Sports fans view the sports pages as encyclopedias of team and player information. Recently, however, the sports pages have begun to read more like a legal journal. Player contract settlements, league expansion plans, antitrust suits, collective bargaining agreements, and other legal issues have become as important as player/game statistics in the world of sports. Sports lawyers off the field have become as significant as coaches on the field. "Free agency," "right of first refusal," "collusion," "no-cut contracts," and "holdout" have become as common to the language of sports as "bases on balls," "dunks," and "assists." This growing interaction between sports and the law has created a need for a greater understanding of the law as it relates to the sports world as well as an appreciation of the many ethical issues which are an integral part of this relationship.
Marquette University Law School, in response to the growing importance of the relationship between sports and the law, established the National Sports Law Institute, in 1989, which is the first of its kind in the United States. The Institute's principal mission is to promote the development of ethical practices in all phases of amateur and professional sports. The Institute aims to upgrade the level of information and education available to lawyers and sports industry personnel.

The Institute is served by a National Board of Advisors to provide direction to the Institute and the Law School's curricular offerings in the sports law area. The Institute has received financial support from four founding sponsors: the Green Bay Packers of the National Football League, the Milwaukee Admirals of the International Hockey League, the Milwaukee Brewers of the American Baseball League, and the Milwaukee Bucks of the National Basketball Association.

Sports law is an amalgam of interrelated legal disciplines encompassing such areas as contracts, agency, torts, antitrust, labor, taxation, and criminal law. For those interested in this somewhat specialized area, both curricular and co-curricular opportunities are offered. In order to assist students and sports-related professionals, the Institute serves as a repository of sports resource materials which include a sports law library and research center. The Law School offers elective courses to its students. "Sports Industry Contracts and Negotiations," focuses on contractual relationships in professional athletics and "Regulation of Amateur Athletics" deals with the regulatory problems in amateur sports.

The Institute offers law students opportunities outside of the classroom. Students can serve as an Institute research assistant, participate in the Student Sports Law Society, take part in the Institute's sports industry and community outreach programs or become an editorial board member of the Marquette Sports Law Journal. The Marquette Sports Law Journal is published by the Institute and Marquette University Law School, and contains scholarly articles on significant sports law issues.

The Institute was instrumental in the formation of the Wisconsin Sports Authority. The Authority was formed to attract and host national and international sports events to Wisconsin. In addition the Authority will also develop educational and outreach functions specifically for Wisconsin's senior, disabled and disadvantaged citizens.
The Institute is dedicated to sports industry outreach programs targeted to those working in the management, ownership, and coaching of amateur and professional sports. Presently, the Institute sponsors two such programs. First, the Sports Business Forum of the National Sports Law Institute, which is a group of approximately seventy-five Wisconsin sports executives, meets to discuss current issues affecting the relationship between sports, business, and the law.

Second, the Amateur Sports Law Center, which is under the auspices of the National Sports Law Institute, provides continuing education programs and seminars for attorneys, college and high school athletic directors, administrators, and coaches.

Also, the Institute is preparing a sports law practitioner's book to be published by the Michie Company, a national legal publishing house. Further, the Institute will also develop a training manual and conduct in-house seminars to assist high school athletic directors, administrators, and coaches identify their legal responsibilities and liabilities in conducting athletic programs while promoting safety and efficiency.

As a special endeavor, the Institute, in conjunction with the Marquette University Center for Ethics, will produce a manual containing legal and ethical commentary on sports industry practices.

Martin J. Greenberg leads Marquette University Law School's National Sports Law Institute. He is the associate director of the Institute and also serves as adjunct professor at the Law School. Professor Greenberg is a specialist in sports law, real estate practice and taxation. He is a partner in the law firm of Martin J. Greenberg and Associates. The Milwaukee Bar Association's 1988 Lawyer of the Year-Legal Scholar Award was presented to the professor and he is noted in Who's Who in American Law. He also has co-authored the 1989 book Sport$ Biz published by Leisure Press, and he has written four other books and numerous articles for legal journals.

James T. Gray, an attorney, is the manager of the Institute and assists Professor Greenberg. Mr. Gray has written on such issues as the application of workers' compensation coverage to injured amateur or professional athletes and the relationship between professional athletes and their agents. He also coordinates Institute affairs including the planning and administration of academic programming, publications, and seminars.

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