

August 25, 2009

## Leadership Spotlight

### Timothy L. Epstein



1. Describe your practice.

My current practice focuses primarily on construction, commercial, and large loss claims. I have also developed a Sports Law practice focusing, primarily, on the litigation needs of players, coaches, teams and schools, and serve as Chair of SmithAmundsen's Sports Law practice group.

2. What's the most interesting case you have handled?

One of my most interesting cases involved the liability of my client, a sports outfitter, for the death of a child prodigy musician who rented a kayak from my client and drowned. Due to a number of significant pleadings issues that took the matter up on appeal, oral discovery of the decedent's friends and fellow musicians on their trip did not take place until many years later. So, I was deposing people in their early twenties about events that took place when they were thirteen and fourteen years old. It was fascinating to watch these people, for the most part exceptionally intelligent and talented musicians, return to their early teen years. I felt like an investigator in the TV show "Cold Case."

3. What's the most amusing client story?

As plaintiff's counsel in a sports law matter, advising a client to not do any press until we filed suit and certainly not without me present. The client agreed not to. Then, while on vacation, I get multiple calls from colleagues: "Hey, your client is on TV!"

4. How did you get involved in the DRI Commercial Litigation Committee?

With my ongoing involvement on the Construction Law and Young Lawyers Committee, I was committed to devoting a good portion of my legal career development to DRI. Finding the opportunity to do that on the Commercial Litigation Committee for my Sports and other commercial work led me here.

6. Tell us something about you that we might not know but which you are passionate about.

From the end of April to the beginning of October, I take every opportunity I get to hit the beach and play volleyball. While I grew up playing indoor men's 6's from Junior High through College and still do play indoors, I have come to love competitive sand doubles.

7. Why did you become a lawyer?

Practicing law seems to be a natural fit for my love of reading, writing, and, or course, arguing. Surprisingly, I have found a great amount of joy in the "counselor" aspect of my practice.

8. What do you like about practicing law?

Practicing law is the closest career that I have found to competing in professional sports. The competition is invigorating, and the camaraderie among counsel reminds me that this is a profession, and not just a job.

9. What don't you like about practicing law?

While seemingly economically necessary due to client demand, the practice of law, like medicine, is, unfortunately, moving from an art to a business.