public and commercial contexts, including EU law issues, public procurement, VAT, telecommunications and charging for policing. He has also worked on numerous matters involving the extension of public law principles to the activities of quasi-public bodies, such as sports governing bodies, whose decisions are not subject to CPR Part 54 Judicial Review but fall to be reviewed by reference to similar standards.

“A broad practice that includes assisting sports governing bodies.”

– LEGAL 500, 2018

Particular cases in the last three years include:

Cases

Premier Rugby Limited, Intermediaries

Current

Advises PRL in relation to changes to the Intermediaries Regulations

Club v EFL, EFL Covid-19 loan

Arbitration. Current

Advised and acted for the EFL in relation to proceedings brought by a Club to challenge the structure of the loan facility made available to League Clubs as a result of the damage suffered due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

EFL, Financial Regulations revision

Current

Advises the EFL on possible revisions to the EFL Financial Regulations.

World Rugby, LNR Competition Law challenge to Regulation 9 Player Release

Complaint to European Commission. Current

Complaint to European Commission. Current

Advises and acts for World Rugby in the context of the LNR's complaint to the European Commission that WR Regulations on player release infringe competition law

Premier League, Restart: response to Covid-19 pandemic, disputes with several clubs

2020 and 2021, current

Advised and acted for the Premier League throughout 2020 and 2021 and continues to do so in the context of its ongoing reaction to the continuing Covid-19 pandemic. At the outset, major concerns were the basis on which the 2019/2020 competition should be completed and the 2020/2021 competition pursued. Issues included whether the 2019/2020 season could and should be played out, and how, and if not, the basis on which it should be resolved in terms of winner, European places and relegation, the creation of protocols for safe play and the consequences of positive tests, and changes to the Premier League Rules to address the situation. Whatever course were adopted would provoke reaction from diverse groups with different interests, and threats of action on various bases including competition law, but a fine line was successfully taken, to date avoiding the litigation threatened.

EFL, Professional Footballers' Association, Salary Cap

Current

Advises and acts for the EFL in relation to the PFA's objections to the adoption of a League 1 and League 2 Salary Cap.

UK Sport, Paris Cycle Funding

Spring 2021.

Acted for UK Sport in relation to a sport's challenge to the funding granted to it in the Paris Cycle. The sport suggests that UK Sport has misapplied the criteria to it with the result that it falls into a different category to that into which it believes it should fall.

Club v Premier Rugby Limited, Coach Movement

Arbitration. Spring 2021

Acted for PRL in a challenge to the PRL decision on the movement of a coach from one Club to another.

World Rugby, Regulation 8 Player Eligibility

2021

Advised World Rugby on possible revisions of Regulation 8 in relation to the eligibility of players to play for a Union.

International Canoe Federation v International Surfing Association

Court of Arbitration for Sport, 2019

Acted for the International Canoe Federation before the Court of Arbitration for Sport in a dispute with the International Surfing Association. CAS issued an award in relation to the governance of the sport of Stand-Up Paddleboard, rejecting the International Surfing Association's claim to an exclusive right to govern the sport at world level but allowing it a role at Olympic level.

Independent Review of Integrity in Tennis

Chair of Inquiry, 2017 and 2018

Appointed as the Chair of the three person Independent Review of Integrity in Tennis, a major international review of the nature and extent of the threats to integrity arising in the sport, how they were addressed by the sport, and of how best to deal with them in the future, through changes to the rules, the mechanisms for enforcement, relationships, independence, resources, transparency, and education. The review also had to deal with various historical allegations, which the press had suggested indicate that tennis' approach in the past and presently was inappropriate. A very large number of witnesses all around the world were heard. An Interim Report followed by a Final Report were issued in 2018.

Arsenal Football Club policing

Advised Arsenal Football Club in the context of the provision of special police services to the Club by the Metropolitan Police.

Chris Froome and UCI, WADA, and Amaury Sport Organisation

Acted for Chris Froome in the context of the delay of the UCI and WADA in clearing the cyclist following an abnormal result. The cyclist was not charged because there was no basis for doing so, but the delay in reaching this conclusion led to the organisers of the Tour de France threatening to withdraw his entry to the 2018 race, raising the possibility of appeal to a French sports tribunal.

National Association

Advised a national sports association on the restructuring of its league.

Polo Player and Hurlingham Polo Association

Advised a Polo player on the legality and reasonableness of the Hurlingham Polo Association's changes to playing equipment rules.

National Association

Advised a national sports association on the compliance of its disciplinary structure with the common law and human rights law.

World Rugby, Belgium and Spain

Advised World Rugby in relation to a dispute over qualification to the Rugby World Cup 2019.

Tokyo Funding Cycle

2016 - 2017

Advised and acted for UK Sport on the process for revision of sports' funding for the Tokyo Funding Cycle. Various sports were at risk of losing funding, and the process had to afford all of them an opportunity to put their case and to challenge any decisions.

Jersey Football Association v UEFA

Court of Arbitration for Sport

Acted for UEFA in the Jersey Football Association's attempt to overturn UEFA's refusal of membership to it.

Football Association of Serbia v UEFA

Court of Arbitration for Sport

Acted for UEFA in the Football Association of Serbia's attempt to overturn UEFA's admission of the Kosovan Football Federation to UEFA before CAS. The hearing has taken place, the award is awaited.

UK Sport Funding

Advised UK Sport on funding structures for the Tokyo Cycle. Previously advised on the Rio Cycle.

Ipswich Town Football Club v Chief Constable of Suffolk Constabulary

(High Court, 2016)

Legality of decision to refuse to police.

Adam regularly advises Arsenal on policing and previously advised Wembley and acted for Wigan in Greater Manchester Police v Wigan AFC (Court of Appeal, Chancery Division 2008).

Aston Villa v FA

(FA Rule K arbitration, 2016)

Legality of application of player immigration rules.

Hull City v FA

(FA Rule K Arbitration, 2015)

Challenge to the governing body's refusal to allow its application to change its official name to Hull Tigers for the 2014/2015 season.

Gibraltar Betting and Gaming Association v Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport and the Gambling Commission

Administrative Court, 2014

Defence to the GBGA's challenge on Article 56 and rationality grounds to legislation and guidance introducing point of consumption regulation of internet gambling in the UK provided by operators outside the UK.

Governance of Sports Governing Bodies

Advised several sports governing bodies on changes to governance structures in the light of relevant recent developments in particular in relation to the compliance of regulatory and disciplinary procedures with human rights and public law standards.

British Swimming v UK Sport

(Sport Resolutions Arbitration, 2014)

Defence of British Swimming's challenge to its decision to withdraw funding from Synchronised Swimming.

Clix Connex Limited v PhonePayPlus and OFT

(Administrative Court, 2014)

Impact of EU Information Society and Digital Economy legislation on PPP's ability to require prior permission for "Information, Connection and Signposting Services" paid for over premium rate telephone lines.

Matthew King v London Marathon Limited

(Queen's Bench Division, 2014)

Defence of discrimination proceedings brought against LML by former Rugby League Player Matthew King following its conclusion that it was not permissible for him to compete in the London Marathon using a motorised wheelchair.

Fenerbahce v UEFA, Besiktas v UEFA

(CAS, 2013)

Legality of reliance on criminal convictions when the convicted party claims that the convictions had been obtained in breach of his human rights and when an appeal to the relevant Supreme Court is pending.

R (Leyton Orient FC) v London Legacy Development Corporation and West Ham and R (Tottenham Hotspur FC and Leyton Orient FC) v Newham Council, OPLC, Mayor of London, and Secretary of State for Culture Media and Sport and Leyton Orient FC v Football Associa

(Administrative Court, 2013)

Whether procurement process breached the EU principles of transparency and equality of treatment and whether Newham Council's involvement in the bid breached EU state aid rules.

Civil Liberties & Human Rights

Adam Lewis regularly deals with issues involving Civil Liberties and Human Rights in the context of his EU and Competition, Public and Regulatory, and Sport law practice. In particular he has frequently had to address fair trial rights in a wide range of public law matters, both for and against public bodies.

Cases

ECB: Review of disciplinary process

Current

Acts for the ECB in relation to the review of its disciplinary processes and the drafting of any appropriate changes.

Professional Discipline

Adam Lewis regularly acts in Professional Discipline matters. Examples of his recent work in this area can be found below.

“He is a fantastic advocate who phrases matters in a way which really hits home; he knows just which nerve to strike and does so in an elegant way”

— CHAMBERS AND PARTNERS, 2017

Cases

Premier League v Manchester City, Financial Regulations and access to documents, and the investigatory process

Commercial Court (Moulder J [2021] EWHC 628 (Comm); [2021] EWHC 711 (Comm) and [2021] EWHC 2077 (Comm)), Court of Appeal ([2021] EWCA Civ 1354)

Acts for the Premier League in ongoing disputes with Manchester City in relation to potential historic breach by the Club of the PL Financial Regulations, access by the Premier League to Club documents, and the investigatory process. There were two arbitration hearings in 2020, hearings before the Commercial Court in Spring 2021 and a hearing before the Court of Appeal in Summer 2021. The Arbitral Tribunal decided it had jurisdiction and rejected a challenge on bias grounds, and subsequently ordered production of documents by the Club. The Club's challenges to the Arbitral Tribunal's approach before the Commercial Court failed. The matter continues with an ongoing Section X Arbitration and the Premier League investigating whether the documents produced reveal a historic breach by the Club of the PL Financial Regulations.

EFL v Derby County, Breach of Financial Regulations

Independent Disciplinary Proceedings, Summer 2021

Advised and acted for the EFL in relation to Derby County's breach of the EFL Financial Regulations in disciplinary proceedings ending in summer 2021.

UEFA v The FA, Euros Final

UEFA Disciplinary Proceedings. October 2021

Acted for The FA in its defence of UEFA charges brought following events at the Euros Final in summer 2021. The tribunal imposed a sanction of one match behind closed doors and a further such match suspended, as opposed to the three matches behind closed doors sought by the independent disciplinary inspector.

Premier Rugby Limited, Salary Cap Disciplinary Proceedings

Possible Disciplinary Proceedings. 2022

Advised and acted for PRL in relation to possible charges against clubs for breach of the Salary Cap Regulations. Previously acted for PRL in the similar case against Saracens.

Sports Governing Body independent internal investigation.

Chair of Inquiry. Winter 2019 and Spring 2020.

Conducted an independent internal investigation in relation to a sports governing body's actions and processes in dealing with a potential breach of its rules by staff.

World Rugby v Scottish Rugby Union

Disciplinary proceedings, Autumn 2019

Advised World Rugby in the context of disciplinary proceedings against the SRU in respect of its reaction to the rescheduling of its match against Japan at the Rugby World Cup 2019.

Independent Review of Integrity in Tennis

Chair of Inquiry, 2017 and 2018

Appointed as the Chair of the three person Independent Review of Integrity in Tennis, a major international review of the nature and extent of the threats to integrity arising in the sport, how they were addressed by the sport, and of how best to deal with them in the future, through changes to the rules, the mechanisms for enforcement, relationships, independence, resources, transparency, and education. The review also had to deal with various historical allegations, which the press had suggested indicate that tennis' approach in the past and presently was inappropriate. A very large number of witnesses all around the world were heard. An Interim Report followed by a Final Report were issued in 2018.

Premier League v Scout and Club

Disciplinary proceedings. 2019.

Acted for the Premier League in disciplinary proceedings against a scout and football club in the context of the Youth Development Rules.

World Rugby, Belgium and Spain

Advised World Rugby in relation to a dispute over qualification to the Rugby World Cup 2019.

The FA v Agent

Advised the FA in its prosecution before the Regulatory Commission of an agent charged with misconduct.

Rugby Football Union v Ashley Johnson

Defended the Wasps rugby player Ashley Johnson on a charge of breaching the anti-doping rules. The breach was found to have been inadvertent and only a short suspension was imposed. Also advised and acted in a number of other doping cases that are confidential.

UK Sport funding and British Bobsleigh and Skeleton Association

Advised UK Sport on the process for revision of sports' funding for the Olympics, including in particular in the context of the objections of the British Bobsleigh and Skeleton Association to the conditions imposed on funding

Previously advised on the Tokyo and Rio Funding Cycles.

Chris Froome and UCI, WADA, and Amaury Sport Organisation

Acted for Chris Froome in the context of the delay of the UCI and WADA in clearing the cyclist following an abnormal result. The cyclist was not charged because there was no basis for doing so, but the delay in reaching this conclusion led to the organisers of the Tour de France threatening to withdraw his entry to the 2018 race, raising the possibility of appeal to a French sports tribunal.

International Cricket Council

Advised the ICC on the application of the ICC Code of Ethics.

FIFA v FA

Acted for The FA in its defence of FIFA disciplinary proceedings in respect of the wearing of the poppy by England players, which FIFA asserted was the wearing of a political symbol. Following two disciplinary hearings and appeal by The FA to CAS, which was not heard, FIFA changed its rules and allowed the wearing of the poppy in November 2017.

Governance of Sports Governing Bodies

Advised several sports governing bodies on changes to governance structures in the light of relevant recent developments in particular in relation to the compliance of regulatory and disciplinary procedures with human rights and public law standards.

Gopperth and Wasps v RFU

(RFU disciplinary proceedings, 2015)

Sanction for on field offence.

Cellino and Leeds United FC v Football League

(FA Rule K Arbitration, 2015)

Threatened FA Rule K proceedings in relation to the decision of the Football League Professional Conduct Committee.

UEFA Financial Fair Play: CFCB counsel

UEFA regulatory proceedings, 2015

Appointed to assist the UEFA Club and Financial Control Body in the administration of the UEFA financial fair play rules, dealing with competition and free movement law issues and assisting in 2014 and 2015 in the settlement of cases with infringing clubs.

UKAD v Rhys Williams

National Anti-Doping Panel, 2015

Defence of anti-doping proceedings.

Football League v Rotherham

FL Disciplinary Proceedings, 2015

Disciplinary proceedings against Rotherham for the fielding of an ineligible player.

Lucinda Turner v British Equestrian Federation

(Sport Resolutions Arbitration, 2014)

Defence of anti-doping proceedings brought by the BEF.

West Ham v Football Association

Sport Resolutions Arbitration, 2014

Defence of proceedings brought by the Club appealing the suspension of the Player Andy Carroll.

Sheikh Hazza Bin Sultan Bin Zayed Al Nahyan v Federation Equestre International

CAS, 2014

Appeal against the international federation's decision that the rider bore responsibility for a prohibited substance in a horse that he rode in an endurance competition.

ICC v Jadeja

(ICC Arbitration, 2014)

Defence of disciplinary proceedings brought by the ICC in relation to an incident between two players.

Bruce Baker v British Boxing Board of Control

(Queen's Bench Division, 2014)

Defence of injunction proceedings brought to restrain the governing body from suspending the manager and promoter, and on its application for a stay under section 9 Arbitration Act 1996.

Japan Olympic Committee and Koji Murofushi v International Olympic Committee

(CAS, 2013)

Acted for the JOC and the athlete Koji Murofushi in his CAS appeal against the IOC's exclusion of him from the IOC Athletes' Commission for improper campaigning.

Besiktas v UEFA

(CAS, 2013)

Defence of the Club's appeal against exclusion from the Europa League for matchfixing.

FC Metalist v UEFA

(CAS, 2013)

Advised in relation to its defence of the Club's appeal against exclusion from the Europa League for matchfixing. Also advised UEFA in relation to various satellite proceedings brought by clubs contending that the excluded clubs should have been excluded earlier, allowing the claimant clubs into the competition.

Fenerbahce v UEFA

(CAS, 2013)

Defended the Club's appeal against exclusion from the Champions League for matchfixing.

Sky Lantern v BHA and Elusive Kate

(British Horseracing Association, 2013)

Acted for Sky Lantern's interests in BHA proceedings, opposed by Elusive Kate's interests.

Sports Governing Body Disciplinary Processes

(2013)

Advised a number of sports governing bodies in relation to the structures and practices of disciplinary processes and their compliance with human rights law, following the Court of Appeal decision in Kaur.

UEFA v The FA

UEFA disciplinary proceedings, 2013

Acted for The FA in defence of disciplinary proceedings brought against it by UEFA over calendar clashes.

USADA v Armstrong, Bruyneel, Lezema and Marti

AAA, 2013

Acted for Bruyneel in USADA's anti-doping proceedings against the remaining defendants after Armstrong chose to withdraw).

World Professional Billiards and Snooker Association v Stephen Lee

Sport Resolutions, 2013

Sat as the Sport Resolutions appointed tribunal to hear matchfixing allegations against the snooker player Stephen Lee.

ACHIEVEMENTS

Publications

- Lewis and Taylor, Sport: Law and Practice, 3rd edition 2014 Bloomsbury Professional, the principal UK sports law text.
- Sports arbitration chapter in Arbitration in England, Julian Lew et al, 2013 Wolters Kluwer.

Lecturing

- British Association for Sport and the Law and De Montfort University Sports Law course.
- Regularly speaks at conferences.

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