



**Irwin A. Kushner**

*Partner; Co-Chair, Corporate Department;  
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Irwin Kushner is a partner and a co-chair of both the firm's Corporate Department and Sports Law Group. He served as Herrick's Executive Chair from 2010-2023 and is a member of the firm's Executive Committee.

Irwin concentrates his practice in general corporation law with an emphasis on sophisticated transactional work. He has vast experience in mergers and acquisitions, joint ventures, private equity, securities law, corporate restructurings and reorganizations, new media law, venture capital, entertainment law, corporate finance and lending, intellectual property and licensing, employment law, equity and debt offerings and syndications in both the public and private context.

He has handled numerous mergers and acquisitions, both hostile and friendly, on behalf of acquirers, targets, and investment banks. The range of transactions includes proxy contests, joint ventures, self-tender offers, third party and spin-offs, taking public companies private, and other forms of corporate restructurings. Irwin's practice also includes advising financial institutions and investment advisors on regulatory issues, derivatives and other financial instruments, as well as private equity and venture capital funds and investors in onshore and offshore fund formation, and portfolio company acquisitions and sales. He has successfully structured, negotiated, supervised and closed many financing and capital raising transactions, including private placements, initial public offerings, PIPEs, hedge fund convertible security investments, secured and mezzanine loan facilities, project finance, workouts, reorganizations, equity and debt restructurings and negotiation of intercreditor relationships. Irwin has also represented clients in a number of high-profile senior executive employment and severance agreements and compensation packages as well as numerous corporations in the administration and establishment of employee compensation plans. Corporate boards and audit and special committees also turn to Irwin for advice on such matters as corporate governance and corporate restructurings.

Irwin is consistently recognized as a leader in sports law and has worked on some of the largest and most innovative deals in sports. He represents several professional sports franchises and sports related entities and has acted as primary counsel on a range of transactions in the industry including:

- High profile team acquisitions and dispositions in all the major sports leagues as well as sales of non-majority interests in professional sports teams
- Mergers, acquisitions and joint ventures
- Concession transactions and venue related services
- Ticketing issues
- Development, operational and promotional matters for sports facilities and their surrounding developments
- Credit facilities and debt structures

- Stadium and arena financing, leasing, development, construction and joint-use agreements
- Media, advertising and sponsorship contracts
- Gaming and wagering matters including online account wagering and advance deposit wagering
- Development and naming rights agreements
- Franchise transfers and financings
- Cable television and radio contracts
- Internet and intellectual property rights
- Charity and fundraising issues
- Major event and tournament promotions
- Commercial transactions involving sports memorabilia and collectibles and
- Seat license agreements for stadiums and arenas

He has acted as lead counsel in all aspects of fifteen major stadium transactions, most significantly the new Yankee Stadium and the development of Citi Field. He also represented the New York Islanders Hockey Club in the development of its new arena complex at Belmont Park. Irwin additionally represents financial institutions and bond insurers in stadium finance matters and loans to teams and team owners. He has significant experience representing major stadiums, teams and leagues in naming rights, sponsorship and concession transactions. Irwin has also represented entities and individuals in the development, construction, financing, leasing, and operations of mixed-use developments.

Irwin's experience includes representation of the New York Yankees in their joint venture effort with Manchester City to create Major League Soccer's New York City Football Club (NYCFC), and the continuing representation of the Club across a range of transactions. He advised Legends Hospitality in the deal to develop and operate the observation deck at the top of One World Trade Center, and was lead counsel to the New York Yankees and Yankee Global Enterprises in News Corp's 2012 acquisition of 49 percent of the Yankees Entertainment and Sports Network (YES), and 21st Century Fox's ensuing 2014 acquisition, which raised its ownership stake in YES to 80 percent, and finally in connection with the 2019 purchase by an investor group, which included Yankee Global Enterprises, of the Walt Disney Company's entire equity interest in the YES Network, which had a total enterprise value of \$3.47 billion.

Irwin has advised on numerous team acquisitions, dispositions, bids and sales of interests of professional teams that span leagues and sports including bids to acquire MLB, NBA, NFL, MLS, NHL and EPL teams. He recently represented a co-owner of the Milwaukee Bucks in the sale of his 25 percent stake in the team. According to ESPN, the transaction struck at a \$3.5 billion valuation was the second highest valuation ever paid for an NBA team and the third highest valuation for any American professional sports team. Irwin also represented Legends in its strategic partnership and minority investment in TeamTrak Cycling League, an entity of World Cycling Limited, to support the launch and growth of the startup indoor cycling league.

Irwin's sports experience also includes the formation of two of the country's largest regional sports networks (YES and SNY), and the ongoing representation of both networks. He has also negotiated many significant television, radio and digital media rights agreements for NBA, MLB and MLS teams – including a radio rights agreements for the Chicago Cubs, the New York Yankees and the NYCFC. Irwin has also advised on many high-profile sponsorship, marketing and advertising agreements for teams and their stadiums, including the new Yankee Stadium's agreements with corporations such as Toyota and AT&T, as well as sponsorship agreements for major sporting events, including Army Black Knight football

games, the NCAA's New Era Pinstripe Bowl and world-championship boxing matches. Irwin provides general corporate and tax-related advice to the New York Racing Association (NYRA) in addition to his primary role as their Integrity Counsel.

Irwin advises clients in transactions throughout North America, South America, Europe (including Eastern Europe) and Asia. His clients are involved in a wide range of industries including sports, e-commerce, real estate, engineering, entertainment, manufacturing, franchise, retail, distribution, consumer products, natural resources, consulting, healthcare and other service businesses.

Irwin is ranked as a leading individual by *Chambers USA* for Sports Law Nationwide and as a "Recommended Attorney" by the *Legal 500*. In 2021, *Sports Business Journal* named Herrick to its list of "Power Players" Outside Counsel" and specifically recognized Irwin for his work in sports law. He was originally recognized for his accomplishments in the publication's inaugural issue in 2016. He frequently lectures, and appears on television and radio, on such topics as M&A, private equity, venture capital, sports financing, structured premium finance and life settlements transactions, and executive compensation, among others. Before joining Herrick, Irwin was an associate in Shearman & Sterling's mergers and acquisitions department where he participated in several high-profile hostile tender offers and numerous public and privately negotiated divestitures and acquisitions.

### Services

- Corporate
- Mergers & Acquisitions/Joint Ventures
- Commercial Finance
- Sports
- Private Equity
- Private Investment Funds
- Investment Management
- Capital Markets
- Corporate Governance
- Restructuring & Business Divorce
- Technology Transactions & Licensing
- Venture Capital
- Employment
- Employment Counseling & Risk Management
- Executive Compensation, Benefits & ERISA
- Cybersecurity
- Insurance & Reinsurance
- Intellectual Property and Technology
- Real Estate
- Acquisitions & Sales
- Real Estate Finance
- Real Estate Joint Ventures
- Real Estate Hospitality
- Real Estate Workouts, Restructurings & Foreclosures
- MENA (Middle East and North Africa)
- Not-for-Profits

- COVID-19 Task Force and Resource Center

### Education

- Boston University School of Law (J.D., *magna cum laude*, 1987)
- Boston University Graduate School of Management (M.B.A, 1988)
- Tulane University (*magna cum laude*)
  - Phi Beta Kappa

### Recognitions and Accolades





- - Ranked in *Chambers USA* - Sports Law-USA (2016 - 2025)
  - *Sports Business Journal's* "Power Players: Outside Counsel" (2016); (2021)
  - *The Best Lawyers in America*® - Sports Law (2022 - 2025)
  - AV Peer Review Ratings & Client Review Awards | Martindale-Hubbell®
  - *Thomson Reuters New York Metro Super Lawyers* (2006 - 2011, 2013 - 2024)
  - *Who's Who Legal*, Global Guide, Recommended Attorney: Sports
  - *Who's Who Legal*, Thought Leaders - USA Sports (2024)
  - *Attorney Intel*, The Top 25 M&A Attorneys (2024)
  - American Bar Foundation - Fellow
  - *Lawdragon 500* - Leading Dealmakers in America (2024 - 2025)
  - *Lawdragon 500* - Leading Lawyers in America (2025)
  - *Lawdragon 500* - Leading Global Entertainment, Sports & Media Lawyers (2025)Award Methodology

#### Memberships & Associations

- American Bar Association
- New York City Bar Association
  - Sports Law Committee, Affiliate Member
- New York County Lawyers Association
- NHL Coaches' Association
  - Advisory Board
- TAGLaw®
  - Advisory Board
  - Co-Chair, Sports & Entertainment Specialty Group
  - Member, Best Practices & Firm Management Specialty Group
  - Member, Financial Institutions & Markets Specialty Group
  - Member, Corporate and M&A Specialty Group
- MEAG New York
  - Board of Directors and Secretary

- Sessions.edu
  - Board of Directors
  - Corporate Secretary
- The Sports Lawyers Association
- *Professional Sports and the Law*
  - Editorial Board
- *Law360*, Sports & Betting Editorial Advisory Board, Member (2021-2024)