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The Soccer Issue

SPORTS LAW PRACTICE GROUP CO-CHAIRS

IN THIS ISSUE

- Introduction
- Marvin Morris – Domestic and International Sports Facilities Expertise
- Manatt Alumnus Profile – Alan Rothenberg
- Manatt Partner Ronald S. Katz Joins Faculty of Annual Sports Law Association Conference
- TaylorMade Teed Off by Rival's Ad Claims

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Introduction

This issue of ManattSports is dedicated to soccer. Our first article showcases Manatt attorney Marvin Morris's involvement with the 2010 FIFA World Cup in South Africa — the first time that the World Cup will be held on the continent of Africa. A second article presents Manatt alumnus — and inductee to the U.S. National Soccer Hall of Fame — Alan Rothenberg's accomplishments in the world of soccer.

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Rodney A. Alves
Manatt L.A. & São Paulo

These articles demonstrate Manatt's depth in the national and international sporting and business realms of soccer. While Alan Rothenberg represents Manatt's proud past, and Marvin Morris reflects our present work, we offer **Rodney Alves** as a peek into the future.

Earlier this year Brazil was named Host Nation for the 2014 Soccer World Cup. Rodney, a Brazilian lawyer with ManattJones Global Strategies, looks forward to projects relating to Brazil's hosting of the 2014 World Cup. As Rodney puts it, "I come from a country that lives and breathes soccer 24/7." Brazil, the country with the largest population of soccer players in the world, already views the 2014 World Cup "as the most important event in

OUR PRACTICE

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[. Practice Group Members](#)

the country for decades." This event will be "a huge opportunity for significant investment in infrastructure, real estate development, security, hospitality, healthcare, telecommunications, and tourism," he explains. Rodney, based in Los Angeles, and Mario Marconini, a former Foreign Trade Secretary in Brazil who now works in ManattJones' Sao Paulo office, look forward to leading roles in these exciting developments.

Meanwhile, back in the United States, soccer has become so popular that Major League Soccer recently announced it will expand next year to 15 teams, and then to 16 teams in 2010. Following in the steps of the English Premier League, MLS also has increased its number of foreign players, with the clear intent to make the league more international. Plainly, the future of soccer is bright and ripe with opportunity. And as in the past, and present, Manatt will be there.

Marvin Morris – Domestic and International Sports Facilities Expertise

By Jeffrey J. Lokey



These days, the commute of Washington, D.C., resident and rising sports law powerhouse attorney Marvin Morris can vary by as much as 8,000 miles — from a few blocks to his Manatt office across the District to trans-Atlantic flights to see his client, the City of Johannesburg, South Africa.

Remarkably, Marvin's ascension to sports law prominence came as a direct result of his years of commitment to public service.

Before joining Manatt, Marvin served as Special Counsel to the Chief Financial Officer of the Government of the District of Columbia, where he negotiated a number of newsworthy, complex public-private financing transactions, including the Mandarin Oriental Hotel-Washington and a 500,000-square-foot retail development that has revitalized a District urban community. In perhaps his most celebrated effort to date, Marvin negotiated on behalf of the Chief Financial Officer the financing provisions in the new baseball stadium lease agreement which brought the Washington Nationals and Major League Baseball back to Washington.

In the course of the historic deal, Marvin wore many hats, including, among others, serving as the point man on the

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financing team responsible for the \$535 million bond issuance to pay for the acquisition and development of the stadium. Marvin recalls: "That was a challenging deal. MLB wanted everything for as little as possible. The District government, on the other hand, wanted baseball in the District, but didn't like the terms of the deal. After three years of tough negotiating and lobbying for the support of the City Council, then-Mayor Anthony Williams' vision was accomplished." The District-owned stadium opened in March, just in time for the Washington Nationals to throw out the first pitch for the 2008 baseball season. Hanging on Marvin's office wall is a shovel commemorating the stadium groundbreaking ceremony — its handle, a piece of a Major League Baseball bat.

In addition to his work with the District government, Marvin has been consulting private investment firms and other businesses in South Africa for over 13 years. While in law school in 1995, he created an opportunity to work with the director for the South African Competition Board in the development of an enforcement statute that would deter monopolies in South Africa, while permitting the growth of companies that apartheid had previously hindered. Marvin's research supported the development of a provision that is now part of the South African Constitution. This project provided a platform for Marvin to begin consulting businesses in South Africa.

In 2006, Marvin's public finance and economic development experience came together. Shortly after the District baseball stadium financing was completed, Marvin was asked by the City of Johannesburg to assist in a study for the development of the country's first "economic empowerment zone" — an area designated as a priority zone for business investment and social empowerment. It turns out that the economic empowerment zone, called the Soweto Empowerment Zone, includes the main stadium for the World Cup 2010. In the last month, the City of Johannesburg again sought Marvin's expertise and ultimately engaged Manatt for assistance on how U.S. municipalities and states have structured tax lien securitizations and other financings to yield additional cash flow. The City plans to use this financing arrangement to fund additional infrastructure, housing and other demands that have increased because of the World Cup 2010. Marvin anticipates that there will be opportunities for the Sports Practice Group to expand its services to South Africa.

[back to top](#)

[Manatt Alumnus Profile – Alan Rothenberg](#)

By Jeffrey J. Lokey



To hear former Manatt name partner, Alan I. Rothenberg, tell it, it was a sport – specifically golf – that led to the firm's initial expansion. "Chuck [Manatt] and Tom [Phelps] were both avid golfers but I did not play much. So when it came time to recruit, they were constantly trying to get me to find attorneys who could fill out a foursome. We had great success attracting talented lawyers, but unfortunately I kept

forgetting to make sure they also played golf. So we just had to keep growing."

Rothenberg, a 2007 inductee into the U.S. National Soccer Hall of Fame and the namesake of the Alan I. Rothenberg Trophy awarded annually to the winner of the Major League Soccer Cup, certainly did not start out his career intent on becoming a powerhouse sports lawyer. "Growing up in the Midwest, all I knew about the law was what I'd seen on television. There was no such thing as 'sports law.' I aspired to be Perry Mason."

It was while working as a young litigation associate that Rothenberg got his first taste of what he would later know as sports law. "I was assigned to a couple of matters involving the various businesses of Jack Kent Cooke, and that ultimately led to matters involving the Lakers, Kings, Redskins, the Forum, heavyweight boxing and, later, soccer." Indeed, when Jack Kent Cooke acquired the Los Angeles Wolves North American Soccer League team, he tapped Rothenberg to serve as the franchise's General Manager.

Several years after returning to Manatt, Rothenberg was approached by Peter Ueberroth to serve as a Commissioner for one of the competitions in the 1984 Olympics. "By that time, I had significant experience and connections with several of the marquee sports, including basketball, boxing and baseball. I chose soccer partly because I was then Managing Partner and head of Manatt's litigation group and knew that, with FIFA's already exceptional infrastructure in place, it was nearly a turn-key operation with built-in worldwide popularity. What we thought was going to be the challenge was generating excitement domestically." Little did Rothenberg know that soccer would be one of the huge hits of the 1984 Olympics, including multiple sellouts of the Rose Bowl and Stanford Stadium.

Rothenberg's Olympics accomplishments and management skills so impressed soccer's international leaders that from 1990-1998 he was elected to serve as President of the United States Soccer Federation. In that capacity, Rothenberg oversaw the 1994 World Cup and the tournament's ultimate success. Rothenberg was also largely responsible for parlaying the domestic popularity of soccer that gained momentum during the '94 World Cup into the formation of Major League Soccer, ultimately serving as Commissioner of the nascent league. Rothenberg, however, graciously deflects many of the accolades to others in his organization. "My success with soccer has always been due to bringing together on my management teams both passionate soccer fans and brilliant strategists and businesspersons who previously had no connection with the game. Those groups learned from and complemented each other, and many of the key personnel have gone on to continued success within MLS and elsewhere in sports."

As for the future of United States soccer, Rothenberg sees bigger and better things. "There's a boom in grassroots soccer that started in the '70s when my kids were playing AYSO and has now expanded to the suburban and immigrant populations. With more homegrown stars and an audience that has grown up with soccer, the economics will start to catch up with that of the top European leagues and allow MLS to continue to attract international superstars. David Beckham is the most recent example, and there will surely be more to follow. There's no question that there's a crowded sports marketplace, but soccer has shown itself to be more than capable of attracting talented athletes and enthusiastic fans across borders and cultures."

When pressed for his predictions regarding the upcoming 2010 World Cup, Rothenberg has no doubt that the real winner will be the game itself. "FIFA is so committed to make this a real statement that they'll move heaven and earth to make it happen. They've had a fully-staffed office in Johannesburg since 2006 and are intent on ensuring that the event provides long-term benefits for the community." Asked to sum up his contributions to soccer, Rothenberg is unflinchingly deferential and circumspect. "Soccer is a true international sport and I've been quite fortunate to have had several chances to be involved in its development and expansion. But I'm not done yet. Not only am I looking forward to World Cup 2010, but I'm just hoping I'm in good enough shape to be in Brazil for the world party that will be World Cup 2014!"

[back to top](#)

Manatt Partner Ronald S. Katz Joins Faculty of Annual Sports Law Association Conference

Ronald Katz will serve on the faculty of the Sports Lawyers Association's upcoming annual meeting in San Francisco. Debbie Spander, Vice President of Business & Legal Affairs, MTV Entertainment, is the SLA's 2008 Conference Chair. Mr. Katz, Co-Chair of Manatt's Sports Law Practice Group, will focus on legal issues for retired players. He joins a roster of experts who will also explore sports sponsorship and media transactions; off-the-field conduct, gambling issues; immigration issues; broadcast and Internet rights and agent regulation, among other issues.

Date & Location

May 15-17, 2008

Westin St. Francis, San Francisco, CA

Conference details available at:

<http://www.sportslaw.org/conferences/2008brochure.pdf>

[back to top](#)

TaylorMade Teed Off by Rival's Ad Claims

TaylorMade-adidas Golf has sued its smaller competitor Nickent Golf over claims in a recent ad campaign. For details, please see the **April 14, 2008** issue of *Advertising Law@Manatt* newsletter.

[back to top](#)