

Dedicated to Joseph E. Tierney, Jr. (1917-1999)

Charles I. Henderson

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DEDICATED TO JOSEPH E. TIERNEY, JR. (1917 – 1999)

Joseph E. Tierney, Jr. was one of the earliest supporters of the National Sports Law Institute and an active member of its Board of Advisors from its inception until his death in December 1999. In 1996, Joe received the Joseph E. O'Neill Award from the Institute. The Award was established by the O'Neill family, the law firm of Davis & Kuelthau, S.C. and the National Sports Law Institute after Mr. O'Neill's untimely death in 1992. The award is given annually to an individual in the sports industry who has made a significant contribution to the field and done so while exemplifying the highest ethical standards. Joe possessed a rare combination of character, insight and skill that enabled him to achieve remarkable success over the course of a long career.

A graduate of Marquette University's School of Business Administration and Marquette University Law School and a Certified Public Accountant, Mr. Tierney began his career as a special agent of the Federal Bureau of Investigation and later joined Arthur Andersen & Company, where he became Managing Tax Partner of its Milwaukee office. After reaching mandatory retirement age at Arthur Andersen & Company in 1980, he joined the law firm of Cook & Franke S.C. and gained his greatest public recognition as the attorney for Milwaukee's leading philanthropist, Jane Bradley Pettit.

Few people have had as great an influence on the field of sports in Milwaukee as Joe Tierney. Joe served on the International Hockey League ("IHL") Board of Governors for more than twenty years. In the last ten years of his tenure, he served on the IHL executive committee overseeing the transition of a Midwestern league, where teams traveled by bus, to a league that stretched across the United States and Canada. He helped guide the growth of Milwaukee's home team, the Admirals, from an average attendance of 1,000 in 1975 to 9,000 in 1996. With the increasing prominence of the Admirals, youth hockey became one of the fastest growing sports in the area.

When Mrs. Pettit decided to give a premier sports facility to the Milwaukee community, Joe Tierney broke new ground in working with state and federal tax authorities to create the Bradley Center Sports and Entertainment Corporation as an instrumentality of the State of Wisconsin to receive and operate the building. Today that building serves as home to the Milwaukee Bucks NBA franchise, the Milwaukee Admirals, the Milwaukee Wave professional indoor soccer team, Marquette University

basketball, and the Milwaukee Mustangs arena football team. In the construction and operation of the Bradley Center, Joe Tierney ensured adherence to the highest ethical standards by providing equal, impeccably fair access to all potential suppliers. He also helped the Bradley Center become a vehicle for non-profit organizations to extend their charitable works further into the community by allowing them to operate Bradley Center concessions. Never before done on such a wide scale, this involvement brought these organizations \$400,000.00 in annual income.

Joe also helped secure the future of the Greater Milwaukee Open golf tournament by prompting careful, thorough analysis of the event, by reorganizing its operations, and by helping to establish it as one of the few PGA tour events held on a public course.

When the Pettit National Ice Center faced financial difficulty, he assumed its leadership. With the assistance of its board of directors he worked to ensure that this U. S. Olympic Training facility would not only continue to provide a venue for world championship ice events and training but also provide recreational family skating and programs to improve ice skills regardless of age or ability.

Joe would have been the first to state that these accomplishments were the result of the extraordinary philanthropy of his client, Jane Bradley Pettit, and her vision for Milwaukee's future. Yet, it took legal structure to bring that vision to reality and preserve it. Joe Tierney accomplished that through astute and innovative legal skill; through precise, systematic analysis; tenacity of purpose and ethics; and through quiet, behind-the-scenes consensus building, often under very difficult circumstances. It was quite an achievement.

On behalf of the National Sports Law Institute, I am privileged to dedicate this symposium issue of the MARQUETTE SPORTS LAW JOURNAL to the memory of my good friend and colleague, Joseph E. Tierney, Jr.

CHARLES I. HENDERSON
Davis & Kuelthau, SC
Secretary & General Counsel,
Bradley Center Sports and Entertainment Corporation
Treasurer of the Pettit National Ice Center
Member, National Sports Law Institute Board of Advisors
Milwaukee, Wisconsin