

Morgan Sports Law

Morgan Sports Law (MSL) is a boutique law firm devoted to sports arbitration and litigation. The firm represents clients in a variety of dispute resolution forums around the world. MSL was founded in 2013, by Mike Morgan, with one goal: to become the world's leading law firm for the resolution of sports-related disputes. The firm has grown rapidly since then and now comprises the largest dedicated sports disputes resolution team in Europe. The firm has, in that time, successfully acted in many of the world's highest profile sports disputes. MSL focuses exclusively on resolving sports-related disputes and protecting athletes' rights, through litigation, arbitration and alternative dispute resolution methods. The firm has assembled a team of the highest calibre; the smartest minds, the most creative strategists and some of the world's most highly regarded sports lawyers. MSL combines the technical excellence that our clients would expect from an international law firm with the specialist focus of a boutique firm. The firm represents high-profile sportspeople and other sports stakeholders, including teams, clubs, managers and sports executives, in a variety of dispute resolution forums across the globe.

Equestrian Services

Morgan Sports Law offers a wide range of services for its equestrian sports clients, led by Lisa Lazarus, former General Counsel of the Fédération Equestre Internationale (FEI). The firm represents equestrian athletes, trainers and horse owners in disputes arising under the Equine Anti-Doping and Controlled Medication regulations from the FEI Tribunal through to the Court of Arbitration for Sport.

The firm also advises equestrian sports clients on best practices in stable management to avoid anti-doping and other potential rule violations. Further, the firm provides guidance to equestrian events and businesses that are seeking counsel from lawyers with a deep knowledge of the industry and its related rules and regulations.

Mike Morgan

Mike Morgan specialises in sports arbitration and litigation, with a particular focus on doping, corruption and selection disputes. Mike has acted for some of the world's highest profile athletes and sports executives, in proceedings before the Court of Arbitration for Sport, the American Arbitration Association, the High Court, the National Anti-Doping Panel (UK), a range of sports tribunals worldwide and the FIFA Dispute Resolution Chamber.



Lisa Lazarus

Lisa joined Morgan Sports Law in February 2018 after having spent six years at the FEI, first as General Counsel and then as Chief of Business Development & Strategy. Prior to that, Lisa worked for the National Football League (NFL) for ten years in various legal and business development roles. Lisa trained at the leading US law firm Akin, Gump, Strauss Hauer & Feld in Washington, DC, before joining the NFL. Lisa's practice is focused on representing Equestrian Athletes in anti-doping proceedings before the FEI Tribunal and Court of Arbitration for Sport. She also acts for equestrian businesses and events organisers who can benefit from her deep strategic insight into equestrian sport.





MR. L.M. SCHELSTRAETE

Active in the fields of company law and equine law. Within the equine law practice, Luc Schelstraete provides services to Dutch yet often also foreign equine businesses, riders, horse owners and equine authorities.

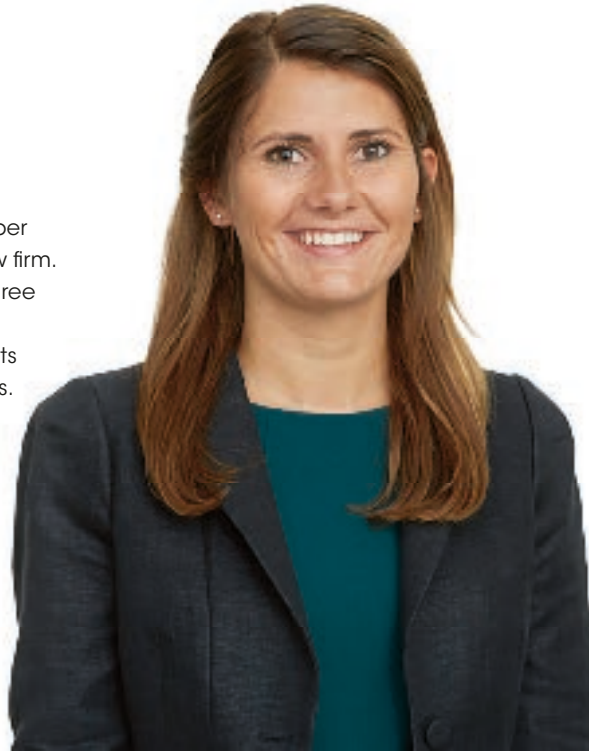
Emma Waters

Emma joined Morgan Sports Law in October 2018, having previously trained at a US law firm. Emma obtained a First Class Honours degree in Law from King's College London and is admitted to the New York Bar. Emma assists Lisa Lazarus on the Firm's equestrian cases.

Recent Cases

Al Wathba Stables: Waad Nadim Moghlbay and Daiana Chopita

On 9 December 2017, Endurance rider, Daiana Chopita competed in the CE11* 100 on horse JC Cahuel. On 23 December 2017, endurance rider Waad Nadim Bou Moghlbay participated in the CE12* 120 on the horse JLB Noche. Ms Chopita also competed on another horse, HLP Gadafi. Both riders are from Al Wathba Stables. Samples taken from the three UAE registered horses, namely JC Cahuel, JLB Noche and HLP Gadafi following their respective events, revealed the presence of Trometamol, a Banned Substance listed on the 2017 FEI Equine Prohibited Substances List. Both riders were provisionally suspended on 9 and 10 January 2018 respectively as the Person Responsible. Following an investigation, it was established that the source of the Trometamol found in the horses' samples was a supplement that contained Trometamol as an unlisted and inactive ingredient (alkalizing agent), which Ms Chopita and Ms Bou Moghlbay could not have known about. Morgan Sports Law subsequently submitted a request to the FEI List Group that the classification of Trometamol be revised to a Controlled Medication (rather than a Banned Substance). This request was accepted by the FEI List Group and was later approved by the FEI Bureau, meaning that as of 1 January 2019 Trometamol will be reclassified as a Controlled Medication (subject to acceptance by the National Federations). In light of the reclassification, MSL reached a settlement agreement with the FEI that meant Ms Chopita and Ms Bou Moghlbay would serve a backdated six-month period of ineligibility (instead of a possible 2 years). This agreement was ratified by the FEI Tribunal and incorporated into a Final Decision, meaning that both riders were immediately free to return to competition.



Paige Johnson

In April 2017, Ms Johnson was suspended from competition after being notified that a Banned Substance, Pramoxine, had been detected in a sample collected from her horse, Luke Skywalker 46, in February. Ms Johnson was able to prove the source of the Banned Substance. The horse's groom was under strict instruction to treat cuts or bruises with a particular brand of antibiotic cream, in order to adhere to the FEI equine anti-doping rules. The groom mistakenly selected a very similar looking product from a shop shelf and administered it to the horse. This product contained added pain relief in the form of Pramoxine. The case was initially heard before an Independent Panel of the FEI, who accepted that the mistakenly purchased product had caused the positive test. Importantly, the Panel recognised that Ms Johnson bore no significant fault or negligence, noting that she was conscientious in the care of her horses and had extensive policies and systems in place to prevent doping violations. Banned Substance cases typically carry a two-year suspension period. Taking account of Ms Johnson's low level of fault, the FEI Panel reduced Ms Johnson's suspension to one year. Ms Johnson elected to appeal the FEI's Decision to the CAS. Additionally, Morgan Sports Law applied on Ms Johnson's behalf to the FEI Prohibited List Group advocating for the reclassification of

Pramoxine. MSL was able to provide compelling scientific evidence that Pramoxine should be classified as a Controlled Medication (and not a Banned Substance) because it was commonly used in horses and had therapeutic benefits. The reclassification request for Pramoxine was successful which converted Ms Johnson's violation to the far less serious Controlled Medication violation. Due to the reclassification of Pramoxine, together with the FEI Panel's finding of no significant fault or negligence, Ms Johnson was able to reach a settlement with the FEI. Her suspension was reduced to three (3) months, backdated to the date of sample collection. Accordingly, Ms Johnson was free to resume her riding career with immediate effect from the date of the settlement.

Sofia Abramovich

Morgan Sports Law acted for equestrian rider, Ms Sofia Abramovich, in her successful sport nationality change from Russia to Great Britain. Ms Abramovich was born in Great Britain and has lived in Great Britain for over ten years. As of 7 February 2019, she is able to compete for Great Britain. Ms Abramovich intends to participate in the Sunshine Tour Championship and Longines Global Championship Tour in 2019, as a Great Britain rider. ■



If you have any questions and/or comments after reading this article, we would be happy to hear from you. You can also contact us for all equine-law related questions or matters. Please contact us via info@europeanequinelawyers.com or by telephone +31-(0)135114420.

