

\$30 MILLION SETTLEMENT REACHED IN CHL EMPLOYMENT CLASS ACTIONS

Toronto – May 15, 2020

The plaintiffs, Sam Berg, Lukas Walter, Travis McEvoy, Kyle O'Connor and Thomas Gobeil and their counsel at Charney Lawyers PC, Goldblatt Partners LLP and Savonitto and Ass. Inc. are pleased to announce that they have reached a settlement with the defendants in the three CHL employment class actions, *Berg v. Ontario Hockey League*, *Walter v. Western Hockey League*, and *Walter v. Quebec Major Junior Hockey League Inc.*

The CHL employment class actions were commenced in 2014, claiming that major junior hockey players in the CHL are employees subject to applicable employment standards legislation, and not student athletes. All three class actions were certified by the Courts, but no determination was made on the merits of the claims.

Following the filing of these lawsuits, amendments to the applicable employment standards legislation were enacted in each of the provinces in which the CHL teams operate stating that major junior hockey players are not employees within the meaning of the applicable employment standards legislation. As a result of these amendments, there is now no legally recognized obligation for owners to treat players as employees under the employment standards legislation presently in effect in the provinces with CHL teams.

Earlier this year, following the enactment of the final amendment regarding the status of players under the applicable employment standards legislation in Alberta, the plaintiffs and CHL and its member leagues and teams entered into settlement discussions with the help of their respective counsel and an agreed-upon mediator. The parties ultimately reached a settlement, which is being submitted to the Courts for approval.

Pursuant to the settlement, the defendants will pay \$30 million to the class, inclusive of legal fees, disbursements, administrative expenses and honoraria, to be distributed to the class members in accordance with the number of full seasons and half seasons they played in the leagues during the class period. In exchange, the class members will give the defendants a full and final release. This settlement, which is subject to approval by the Courts, will fully and finally resolve the CHL employment class actions.

“We launched these class actions to fight for the rights of the players and to make a positive change, and we’re proud of what these lawsuits and this settlement have achieved,” said Sam Berg and Lukas Walter, the two initial plaintiffs in these actions, “While we can’t do anything about the legislative amendments exempting players from employment standards legislation across the country, this settlement will put millions of dollars into the pockets of the hardworking players and will make a real difference in their lives.”

“This settlement is a vindication of the plaintiffs,” said Joshua Mandryk of Goldblatt Partners LLP. “These class actions and this settlement would not have been possible without their courage to stand up for the players, and we’re proud of what they’ve been able to accomplish. In

addition to the plaintiffs, Sam Berg, Lukas Walter, Travis McEvoy, Kyle O'Connor and Thomas Gobeil, we would like to thank those players who came forward to support these class actions by testifying in the proceedings, Daniel Pachis, Jeremy Gottzmann, and the late John Paul Chartrand.”

“We believe this is an excellent settlement for the class, and will come as welcome financial support during the COVID-19 crisis,” added Ted Charney of Charney Lawyers PC. “We look forward to the settlement approval motion in these actions.”

More details related to the proposed settlement are available at www.chlclassaction.com

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