



John S. Wilson

Partner

Seattle

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OVERVIEW

John Wilson is a partner recognized for his work at the intersection of the technology and sports industries, advising clients on the transactional matters that are reshaping both spaces. He has been recognized by *Chambers USA* for sports law. His practice brings together deep technology transactions experience with a national sports law practice, giving clients a rare, integrated perspective on the sports and entertainment business.

On the technology side, John has extensive experience drafting and negotiating commercial agreements for clients ranging from early-stage startups to Fortune 500 corporations. These agreements include cloud computing services arrangements (including IaaS and SaaS), technology development agreements, licensing arrangements, worldwide distribution agreements, cooperative marketing agreements, and endorsement deals. He regularly counsels clients on the intellectual property, social media, and privacy issues that arise alongside these commercial relationships.

On the sports side, John represents clients throughout Major League Soccer (MLS), the National Basketball Association (NBA), the National Women's Soccer League (NWSL), the United Soccer League (USL), and various professional football teams such as the Seattle Seahawks and Washington Commanders, as well as leading sports apparel and equipment companies, in structuring, drafting, and negotiating sports and entertainment transactions. His work spans naming rights deals, sponsorship agreements, celebrity and athlete endorsements, media rights agreements, and stadium construction contracts. John has experience advising both sides of these transactions—teams and leagues, as well as sponsors and brands—giving him a comprehensive, dealmaker's understanding of how sports and entertainment agreements come together from every vantage point.

John also served as outside counsel to the organization that organized and hosted the World Cup 2026 matches in Seattle, advising on the legal and operational matters involved in bringing the tournament to the region.

Prior to joining the firm's Technology Transactions practice group, John was a member of the Intellectual Property Litigation practice group, where he represented clients in numerous court appearances, negotiated favorable settlements, and assisted with Section 337 investigations before the International Trade Commission in Washington, DC. That litigation background continues to inform how he counsels clients on protecting and monetizing their intellectual property today.

John is also deeply committed to pro bono service. He argued before the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals on behalf of a Mexican national seeking asylum, withholding of removal, and protection under the Convention Against Torture based on his client's past military service and his involvement in the arrest of several members of the Los Zetas drug cartel. He also provides counsel to the Make-A-Wish Foundation of Alaska and Washington, where he is a former board trustee, and he serves on the board of directors for several other non-profit organizations.

PROFESSIONAL BACKGROUND

Prior to joining the firm, John was the lead law clerk for the United States Attorney's Office in Eugene, Oregon. He was closely involved with the prosecution of white collar, terrorism, and fraud cases. Prior to attending law school, John worked for several years as a quality assurance consultant and engineer for a variety of large manufacturing companies in the high tech and defense industries.

ACHIEVEMENTS

- Recognized by *Chambers USA* for Sports Law, USA - Nationwide, 2024-2026
- Selected to Washington Rising Stars list, 2013-2018

PROFESSIONAL / CIVIC ACTIVITIES

- Member, Sports Lawyers Association
- Board of Directors, Make-A-Wish Alaska and Washington
- General Counsel, Sounders Community Trust
- Member, University of Oregon Dean's Advisory Counsel
- Board of Directors, Pacific Northwest Soccer Club

EDUCATION

- J.D., University of Oregon School of Law, 2008 (*Operations Editor, Oregon Law Review, University of Oregon Moot Court Board, Winner of the Intraschool National Appellate Advocacy Competition and Corporate Law Moot Court Competition*)
- B.A., George Fox University, 2003 (*varsity soccer team*)

ADMISSIONS

- Bar of Washington

THOUGHT LEADERSHIP *POWERED BY HUB*

- 14 August 2026, Talking Sports Law: A Conversation with Nick Brown, VP and Chief Administrative Officer for Arthur M. Blank Sports and Entertainment
- 24 June 2026, Talking Sports Law: A Conversation With Christopher McCleary, Former General Counsel and Chief Operating Officer of the US Olympic & Paralympic Committee
- 27 March 2026, Talking Sports Law: A Conversation With Michael Donadio, Vice President and Deputy General Counsel of the Pittsburgh Penguins
- 16 March 2026, Talking Sports Law: A Conversation With Marissa Meli, Green Bay Packers Associate General Counsel
- 13 January 2026, Talking Sports Law: A Conversation With Guiselle Torres, Denver Summit FC General Counsel
- 2 July 2025, Talking Sports Law: A Conversation with Grecia Barboza, San Francisco 49ers Counsel
- 4 April 2025, Talking Sports Law: A Conversation with Former Executive Vice President and General Counsel of Seattle Mariners Fred Rivera
- 18 February 2025, Talking Sports Law: A Conversation with Bob Caldwell, VP and General Counsel of Real Salt Lake and Utah Royals
- 7 April 2023, A Conversation with Washington Commanders Chief Legal Officer Mali Friedman
- 21 July 2022, Talking Sports Law: A Conversation with Dan Hunt, President and CEO of FC Dallas and Toyota Stadium
- 19 - 20 July 2022, Global Sports Law Symposium
- 2 June 2022, Talking Sports Law: A Conversation with Orlando City SC and Orlando Pride General Counsel Caesar Lopez
- 15 March 2022, Talking Sports Law: An Interview with Jacksonville Jaguars General Counsel Justin Sievert
- 7 September 2021, Talking Sports Law: An Interview with the Legal Team from Canucks Sports and Entertainment
- 25 February 2021, Talking Sports Law: A Conversation with NCAA Chief Legal Officer Donald Remy
- 4 February 2021, Talking Sports Law: A Conversation with Bepro General Counsel Malte Vosteen
- 29 January 2021, Talking Sports Law: A Conversation with LAFC General Counsel Randy Haight
- 28 September 2020, Talking Sports Law: A Conversation with Tennessee Titans General Counsel Dan Werly
- 27 August 2020, Equity Crowdfunding: Offering Fans a True Stake in Their Favorite Teams
- 20 August 2020, Talking Sports Law: A Conversation with Seattle Seahawks Associate Counsel Alen Cisija

- 23 June 2020, COVID-19: Don't Forget the Fine Print: Liability Considerations as Fans Return to Live Sports after COVID-19
- 22 May 2020, COVID-19: Three Legal Issues for Leagues, Teams, and Stadium Operators as Live Sports Return
- 16 April 2020, COVID-19: A Survey of Sports Betting Activity during the Pandemic and Legal Considerations for Stakeholders
- 7 April 2020, COVID-19: Esports May Be the Best Play During the COVID-19 Pandemic
- 14 January 2020, Talking Sports Law: Interview with Sounders FC General Counsel Maya Mendoza-Exstrom
- 01 October 2019, The Times They Are a-Changin': California Passes Game Changing Law to Allow Collegiate Athletes to Be Paid
- 23 April 2019, Talking Sports Law: Interview with Michael Hammond, GC of Stack Sports
- 14 March 2019, Talking Sports Law: Interview with Boston Red Sox Counsel
- 6 February 2019, Talking Sports Law: Inside Interview with Guiselle Torres Associate General Counsel, Marketing and International Affairs at United States Olympic Committee
- 11 January 2019, Talking Sports Law: Top Recruit Joins Our Sports Law Roster
- 12 December 2018, An Introduction to Talking Sports Law

OTHER PUBLICATIONS

- "MySpace, Your Space, or Our Space? New Frontiers in Electronic Evidence," 86 Or. L. Rev. 1201, 2008.
- "Rapanos v. United States: Muddying Enforcement of the Clean Water Act," *Western Environmental Law Update*, 2007.

NEWS & EVENTS

- 4 June 2026, K&L Gates Receives Nearly 235 Firm, Individual Rankings in 2026 *Chambers USA* Guide
- 19 February 2026, K&L Gates Advises Bolt Ventures in Series A Round for Source Golf, Inc.
- 5 June 2025, K&L Gates Receives More Than 240 Firm, Individual Rankings in 2025 *Chambers USA* Guide
- 6 June 2024, K&L Gates Receives More Than 200 Firm, Individual Rankings in 2024 *Chambers USA* Guide
- 30 March 2021, Global Sports Law Symposium
- 11 December 2020, K&L Gates Advises Esports Organization Kansas City Pioneers on Premier Sponsorship Agreement and Other Legal Matters

- 9 June 2020, K&L Gates Advises Charlotte Phoenix Emerging Esports Organization on Capital Raise, Other Legal Matters
- 2 March 2018, K&L Gates Names 34 New Partners Across Global Platform

MEDIA MENTIONS

- 2 July 2026, *Law360* | World Cup Is 'Once In A Lifetime' Opportunity For Law Firms
- 24 May 2026, *The Seattle Times* | Seahawks' next owners may want a new Lumen Field. Good luck getting it
- 8 May 2026 , *The Seattle Times* | Will the 'millionaires tax' hurt Seattle sports? It's complicated

AREAS OF FOCUS

- Technology Transactions and Sourcing
- IP Litigation

INDUSTRIES

- Apparel and Footwear
- Consumer Goods and Services
- Media and Entertainment
- Sports