

Proskauer Atty Is Part Of 'Rich' Harvard Football Tradition

Law360 on **December 2, 2024**

Proskauer partner [Chad Dale's](#) path to being the public address announcer for Harvard University football is an unusual one. He had no experience, he didn't go to Harvard, and he had not previously shown any interest in the job.

But he did have an influential reference: his grieving grandmother. Dale's grandfather and namesake, Charles Dale, became Harvard's very first public address announcer when the school installed a PA system at the concrete, U-shaped stadium in Allston, Massachusetts, just across the Charles River from the main campus.

"He started as the PA announcer in the fall of 1931," Dale said. "And he did it for the next 60 years until he passed away in August of 1991."

Dale was at his grandfather's wake at a funeral home in Watertown. He happened to be standing next to his grandmother when Harvard's newly named athletic director, former Olympic hockey gold medalist Bill Cleary, approached to pay his respects.

"My grandmother was literally in a catatonic state, she was despondent," Dale said. "She was so in love and devoted to my grandfather and he passed away suddenly in the garden one day."

Cleary and another then-Harvard staffer offered their condolences, Dale said, and his grandmother's mood changed in an instant.

"She became laser-focused and she looked Bill Cleary right in the eye," he said. "She said, 'Wouldn't my grandson Chad do a nice job in Charles' spot?'"

And so began a tenure for Dale that will see its 33rd season wrap up when Harvard hosts Yale in the 140th meeting between the two schools in a rivalry that dates back to the presidency of Ulysses S. Grant, and is simply known as "The Game."

"I was told I had the job by my grandmother, and I was instantly excited about it and nervous at the same time," Dale recalled. "I had never done any announcing. I didn't know how to do it, but it was an exciting opportunity."

Though he was a PA rookie, Dale had plenty of exposure to the process through his grandfather. While attending law school at nearby Northeastern, he would visit his grandparents on fall weekends and accompany his grandfather to the Harvard home games. Dale would often "spot" for his grandfather, meaning he would sit next to him and tell him which player had caught a pass or made a tackle so his grandfather could then announce it to the crowd.

"It was a nice way to spend time with my grandfather," Dale said, adding that his grandmother, cousins and other relatives were also spotters over the years. "It was a family affair."

Dale said he has developed "a bit of a knack" for announcing over the past three decades. His legal career has also been a success. He is part of the restructuring and bankruptcy practice at Proskauer and primarily does restructuring work for private credit funds.

But nearly every Saturday that Harvard has had a home game since 1991, he has climbed the 120 stairs — there is no elevator and Dale has taken to counting the number of steps once per year — to the roof of the stadium and the aluminum shed that serves as its press box.

"It gets a little cold," Dale said, "but it's so much fun."

Over the years, Dale has taken numerous fellow Proskauer partners and associates to games, many of whom are Harvard graduates. He also invites attorneys from other firms who are Harvard alumni to join him in the booth. The family affair has continued and Dale's spotters through the years have included his children, his cousins and his uncle.

Dale said one of the most enjoyable aspects of the job has been seeing top talent come through a school more known for producing U.S. Supreme Court justices than NFL stars.

Dale counts Isaiah Kacyvenski, a linebacker who played seven seasons with the Seattle Seahawks, as the best defensive player he has seen at Harvard during his time. The best offensive player? That would be quarterback Ryan Fitzpatrick, whose 17-year NFL career was the longest of any Harvard player.

Dale can tick through a number of standouts whose names he has called from the booth, including Kyle Juszczyk, who was at one point the highest-paid fullback in the NFL, and Cameron Brate, a tight end who won a Super Bowl while teaming up with Tom Brady for the Tampa Bay Buccaneers.

"There is a lot of really great talent that has come out of Harvard," Dale said.

Oddly enough, Dale's greatest highlight as the Harvard PA announcer did not take place on Harvard's campus. Dale was on the mic in 2018 when Harvard beat Yale 45-27 at Fenway Park in the highest-scoring game in the rivalry's history.

"I am a huge Red Sox fan, and I got to call the game at Fenway Park," he said. "That was as much fun as any public address announcer can have."

Dale joked that there is no succession plan in place when his tenure ends, and he is not sure how many more years he will continue to welcome Crimson fans to Harvard Stadium. But between him and his grandfather, someone named Charles Dale has been Harvard's PA announcer for 94 years. He said getting to 100 combined years shouldn't be a problem.

"I enjoy the football, I enjoy the people there," Dale said. "There is a really rich tradition at Harvard, and it's great to be a part of it."

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