

Press Releases

O'Melveny Advises Pro Soccer Team Oakland Roots Sports Club on Agreement to Join United Soccer League



September 16, 2020

RELATED PROFESSIONALS

Irwin Rajj

New York
D: +1-212-326-2120

Chris Anderson

Century City
D: +1-310-246-8580

Billy Abbott

Silicon Valley
D: +1-650-473-2614

RELATED INDUSTRIES

[Sports, Stadiums & Arenas](#)

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

NEW YORK—September 16, 2020—O'Melveny advised the professional soccer team Oakland Roots Sports Club on an agreement to become a member of the United Soccer League (USL).

The deal was announced on September 15, 2020.

The Oakland Roots acquired USL franchise rights from USL East Bay and will join the USL Championship beginning in the 2021 season.

Founded in July 2018 in Oakland, California, the Oakland Roots Sports Club has quickly grown into a cultural phenomenon in the United States soccer scene, selling out its first five home games and averaging home game attendance of more than 5,000 fans. The club uses its broad reach in the Oakland community to drive progress on social issues.

Based in Tampa, Florida, the United Soccer League is the largest and fastest-growing professional soccer organization in North America and counts more than 125 clubs in its membership.

The O'Melveny team advising the Oakland Roots was led by partner Irwin Rajj and associate Chris Anderson. Counsel Billy Abbott advised on tax issues.

O'Melveny has more than a half-century's experience advising a wide range of sports teams, leagues, and stakeholders. The firm has handled numerous billion-dollar acquisitions and dispositions of professional sports teams; cutting-edge media and licensing arrangements; stadium development, financings, and naming rights; sponsorships and endorsements; and strategic joint ventures.

About O'Melveny

It's more than what you do: it's how you do it. Across sectors and borders, in board rooms and courtrooms, we measure our success by yours. And in our interactions, we commit to making your O'Melveny experience as satisfying as the outcomes we help you achieve. Our greatest accomplishment is ensuring that you never have to choose between premier lawyering and exceptional service. So, tell us. What do you want to achieve? Visit us at www.omm.com or learn more in our [firm at-a-glance](#), [year-end highlights](#), and on [LinkedIn](#), [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), and [YouTube](#).

Contact:

Brandon Jacobsen O'Melveny & Myers LLP
+1 213 430 8024
bjacobsen@omm.com

The Oakland Roots issued the following:

PURPOSE-DRIVEN CLUB HAS CAPTURED IMAGINATION OF FANS LOCALLY AND ACROSS THE UNITED STATES SINCE ITS FOUNDATION

TAMPA, Fla. – The United Soccer League today announced Oakland Roots Sports Club would become a member of the USL Championship beginning in the 2021 season, adding an organization that from its origins has captured the imagination of fans both locally and across the United States with its unique branding and mission of inclusivity and social good.

Founded in July 2018 by six local soccer fans and investors, Roots has quickly grown into a cultural phenomenon in the United States soccer scene. Based in the heart of Oakland at Laney College Stadium, the club sold out its first five home games in club history and welcomed 5,723 fans to its home finale last October. Roots' strong attendance continued into this spring, and they have averaged more than 5,000 fans at home games since the club's launch.

"Oakland Roots Sports Club is one of the most impressive and purpose-driven organizations in the United States. We are thrilled to welcome them into the Championship," said USL Chief Executive Officer Alec Papadakis. "When we think about the kind of clubs that can help drive our league forward, we look for committed ownership and fantastic community support. With Steven Aldrich, his team, and the city of Oakland, Roots S.C. possess those things in abundance, and we have no doubt they will be a huge success in our league."

In addition to the passion and commitment Roots have seen from local soccer fans, including supporters group Roots Radicals, the club has used its broad reach in the Oakland community to drive progress on social issues. Additionally this past June, Roots became the first professional club in the United States to join Common Goal, a global initiative begun by Manchester United and Spain midfielder Juan Mata that sees players and clubs contribute a minimum of one percent of their salaries and ticket revenue to fight social inequality.

“We are excited to join the USL Championship in 2021,” said Roots Chair Steven Aldrich. “Playing in the Championship is a great opportunity for the Oakland Roots to continue our journey of using soccer as a force for social good. We can’t wait to showcase the passion, pride, and commitment of our players, fans, and The Town to an even wider audience next year.”

Roots joins the Championship for the 2021 season having acquired the franchise rights from USL East Bay.

“This has been a long journey together of nearly five years,” added Roots Co-Founders Benno Nagel and Edreece Arghandiwal. “We can’t wait to take another step together as we continue to grow our roots.”

###