



Charles H. Baker

Partner

New York
D: +1-212-326-2121
cbaker@omm.com

Charles Baker is Co-Chair of O'Melveny's Sports Industry Group. Chuck's corporate practice encompasses mergers and acquisitions, private equity, and venture capital transactions, with a core focus in the sports, media and consumer sectors.

Chuck has represented buyers and sellers of sports franchises in the National Football League, National Basketball Association, National Hockey League, Major League Baseball, Major League Soccer and many of the European football leagues. Most recently, Chuck represented David Tepper, founder and president of global hedge fund Appaloosa Management, in his acquisition of the NFL's Carolina Panthers.

Chuck has been featured by dozens of national publications and other media outlets as a thought leader in the fields of sports and entertainment law, and is also a frequent public speaker on those topics. Most recently, *The American Lawyer* named Chuck to its prestigious 2019 "Dealmakers of the Year" list. He was also profiled in *Variety's* 2018 and 2017 "Dealmakers Elite New York," a feature spotlighting the most important players in the fields of law, finance, representation, and executive leadership.

Chuck has been recognized nationally for sports law in the last six editions of *Chambers USA: America's Leading Lawyers for Business*, which has described him as a "very strong practitioner" who is "well connected, incredibly bright and just able to get the deal closed" with "tremendous experience and know-how in the sports space."

He was also recognized by *Law360* in 2015 and 2016 for his stellar M&A and sports law work, and by the *Global M&A Network* for his work on the sale of the Atlanta Hawks NBA team, naming

Admissions

Bar Admissions
New York

Education

Cornell University, J.D.

it the “2015 USA Deal of the Year” at its prestigious M&A Atlas Awards. In 2016, he was featured in *Sports Business Journal*'s “Power Players: Sports Lawyers & Outside Counsel” 2016 list.

Chuck, who holds a JD from Cornell University, is a Distinguished Lecturer at NYU's Tisch Institute for Sports Management, Media, and Business. He is also a member of the University of Miami School of Law's Entertainment, Arts, and Sports Law board. Chuck also served as a staff associate for former Senator Bill Bradley.

He is active at the board level with the March of Dimes and the Leukemia & Lymphoma Society, and previously with USA Triathlon.

Experience

Sports Matters

- **David Tepper**, founder and president of global hedge fund Appaloosa Management, in his US\$2.275 billion acquisition of the NFL Carolina Panthers, the largest transaction for an NFL team to date
- **David Tepper** in his acquisition of Major League Soccer's 30th expansion team for Charlotte, NC
- Investors including Hollywood producer **Jerry Bruckheimer** in David Bonderman and Oak View Group's acquisition of NHL Seattle expansion franchise
- **Meg Whitman and Dr. Griff Harsh** in their acquisition of a minority interest in MLS Cincinnati FC
- Investor group in the acquisition of a minority interest in MLS **Seattle Sounders FC**
- Legendary Spanish football player **David Villa** in his investment in Queensboro FC, an expansion United Soccer League (USL) franchise in New York City
- **Future Beat, LLC**, a provider of VIP experiences for concerts and other events, in its sale to On Location Events, LLC, the official hospitality partner of the NFL
- **SportsCastr**, a live-streaming platform that allows anyone to become a color commentator, in connection with the sale of a minority stake in the company to the NFL Players Association (NFLPA) and the company's becoming an official licensee of the NFLPA
- **American Flag Football League (AFFL)** in connection with a broadcasting partnership with the NFL Network — the first-ever broadcast deal for professional flag football
- **ReKTGlobal, Inc.**, an esports company, in the acquisition of Rogue, a Steve Aoki-backed, Las Vegas-based esports team, and a European Riot Games League of Legends franchise
- Investor in connection with a controlling interest in the **Brooklyn Nets** NBA franchise
- **Prospect Sports Partners** in connection with the development of a youth soccer academy in Kings Park, NY and mixed use development with Barcelona Football Club
- Leading online youth sports media company **STACK Media, Inc.** on its sale to Genstar-backed Blue Star Sports
- **Phoenix Rising Football Club** on various aspects of a potential MLS expansion team
- **Blue Pool Capital**, the family office of Alibaba executive vice chairman Joseph Tsai, in the acquisition of the San Diego Seals, a National Lacrosse League expansion team
- Private equity investors in connection with controlling acquisition of **LAFC**
- Owners of **Atlanta Hawks** in auctioned sale of NBA team and operating rights to Philips Arena
- Atlanta Falcons owner, Arthur M. Blank, in the acquisition of the **Atlanta United Football Club**

- Checketts Partners Investment Fund in formation and investments in **ScoreBig**, **Gravity Media**, **Veritone**, and **Legends Hospitality**
- Rob Dyrdek and **Street League Skateboarding** in Series A financing by Causeway Media Partners, a private equity firm focused on sports and media investments
- Abu Dhabi United Group and Manchester City F.C. in acquisition, with the New York Yankees, of **New York City Football Club**, MLS's 20th expansion club
- **Red Bull Global Rallycross Championship** racing series in equity raise
- Investors in the purchase of a minority interest in the **Oakland Raiders**
- Private equity firm in the refinancing of the **Ottawa Senators**
- Chang USA in sale of **DC Soccer** to Black Eagle Investment Group; MacFarlane-Chang in acquisition of **DC United** from AEG
- Investor groups in the potential acquisition of the **Los Angeles Dodgers**, **Memphis Grizzlies**, **New York Mets**, and **D.C. United**
- **A.S. Roma Football Club** and **Raptor Sports Group** in majority equity capital raise
- **Manchester City F.C.** in a kit sponsorship deal with Nike Inc.
- Private equity investor in the proposed purchase by Matthew Hulsizer of the **St. Louis Blues**
- Atlanta Spirit Group in the sale of the **Atlanta Thrashers** to True North Sports and relocation to Winnipeg, Manitoba
- Private equity investor in the purchase by Ted Leonsis of **Washington Capitals** and **Washington Wizards**
- Stephen Ross in the purchase of the **Miami Dolphins** football franchise and Dolphin Stadium
- Kurt Salmon Associates as financial advisor in Ashworth's merger with **TaylorMade-Adidas Golf**
- **Fila Korea** in its acquisition of the global footwear and apparel business from Cerberus Capital
- **Highbridge Principal Strategies** in investment in Wasserman Media Group
- Investors in the purchase of the **Philadelphia 76ers** from Comcast-Spectacor
- Ethos II LLC in its acquisition of **Boston Triathlon** and **Maine Lobsterman Triathlon**

Non-Sports Matters

- **Union Square Hospitality Group** in connection with Food and Beverage Operating Agreement with King & Grove hotel chain
- **Wednesday Agency Group**, a digital advertising agency, in its sale to BBDO, a subsidiary of the Omnicom Group
- **Fosun** in connection with its minority investment in St. John Knits
- **Frame Denim** in its sale to private equity investors
- **FTI Consulting, Inc.** in its acquisition of The Salter Group, LLC, a leading entertainment and media advisory firm
- **Fashion Networks International**, a leading fashion blog portal, in its sale to Fairchild Fashion Media, a division of Condé Nast

- **Dubai World** in its minority investment in MGM Mirage and joint venture in the Las Vegas CityCenter development project
- **LionTree Advisors LLC**, as financial advisor and fairness opinion provider, in connection with Charter Communications's US\$78.7 billion acquisition of Time Warner Cable and Charter Communications's US\$10.4 billion acquisition of Bright House Networks
- **JPMorgan Securities**, as financial advisor and fairness opinion provider, in connection with the following:
 - News Corporation's acquisition of Dow Jones & Company
 - Mars, Inc., and Berkshire Hathaway, Inc.'s acquisition of Wm. Wrigley Jr.
 - Landmark Communications' sale of The Weather Channel to NBC, Bain and Blackstone
 - MoneyGram's recapitalization with T.H. Lee Partners and Goldman Sachs
 - United Industrial Corporation's sale to Textron, Inc.
- **UBS Securities**, as financial advisor and fairness opinion provider, in connection with the acquisition by The Princeton Review of Penn Foster Education Group from The Wicks Group of Companies
- **Duff & Phelps**, as financial advisor, in connection with US\$4.4 billion spinoff by Verizon Communications of landline businesses to Frontier Communications
- **Bear Stearns** as financial advisor in connection with proposed sale of Steve Madden Company to Nautica
- **Bear Stearns** as financial advisor and fairness opinion provider in a hostile takeover by Jones Apparel of Maxwell Shoe Company
- **Jennifer Lopez** in proposed dispositions of Sweetface Fashion Company, LLC to Tommy Hilfiger Inc. and The Yucaipa Companies
- **Onward Kashiwama** in purchase of minority interest and license agreement with Michael Kors

Corporate & Government Experience

- Staff Intern, former Senator Bill Bradley

Professional Activities

Memberships

- *Law360*, Sports Editorial Advisory Board
- Block Six Analytics, Advisory Board
- Sports Innovation Lab, Advisory Board
- SportsCastr.Live, Advisory Board
- University of Miami School of Law, Entertainment, Arts and Sports Law Board
- American Bar Association, Business Law and Sports Law Committees, Financial Advisor Task Force
- Sports Lawyers Association
- Former, *Law360*, Media and Entertainment Editorial Board

Civic and Charitable

- Leukemia & Lymphoma Society, Executive Officer and Director
- March of Dimes, Board of Trustees, Sports Luncheon Committee
- United Nations Foundation for Gender Equality, Board Member
- Honorary Committee for Challenged Athletes Foundation (CAF), Member
- Ivy Sports Symposium, Board of Directors
- USA Triathlon, Independent Director, Board of Directors (previous)

Faculty

- University of Miami School of Law, Visiting Professor

Publications

- “Two Sports Leagues that Could Be Poised for Growth in 2012 and Why,” *Sports Litigation Alert Online*, Volume 9, Issue 24, December 28, 2012

Selected Speaking Engagements

- Panelist, “Sports Valuations & Venture Capital Opportunities,” University of Michigan’s Sport Management Summer Speaker Series (August 19, 2020)
- Panelist, “Decision-Making in Unprecedented Times,” Effects of COVID-19 on Sports & Entertainment Webinar (March 26, 2020)
- Panelist, “How are Investors Shaping Sport. What is driving investors’ appetite for sports, where is the money going and how is the power and influence of active investors changing the sports landscape?,” Sports Decision Makers Summit (May 7, 2019)
- Panelist, “The Role of Global Business as a Catalyst for Sport Integrity,” SIGA Sport Integrity Forum (March 26, 2019)
- Panelist, “Growth and Future of eSports,” Fordham Sports Law Symposium (February 22, 2019)
- Speaker, “Negotiation and Dispute Resolution in Sports SPRT PS5105,” University of Columbia: Sports Management Program (January 17, 2019)
- Speaker, “Disruption and Growth - The Future of Esports,” Cornell ILR Sports Leadership Summit (November 15, 2018)
- Speaker, “M&A in Sports: Inside the Carolina Panthers Acquisition,” Wharton Sports Business Summit (November 9, 2018)
- Speaker, “Sports Team Valuations,” University of Michigan (November 2, 2018)
- Speaker, “The Role of Lawyers in Professional Sports Franchise Acquisitions,” Harvard Law School (October 11, 2018)
- Keynote Speaker, “Investing in Sports,” SportBusiness Summit 2018 (September 18, 2018)
- Guest Lecturer, “The Business of Sports - Mergers & Acquisitions in Professional Sport,” UCLA Anderson School of Management (September 6, 2018)
- Keynote Speaker, “Investing in Sports,” Opal Financial Group’s 12th Annual Family Office & Private Wealth Management Forum (July 17, 2018)

- Moderator, “Innovations in Stadium Development,” Miami University of Law Global Entertainment & Sport Conference (April 5, 2018)
- Moderator, “Investing in Sports and esports: Engaging Today’s Fan,” with Marc Lasry, Dave Checketts, and Jared Bartie, NYSSCPA Family Office Committee (March 14, 2018)
- Speaker, “Investing in Professional Sports Teams,” Investment Conference Lunch, RBC Wealth Management (September 27, 2017)
- Panelist, “Team & Venue Acquisitions and Financings,” Sports Lawyers Association Conference (May 19, 2017)
- Panelist, “Sports & Entertainment Law in Practice,” Harvard Committee on Sports & Entertainment Law (April 13, 2017)
- Panelist, “Inside the Deal: Trends in Financing Sports Properties,” NYU Tisch Institute for Sports Management, Media, and Business - 16th Annual Cal Ramsey Distinguished Lecturer Series in Sports Management (March 29, 2017)
- Lead Panelist, “Mergers & Acquisitions and Financing: Professional Sports Teams and Venue Transactions,” Sports Lawyers Association Conference (May 13, 2016)
- Distinguished Lecturer, NYU Tisch Institute for Sports Management, Media, and Business (May 2016)
- Panelist, NYU Tisch Institute for Sports Management, Media, and Business, “Public Policy: When Do Sports Leagues, Teams, and Organizations Get Involved,” Social Responsibility Conference (March 14, 2016)
- Panelist, “Living the Dream: Buying, Selling and Evaluating Sports Franchises,” 3rd Annual Cardozo Sports Law Symposium, Benjamin N. Cardozo School of Law (March 13, 2015)
- Panelist, “Sports Business Today: Leadership in the Global Economy,” 9th Annual Ivy Sports Symposium, Princeton Hyatt Regency (November 14, 2014)
- Speaker, “Sports M&A: Deal Drivers and Breaking into the Business,” Cornell University (October 31, 2014)
- Moderator, “Going Global: International Expansion,” Ivy Sports Symposium, Harvard Law School (November 22, 2013)
- Speaker, “Sports M&A,” Bloomberg Dealmakers Summit, New York (October 25, 2012)

Honors & Awards

- Recognized as one of *The American Lawyer’s* “Dealmakers of the Year” (2019)
- Corporate Honoree, Leukemia and Lymphoma Society, New York Chapter, Inaugural Crimson Ball (2018)
- Recognized as a “Dealmaker” in *Variety’s* Dealmakers Elite: New York (2017-2018)
- Recognized nationally for Sports Law by *Chambers USA* (2012-2020)
- Named to New York *Super Lawyers®* list for work in sports & entertainment law (2017)
- Included in *Sports Business Journal’s* “Power Players: Sports Lawyers & Outside Counsel” list (2016)
- Recognized by *The Legal 500* for work in M&A and sports law (2015-2019)
- Awarded “USA Deal of the Year,” by *Global M&A Network*, M&A Atlas Awards (2015)