

Perkins Coie Prevails on Behalf of University of Oregon in High-Profile Jury Trial

PORTLAND (MAY 11, 2022)—A Perkins Coie litigation team won a favorable settlement for the University of Oregon this week, concluding a month-long jury trial in which a former Oregon Ducks football player sought damages for injuries sustained during strenuous winter workouts.

The \$500,000 settlement, agreed to before closing arguments, was less than 2% of what the plaintiff sought the jury to award for damages stemming from claims that his injuries stopped him from making the National Football League (NFL) and would increase his susceptibility to further medical issues.

Prior to the settlement, the Perkins Coie team was able to capitalize on a judicial admission made by the plaintiff's counsel that they could not prove with any likelihood that the plaintiff would have ever made it to the NFL, which in turn led to Lane County Circuit Court Judge Clara Rigmaiden granting a motion to remove "any damages related to the NFL" from the plaintiff's claims of lost earning capacity.

The Perkins Coie team also won significant concessions on behalf of their individual clients, former University of Oregon Head Coach Willie Taggart and former Strength and Conditioning Coach Irele Oderinde. Both were dismissed from the case, and the plaintiff issued a conciliatory statement noting that after hearing the coaches' testimonies, he realized the workouts at issue were intended to be team building exercises.

"Our trial practice team poured their hearts into this case for months, and it exemplifies the extraordinary results clients are confident they can expect from the tremendous talent Perkins Coie trial lawyers bring to any trial proceeding whether in Oregon or nationwide," said Renée Rothauge, Trial Practice Chair and partner in the Portland office. "The Oregon Ducks football program is comprised of a group of conscientious and hard-working professionals who work every day to nurture student-athletes, both as teammates and people. We hope the resolution in this case continues to reinforce the stalwart reputation of the program and its coaches."

The Perkins Coie team was led by partner Stephen English, associate Marten King, and senior paralegal Kristi Slenker.

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