



Elliot P. Saccucci

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Loopstra Nixon LLP

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Employment & Sports

Elliot is a Partner, co-head of the firm’s Labour & Employment Group and the head of its Sports Law Group. He has extensive experience assisting employers in all manner of employment issues, as well as conducting and advising on workplace investigations, restorative processes, and corporate governance issues. He is a trusted advisor to employers ranging from not-for-profit-organizations to small-to-midsize enterprises, municipalities, and large public companies.

Elliot has made a significant impact on Canadian sports law. He is routinely retained by all kinds of sports stakeholders from PSOs and NSOs, to coaches, to parents and athletes. He has extensive sports law experience as both a lawyer and an arbitrator. He has acted as counsel for professional and amateur athletes, coaches, national and provincial sports organizations, sports governance organizations, and professional teams, including National Hockey League clubs.

He represents clients in professional and amateur athletic issues, including salary negotiation, endorsement advice and negotiation, and arbitrations involving salary, carding, team selection, Safe Sport/UCCMS and discipline, and membership disputes. Elliot is external general counsel to one of the leading Safe Sport/UCCMS, governance and case management companies to Canadian sports organizations because of his expansive experience litigating some of the most consequential Safe Sport/UCCMS cases over the last decade.

Elliot is an experienced advocate with appearances before the Superior Court, Divisional Court, BC Supreme Court, the Federal Court of Appeal, as well as the Ontario Labour Relations Board, Child and Family Services Board, Ontario Human Rights Tribunal, Sport Dispute Resolution Centre of Canada (Ordinary and Safeguarding), GTHL Special Committee on Appeals, the Ontario Basketball Discipline Panel, the Gymnastics Canada and Ontario Discipline Panels, the Swim Ontario Discipline Panel, the Dive Ontario Discipline Panel, the Quadball Canada Appeal Panel, and the Hockey Canada Discipline Panel.

Elliot has been recognized by Best Lawyers in Labour and Employment since 2022. He is also ranked as a “Leading Partner” in Sports Law by Legal 500 Canada for 2026, a “Leading Lawyer to Watch” in Employment Law by Lexpert in 2026, and was recognized as a Lexpert Rising Star, leading lawyer 40 and under in 2025.

Qualifications and Designations

- J.D. (*Magna Cum Laude*) Osgoode Hall Law School (2012)
- B.B.A (Hons) Lazaridis School of Business and Economics (2008)

Professional Memberships

- Certified Regional Attorney, National Lacrosse League Players’ Association
- Member, Sports Lawyers’ Association
- Adjudicator, World Aquatics Integrity Unit
- Arbitrator, Alpine Canada Alpin Independent Supervisory Unit



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Representative Work & Decisions

- Playing and/or endorsement contracts for National Lacrosse League players including (but not limited to): Robert Church, Ben McIntosh, Ian Mackay, Curtis Dickson, Bett Hickey, Garrett Billings, Mike Messenger, Shawn Evans, Tyler Pace, Mitch De Snoo.
- *Smirnova v. Skate Canada*, Sports Dispute Resolution Centre of Canada, No. SDRCC 15-0252 (April 22, 2015, P. Brunet) (Counsel to Coach) (Jurisdiction upheld).
- *Smirnova v. Skate Canada*, Sports Dispute Resolution Centre of Canada, No. SDRCC 12-0252 (May 1, 2015, C. Qualtrough) (Counsel to coach) (Sanction successfully overturned).
- *Lehmann v. Table Tennis Canada*, Sports Dispute Resolution Centre of Canada, No. SDRCC-18-0355 (April 18, 2018, P. Brunet) (Counsel to athlete) (Successful team selection appeal, athlete named to team).
- *Gemel Smith v. Dallas Stars Hockey Club*, NHL/NHLPA Salary Arbitration (July, 2018) (Co-counsel, Dallas Stars Hockey Club)
- *Brett Kulak v. Calgary Flames Hockey Club*, NHL/NHLPA Salary Arbitration (July, 2018) (Co-counsel, Calgary Flames Hockey Club).
- *Durant v. Executive Director of the Greater Toronto Hockey League*, GTHL Appeal Committee, Appeal No. 1899 (April, 2020). (Counsel to coach).
- *Diving Plongeon Ontario v. Kathleen Murphy et al*, Dive Ontario (intervenor), No. DVON 20-0001 (July 10, 2020, E.P. Saccucci as Sole Arbitrator).
- *Thomson v. Nordiq Canada*, Sports Dispute Resolution Centre of Canada, No. SDRCC-21-0488 (March 8, 2021, M. Wilson) (Team selection) (Counsel to athlete).
- *Nicol v. Swim Natation Canada* (2022), SDRCC (Counsel to athlete) (Team selection, settled, med-arb).
- *Mullett v. Executive Director of the Greater Toronto Hockey League*, GTHL Appeal Committee, Appeal No. 2349 (January, 2023) (Counsel to coach) (Successfully avoided any discipline).
- *Pouliquen v. Canadian Fencing Federation*, Sports Dispute Resolution Centre of Canada, No. 23-0644 (June 22, 2023, J.J. McIntyre) (Counsel to athlete) (Team selection).
- *Anonymous Complainants v. Weidenfelder*, Hockey Canada Decision No. 22-0055 (August 2, 2023, W. Boyer) (Athlete complainants' counsel) (Coach suspended).
- *Anonymous Complainant v. Assistant Coach*, Hockey Canada Decision No. 23-1021 (October 2, 2023, The Hon. Anne M. Mullins) (Respondent coach's counsel).
- *Mississauga Majors v. Provincial Women's Softball Association*, Ontario Superior Court, heard January 26, 2024, 2024 ONSC 4986. (Co-counsel to Majors) (Successful affiliation challenge, membership granted by court order).
- *Maskwa Aquatics Club v. Rideau Canoe Club and Canoe Kayak Canada*, SDRCC (settled med-arb) (February 2024) (Counsel to Maskwa) (Dispute regarding points ascribed to races of disabled athletes on behalf of club and athletes).
- *Saadi v. Gymnastics Canada*, Sports Dispute Centre of Canada, No. SDRCC-24-0703, (UCCMS Case) (June 27, 2024) (Carol Roberts) (*Pro bono* respondent's counsel).
- *World Aquatics v. Hamman Malla (Syria)*, Aquatics Integrity Unit, (February 3, 2024) (E.P. Saccucci as member of three adjudicator Panel).
- *World Aquatics v. Marcos Jara (Chile)*, Aquatics Integrity Unit, (February 29, 2024) (E.P. Saccucci as member of three adjudicator Panel).



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- *World Aquatics v. Andrey Kryukov (Kazakhstan)*, Aquatics Integrity Unit, (March 27, 2024) (E.P. Saccucci as member of three adjudicator Panel).
- *Ra-Akbar v. Dynamo Gymnastics Club*, Ontario Labour Relations Board, 2025 CanLII 31635 (ON LRB) (Counsel to club in what is ‘work’ in sports volunteering context).
- *Ontario Volleyball Association v. Carter Walls and the Deputy Director of Sanctions*, SDRCC, ST-24-0017 (Counsel to OVA (Interested Party). Successful appeal of DDSO Violation and Sanction decision (Coach suspended)).
- *Parent v. Coach and Player*, Hockey Canada (2025) (Counsel to parent and minor athlete) (Successfully resisted interim suspension for parent).
- *Minor Athlete v. Swim Ontario*, Swim Ontario Panel, September 2024 (Counsel to respondent athlete. Presumptive ban avoided).
- *Minor hockey player v. GTHL*, GTHL Appeal Committee, Appeal No. 2555 (January 2025) (Counsel to minor hockey player in successful appeal of investigation resulting in no sanction and investigation overturned).
- *Soccer Player v. NSL*, 2025, Superior Court of Justice (playing contract dispute settled)
- *Dias v. Anonymous Player Respondent*, Ontario Basketball Association Panel, August 2025 (Counsel to Complainant. Successful prosecution resulting in suspension of respondent player).
- *Provincial Women’s Softball v. Mississauga Majors*, Ontario Superior Court (Divisional Court), heard March 4, 2025 (Co-counsel to Majors) (Successfully upheld affiliation order from Superior Court).
- *Hockey owner v. Hockey owner*. Superior Court litigation involving the forced sale of a junior hockey team. (Co-counsel) (Settled) (2025).
- *Dayton Gorline v. DSO*, Sports Dispute Centre of Canada, No SDRCC-ST-25-0055 (Successful Appeal of DSO decision, lifetime ban overturned for suspension of 2-4 years) (Counsel to Coach) (March, 2026)
- *Minor v. Gymnastics Ontario*, Gymnastics Ontario Disciplinary Panel (April, 2026), (Counsel to respondent athlete) (Settled. Complaint withdrawn).
- *Hambly v. Sport Integrity Canada* (Counsel to respondent) (Ongoing).
- *Anonymous Respondent v. Quadball Canada*, Quadball Canada Appeal Panel (April, 2026). (Counsel to respondent athlete) (Ongoing).