Introduction: Fordham Sports Law Forum

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Introduction

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Thanks very much. I’d like to begin by thanking Laura Freedman and Lenny Simon for the terrific work that they have done with the Fordham Sports Law Forum. This is a terrific institution.

I’d also like to thank Michael Taxin for all of his hard work in putting together what is just a great program today. And also Professor Jay Moyer of our Adjunct Faculty, who is the advisor to the Sports Law Forum.

This afternoon I’ll be pleased to welcome back to the school your keynote speaker, Tim Brosnan.

Since its founding in 1996, the Fordham Sports Law Forum has attracted numerous distinguished speakers to the school who have graciously shared their expertise and insight into the intersecting worlds of sports, law, and business. These participants have greatly enriched and invigorated the academic environment for many of your students and have made this venue one of the highlights of the academic year.

I’d like to thank all of the panelists in today’s symposium for sharing their talent and for helping the school further its educational mission.

In addition to providing a place where major figures from the world of organized sports and other disciplines can share their

thoughts on important, timely topics, the Sports Law Forum publishes issues of symposium proceedings, thus engaging a much larger audience. The Spring 2001 issue contained an edited and footnoted transcript of the symposium Legal Issues in Professional Sports, and the Spring 2002 issue contained a similarly edited transcript of the 2001 symposium and four outside articles which addressed Legal Issues in Sports Security, Conflicts of Interest in Sports, and The Current of Sports and the Media. They were all really just terrific books, and we’re continuing a great tradition today.

In recent years, professional sports have become increasingly important as an economic engine that drives a large segment of our society. Its contests draw millions of viewers at home and reach millions more around the globe, and it’s generally seen as an unofficial American ambassador to the world at large. Its star athletes serve as spokespersons for a multitude of products and services and often serve in an equally important capacity as role models for the younger generation. As a result, the world of professional sports has become one of the main partners in the life of the nation, on a par with other multinational corporate entities, and equally deserving of our attention.

An overview of the topics for this symposium reveals both the wide-ranging importance of professional sports and the impact it has in so many areas of life. Panel I addresses the dynamic evolution of sports television, the competition between network cable and pay-for-view, and the possible results of that competition. Panel II explores the impact of Title IX of the Education Amendments ("Title IX")\(^1\) on college and professional athletics, as well as discussing the legal and policy issues arising from current litigation. Then, Panel III examines the rules and regulations governing sports agents and the important ethical issues involving agents and those they represent.

The world of professional sports offers many good things to our society, but it also has challenges that must be dealt with

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before it can fulfill its great promise. This symposium is an important part of meeting some of these challenges.

I’d like to conclude by welcoming you all here today. This was not an easy journey for you to make. I live seven blocks away, and it wasn’t easy for me. I appreciate those of you who have come, in many cases from great distances, to join us. So welcome, all. Welcome to our fantastic panelists.

Let me turn things over to our symposium editor, Michael Taxin.