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Lawyers in California 2016

CORPORATE

CHRISTOPHER D. BREARTON

LATHAM & WATKINS LLP | LOS ANGELES

SPECIALTY: MEDIA & ENTERTAINMENT, SPORTS

Brearton and about a dozen others joined Latham from O'Melveny & Myers LLP in late 2014 to build a new entertainment group. He serves as deputy managing partner of the firm's Century City office. "We came to bring a media and sports practice to this law firm," he said. "And I can't say I'm wanting for legal work."

In June, Brearton advised premium cable and satellite television network Starz in its \$4.4 billion acquisition by Lions Gate Entertainment Corp. He said the deal will scale the combined companies' global distribution footprint across mobile, broadband, cable and satellite platforms.

He represents the NCAA in its multimedia rights extension for the Division I men's basketball championship with CBS Sports and Time Warner's Turner Broadcasting System Inc. The deal, announced in April, operates through 2032 and includes a total rights fee of \$8.8 billion. It provides for live coverage of all Division I championship games across any platform, including those to be created over the life of the agreement.

"The NCAA's March Madness is one of the most valuable sports properties in the U.S.," Brearton said. "Our deal secures the financial future of the NCAA. It's a real partnership in that it allows collective innovation long term without either side having

to look over its shoulder."

Brearton and a team of Latham lawyers represent the owners of the Los Angeles Football Club, a Major League Soccer franchise, which has gained approvals to build a new stadium in LA's Exposition Park adjacent to the Los Angeles Memorial Coliseum. "That's a good example of why we came over from our prior firm," he said. "We are expanding our firm's pitch to the club to add to our land use work and include naming rights deals, sponsorship deals, kit deals for jerseys and TV and broadcast deals. Soccer has a huge future in LA."

He continues to represent the International Olympic Committee and is currently working on its plans for a global "over-the-top" channel focused on Olympic sports and the Olympic Movement. "I hope you're watching the Olympics right now," he said in late August. "We plan to bring that to screens in all its glory, so people can follow the Olympic experience year-round." Brearton explained that in the media context, over-the-top means digital platforms such as iTunes and Android. "No cable box needed," he said.

Fortunately, Brearton is a sports fan. "My wife and I were college athletes. I was a swimmer and my college coach became an Olympic coach," he said, adding that he spent 10 days at the Rio Olympics. "We



were down there to help out the committee. It's important as a lawyer to experience the product you promote. I can't say I struggled with the committee's request to attend the games. I love international competition. I'd watch international Monopoly, if it existed."

— John Roemer