

## Press Release: Couchman Harrington's Window of Opportunity

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As football's transfer window re-opens for the Summer, Couchman Harrington Associates, the market-leading sports business law practice, has been far from quiet in the world of football during the months since January when the window has been closed. The completion last week of Ricardo Carvalho's 5 -year contract extension with Chelsea was the latest in a string of major contract negotiations in which the firm has represented top players seeking to secure their futures before Summer trading begins.

In April the firm acted for Jonathan Woodgate in relation to the finalisation of his transfer from Real Madrid to Middlesbrough. The firm has also acted recently in contract renegotiations on behalf of several other Premiership players including French international Franck Queudrue (Fulham), Belgian International Emile Mpenza (Manchester City), Luke Young (Charlton Athletic) and Simon Davies (Fulham). Last season, the firm represented, amongst others, both Michael Ballack and Andriy Shevchenko in their respective moves to Chelsea, Didier Drogba in the renegotiation of his contract with Chelsea and Michael Carrick in his move to Manchester United, arguably the four biggest deals of the year, and Fraser Reid, Head of Couchman Harrington's football business, expects an even busier Summer this year;

"After last season's successes, the volume of business we have undertaken whilst the window has been closed has been particularly pleasing and confirms that we are very much the law firm of choice in this area. Players and their agents are increasingly seeking expert, specialist advice; deals are becoming more and more sophisticated and are more heavily regulated than ever before and we are at the forefront of those developments. The new investment flooding into the Premiership together with the security in terms of forward revenues which Premiership Clubs now have following completion of the latest round of media deals, means we are likely to see unprecedented levels of transfer activity this Summer. We are already engaged in several major discussions on behalf of top players and expect our football business to continue its outstanding growth in the coming months."

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**Couchman Harrington Associates is a commercial law firm offering specialist legal advice to the sports industry. The leading independent legal directories say the following about the firm:-**

*"Remarkably successful at a time when other firms have been looking to exit the sports market...winning business model" (Legal 500)*

*"The achievement of this firm is incredible...it has made a huge impression in the market...the country's number one sports law boutique" (Chambers Directory)*

*"A phenomenal sports practice...there is clear blue water between CHA and rival boutique sports firms" (Legal 500)*

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