

Press Release: Couchman Harrington Acts In Biggest Deal In History Of Cricket

Date of Release: 1 March 2006

Couchman Harrington, the leading sports business law firm, has acted for Indian sports and media agency Nimbus Communications Limited in its spectacular \$612m acquisition of global media rights to international and domestic cricket played in India until 2010 from the Board of Control for Cricket in India ("BCCI").

The deal, which completed following a lengthy open tender process in which Nimbus prevailed over broadcasting giants like ESPN Star Sports and Sony Entertainment Television, saw the agency pay a staggering \$612m for the rights, seen by many as the "jewel in the crown" of sports rights in Asia.

The deal is the latest in a line of projects undertaken by Couchman Harrington in Asia which acted last year in Zee Telefilms' 10 year deal for the media and marketing rights of the All India Football Federation and in Singapore-based Nimbus Sport's recent multi-million dollar 4 year television production deal with the BCCI.

Couchman Harrington Partner Mark Whitehead said, "This extraordinary deal builds on our experience in the region and emphasises the increasingly international nature of our practice. The passion for cricket in India has to be seen to be believed and the politics of the national sport are complex and intense. As a result, the process was a rollercoaster ride played out in the full glare of the media and it was an honour and a privilege to be involved in one of the most important and exciting sports rights deals ever done in Asia and one of the highest value sports rights deals anywhere in the world in recent times. Nimbus is now undoubtedly a major force on the world stage of sports commerce."

Nimbus Chairman Harish Thawani commented, "Mark Whitehead has now been at my side, both of us in various roles, in the three biggest deals in the history of cricket; the World Sport Group & Nimbus alliance's deal for the Cricket World Cup rights from ICC in 2000, Global Cricket Corporation's sale to Sony of Cricket World Cup Rights in India from 2002-2007 which was handled by Nimbus Sport and now this deal. Mark and his team are truly valued advisors and the combination of legal strength and commercial acumen is indeed a rare one. Couchman Harrington are already helping us to develop and execute our global licensing contracts for these rights as both of our respective businesses go from strength to strength."

Couchman Harrington Associates is a commercial law firm offering specialist legal advice to the sports industry. The leading independent legal directories say the following about the firm:-

“Remarkably successful at a time when other firms have been looking to exit the sports market...winning business model” (Legal 500)

“The achievement of this firm is incredible ... it has made a huge impression in the market ... the country's number one sports law boutique” (Chambers Directory 2006)

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