

World Jai Alai League Begins Its Second Century Under New Owner Rob Gough

Entrepreneur and investor launches long-term transformation as the world's fastest ball sport celebrates 100 years in Miami

MIAMI, FL, UNITED STATES, August 13, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ --

Entrepreneur and investor [Rob Gough](#) has acquired the [World Jai Alai League](#), launching a long-term vision to modernize one of America's most historic professional sports traditions and carry it into its second century.

The acquisition comes at a landmark moment. Professional jai alai has been played in Miami since 1926, making 2026 its centennial in the city. At its height, jai alai was one of South Florida's marquee live attractions, drawing five-figure crowds on Friday nights and establishing a deep connection to the city's culture and sporting identity.

Under Gough's new ownership, World Jai Alai League will invest in an elevated live experience, enhanced broadcast production, premium storytelling, expanded digital content and a modern commercial platform built around its athletes, teams and partners.

The league will pursue that transformation while preserving its traditions, distinctive style of play and connection to Miami that have defined the sport for generations.



World Jai Alai League



Rob Gough

"Jai Alai already has what most modern sports properties spend years and fortunes trying to create: extraordinary athletes, unmatched speed, authentic history and a deep connection to Miami," said Gough.

"My role is not to reinvent what makes the sport special. It is to give it the investment, presentation and platform it deserves, and to build a league capable of carrying jai alai into its next century."

With centuries-old roots in the Basque regions of France and Spain, jai alai is recognized as the world's fastest ball sport. Players use a handwoven basket known as a cesta to catch and propel the ball at speeds approaching 188 miles per hour.

At that velocity, the drama is not manufactured. The speed is real, the physical stakes are real and the athletes compete with almost no margin for error. The result is a sport defined by courage, precision, split-second reactions and real consequences on every point.

World Jai Alai League combines that historic competition with a modern team-based format, live entertainment, digital distribution and regulated wagering markets available through leading sportsbook platforms. The goal is to introduce jai alai to a new generation without diluting the qualities that define the sport.

Gough brings a track record of building and scaling businesses and investing in culturally significant sports assets. He founded and grew a portfolio of digital businesses that was acquired by a Silicon Valley public company in 2014, and later made international headlines with his record-setting \$5.2 million purchase of a 1952 Topps Mickey Mantle card.

"I have spent years acquiring irreplaceable pieces of sports history," Gough said. "The World Jai Alai League is the rare opportunity to own and help shape a living one. I intend to raise the standard of the live experience, broadcast presentation and storytelling while protecting the speed, skill and heritage that make jai alai unlike anything else in sports."

As part of its next phase, the league will be built around a limited number of city-based teams and a select group of ownership partners. World Jai Alai League will prioritize owners who bring strategic expertise, market reach, cultural relevance and a genuine long-term commitment to growing the sport.

"The opportunity to own a professional sports team is rare, and we intend to keep it that way," Gough said. "Ownership opportunities will remain deliberately limited, and we will be highly selective about the owners and cities we bring into the league. We are building around quality, alignment and long-term commitment, not volume."

Alongside the acquisition, the league has unveiled a refreshed visual identity designed to reflect

the speed, heritage and international ambition of the sport. The new identity is the first visible step in a broader transformation of how World Jai Alai League is presented to fans, partners and the world.

Initial priorities under Gough's ownership include upgrading broadcast production, reimagining the live fan experience at JAM Arena, expanding athlete-driven storytelling and developing new opportunities for teams, sponsors and strategic partners.

"This is not a short-term project," Gough said. "We are building something that honors the athletes and people who have carried this sport forward while giving fans, owners and partners new reasons to believe in its future. This acquisition is only the beginning."

The Fall 2026 World Jai Alai League season begins on September 18 at JAM Arena in Miami, and is available to watch on ESPN+, FuboTV, and the World Jai Alai League YouTube channel. Tickets, streaming information and the full schedule are available at jaialai.com.

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ABOUT WORLD JAI ALAI LEAGUE

World Jai Alai League is dedicated to growing one of the world's fastest and most exciting sports by modernizing its presentation, expanding fan engagement and introducing jai alai to a new generation through elite competition, premium content, live entertainment and regulated sports wagering. Based at JAM Arena in Miami, the league unites more than a century of sporting heritage with an ambitious vision for the future. For more information, visit jaialai.com.

ABOUT ROB GOUGH

Rob Gough is an American entrepreneur and investor whose work spans consumer businesses, media, technology and culturally significant sports assets. A bone cancer survivor, Gough founded and scaled a portfolio of digital businesses that was acquired by a Silicon Valley public company in 2014. He later became widely recognized for his investments in the ultra-high-end sports memorabilia market, making international headlines with his record-setting \$5.2 million purchase of a 1952 Topps Mickey Mantle card. Gough continues to build and invest at the intersection of health, sports, media, culture and technology.

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