

CAA Agent and Head of Baseball flips from Player Rep to Mets GM

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Michael A. Rueda

PARTNER | HEAD OF US SPORTS AND ENTERTAINMENT | US

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Brodie Van Wagenen, the former agent and co-head of the baseball division at Creative Artists Agency, is now the General Manager of the New York Mets. Van Wagenen joins the Mets with no front-office experience, beating out more traditional candidates for the job. The Mets chief operating officer Jeff Wilpon said in the statement regarding Van Wagenen's hiring, "Brodie is an extremely knowledgeable, creative, progressive and collaborative leader who I'm confident will lead us toward sustainable success." Chairman of the board Fred Wilpon also stated, "Brodie showed us he is a progressive thinker who is prepared for this role and has great baseball acumen. Jeff brought forward an array of candidates and we all agreed that Brodie's high character, blend of analytics, scouting and development ideas illustrate why he will be successful in this role."

Given Van Wagenen's prior role at CAA, several of his former clients are now his employees, in particular Jacob deGrom and Noah Syndergaard. It is reported the CAA has 6 clients on the Mets roster and both deGrom and Syndergaard are reportedly up for trade consideration and/or new long term contracts. Generally speaking, Van Wagenen will now sit on the opposite side of the negotiating table as he once did for his clients. MLB Player's Union head Tony Clark recently shared concerns players were raising regarding Van Wagenen's ability to use confidential information gained through his time as an agent against his former clients in future negotiations.

The conflict of interest presented in this situation is tricky. As a general manager, Van Wagenen's loyalty is to the Mets. However, Van Wagenen likely possesses confidential information about his former clients that was entrusted to him when he served as their agent. The conflict arises when someone in Van Wagenen's shoes is faced with the decision to either use that confidential information against his former clients, if it's in the best interests of his new employer, or keep that information confidential and/or recuse himself from negotiations involving former clients. Either way, this certainly raises concerns for players. In particular, players could be reluctant to share sensitive information with agents in the future, particularly if the agent is so high profile in nature that he or she can be seen as easily moving from player representation to general management. It's worth noting that Van Wagenen is not the first agent to become a GM of a pro sports team. Dave Stewart was hired by the Diamondbacks in 2014 and fired in 2016. The Lakers also hired Kobe Bryant's agent, Rob Pelinka, as their GM in 2017.

<https://nypost.com/2018/10/29/mets-ready-to-introduce-the-brodie-van-wagenen-era/>

Authors

Michael A. Rueda

PARTNER | HEAD OF US SPORTS AND ENTERTAINMENT | NEW YORK

Corporate

 +1 203 302 4087

 michael.rueda@withersworldwide.com