



Mark Hovell

Personal details

Position: Partner
Qualifications: Mark qualified as a solicitor in 1993 and as an insolvency practitioner in 1999

Expertise

Mark is a leading sports lawyer, practicing in that niche area since 1993. He is the Head of Sports at leading national law firm, Mills & Reeve, practicing out of its Manchester and London offices, in the main.

While still representing athletes and clubs at regulatory, disciplinary and commercial appeals and tribunals, since 2002 Mark has spent more time presiding over disputes at such appeals and tribunals, mainly at the [Court of Arbitration for Sport](#) (CAS), in Switzerland. Mark is on the General List of Arbitrators at the CAS as well as the specific Football List and has presided over 100+ matters to date, many as President of the Panel or as a Sole Arbitrator.

Mark was appointed to the CAS's Ad Hoc Panels for the FIFA 2010 World Cup and the Commonwealth Games in both Glasgow and Delhi.

Mark is also on [Sport Resolutions'](#) Panel of Arbitrators – Chairpersons List - in the UK and has been on panels for a number of Rule K Arbitrations for the Football Association. He also taken part in a number of commercial mediations in the sporting sector.

He is a Member of the Chartered Institute of Arbitrators; an Insolvency Practitioner, a Fellow of R3 and on the board of the Manchester FA. Mark is a regular lecturer on sports law matters (in particular on finance topics such as restructuring and Financial Fair Play (FFP)) both in the UK and around the world.

Arbitration/tribunal experience

Football cases

o Club v Club

Mark has dealt with dozens of financial disputes between clubs, ranging from unpaid transfer fees, disputes on the quantum of training compensation (including the leading case of *Parma v Manchester United* CAS 2009/A/1908) and solidarity monies, through to one of the three leading Article 17 cases (*Udinese v De Sanctis and Sevilla* – CAS 2010/A/2145,6&7).

o Club v Associations

Of late, Mark has dealt with some of the leading appeals against FIFA and UEFA on such areas as corruption (*Metalist v UEFA* – CAS 2013/A/3297), racism (*HFF v FIFA* - CAS 2013/A/3094) and FFP (*Besiktas v UEFA* – CAS 2012/A/2824) often on an expedited basis. Many cases in this area often involve complex jurisdictional arguments, such as the multi-party dispute Mark recently heard in Johannesburg involving the majority of the Second Division clubs (CAS 2013/A/3076).

MILLS & REEVE

○ **Player/Managers v Club**

The vast majority of the cases in this area relate to non-payment of players, but some have thrown up some interesting issues, such as a player's right to play (*Strelkov v FC Krylia Sovetov* – CAS 2011/A/2428), players assaulting their colleagues, through to using the specificity of sport to award damages to a player (*Rasiak v Limassol* - CAS 2012/A/2792).

Domestically, Mark acted for five players at Notts County in their challenge to the club's stance on severance pay before the Football League Appeals Committee (FLAC) and for manager, Martin Allen in his dispute for wrongful dismissal by Bournemouth AFC, again before the FLAC.

○ **Association v Player/Managers**

Domestically, Mark represented two Accrington Stanley players charged with a breach of betting regulations before the FA Regulatory Commission and FA Appeals Board Hearing. He also defended the entire Chesterfield Town playing squad in a three day FA Commission alleging the payment of non-contractual benefits, as advocate.

Additionally, He has heard appeals against misconduct charges against a manager during a match (*Mazzarri v UEFA* - CAS 2012/A/2729) and the geographic extension of a player's ban in football to worldwide (*Vukovic v FIFA* - CAS 2009/A/1945)

○ **Doping**

In addition to representing a number of footballers before the FA's Doping Commission, Mark has dealt with a number of doping matters as an Arbitrator, including a leading case on the issue of admissibility (*FIFA v FVF & Villafraz* – CAS 2011/A/2562).

Non-football cases

○ **Doping and other misconduct**

Mark dealt with the first **rugby** doping case at the CAS (*Worgan* - CAS 2005/A/963) and more recently with a number of **athletics** doping cases arising out of India, including a case involving six athletes the week before the London Olympics (CAS 2012/A/2732 & 2763 and CAS 2013/A/2979).

Mark was on the panel at a hearing to challenge a misconduct ban resulting from interference with another competitor in a **Triathlon** (*Wiltshire* - CAS 2011/A/2525)

○ **Athlete selection cases**

Mark joined with colleagues from the CAS ad hoc Committee at the London Olympic Games to hear the SA **Equestrian** selection case of Peternell (CAS 2012/A/2845), having dealt with similar matters in **pentathlon** before the Beijing Olympics (CAS 2007/A/1590 and CAS 2008/A/1525) and the only eligibility case at the Delhi Commonwealth Games for **lawn bowling** from the Norfolk Islands (N° CG2010/01)

○ **Financial cases**

Mark has heard numerous non-payment/breach of duties cases between athletes and clubs or agents, in sports such as **Basketball** (CAS 2010/A/2035, CAS 2009/A/1921 and CAS 2011/A/2350)

○ **Wider disputes**

Some cases have involved an understanding of EU law, such as a **Basketball** case which involved a challenge to FIBA's European Championship Regulations (CAS 2009/A/1788).

MILLS & REEVE

Others have been crossovers between mediation and arbitration, such as the dispute between the British **Bobsleigh** and the British **Bob Skeleton** Associations (CAS 2006/A/1187)

What others say

Mark received an special recognition award at the 2013 North West Football Awards for his services to football in the area.

He is highly rated in the leading legal directories *Legal 500* and *Chambers UK*. They comment:

Chambers UK: "Mark Hovell heads the department. He is a licensed insolvency practitioner and is "the go-to person in Manchester for sports insolvency."

Legal 500: "...Mark Hovell, who is 'diligent and calm under pressure'...his role as an arbitrator for the Court of Arbitration for Sport has seen him involved in various high-profile cases."