

# Preface

I am delighted to be able to contribute the first English-language book on the topic of the treatment of breakaway leagues under EU sports law. The book has been in preparation over a period of several years and there were some longer breaks in the research and in the writing. It was finally completed during this summer and reflects the law as it stood in August 2014.

Each chapter of this book addresses different but connected topics. As the reader moves through the chapters ‘the story’ progresses and incorporates increasingly complex legal analysis. The first two chapters introduce the subjects of sports law, EU sports law and policy, and the sporting industry with its specificities; the third chapter highlights the tensions and governance issues in European football amid breakaway threats by elite clubs; Chaps. 4 and 5 are the core of EU sports law and include a detailed analysis of the EU internal market and competition law as applied to legal issues in the sporting industry; Chap. 6 categorises sporting exceptions through the prism of convergence between the internal market and competition law and is the most significant contribution of this book to general EU law; and Chap. 7 analyses the legality of UEFA restrictive clauses and the behaviour of elite clubs under EU law. Whereas the first two chapters are suitable for anyone interested in the subject of sports law, the third chapter is of interest to sports lawyers, managers and journalists, and Chaps. 4–7 strongly focus on the legal technical aspects of the case law and are therefore aimed at sports law academics and practitioners.

My intention at all stages was to provide alternative viewpoints and novel perspectives in relation to what has already been said and written. Thus, the readers will find, for example, unique comments on the home-grown rule in the light of the 3 + 2 rule from the *Bosman* case, an original approach to categorising sporting exceptions through converging EU internal market and competition law analytical frameworks, proposals on the treatment of special responsibility of superdominant undertakings under Article 102 TFEU, and details of the 1998 Media Partners proposals which have not been published previously.

I am enormously grateful to those people who have supported and encouraged me during this project—thanks are due to David McArdle, Samuli Miettinen, Geoff Pearson, Ryan Gauthier and, most of all, to Daniel Lovric, who spent many days on a linguistic review of this book without asking a cent in return. Many thanks (hvala!) to my Serbian friend Mateja Sponza for his technical assistance in creating the illustrations that appear in Chaps. 5 and 6.

New York, August 2014

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<http://www.springer.com/978-94-6265-047-3>

EU Sports Law and Breakaway Leagues in Football

Pijetlovic, K.

2015, XVIII, 333 p. 3 illus., Hardcover

ISBN: 978-94-6265-047-3

A product of T.M.C. Asser Press