
Kluwer Mediation Blog

NHL Dispute Goes to Mediation

Rick Weiler (Weiler ADR Inc.) · Tuesday, November 27th, 2012

OK, I know I'm going out of turn with this Blog post, but I thought readers will want to be aware of a HUGE mediation development in Canada – even if it does involve a mediation that will take place in the U.S.

It was announced yesterday that the National Hockey League and its players have agreed to go to mediation to attempt to settle the dispute that has already cost them (and their suppliers and fans) about a third of the current season. You can read all about it [here](#).

Apparently the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service has agreed to appoint three highly experienced mediators to meet with the parties as soon as possible. Given the scope, complexity and pressure of this dispute, the appointment of three mediators seems to me very wise.

This has been and continues to be a highly costly dispute for everyone involved. While I suspect that mediation will now give the warring principle negotiators the cover they need to save some face when a settlement is announced, it seems to me that the constituencies should be asking some tough questions about why this route wasn't pursued months ago when it was readily apparent that direct negotiations were at an impasse.

One thing for sure, given hockey's near sacred status in Canada, all eyes will be on this mediation. It may provide a very high profile example of the value of the mediation process.

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