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Law360's Legal Lions Of The Week

By Kevin Penton and Andrea Keckley

Law360 (June 20, 2025, 12:33 PM EDT) -- WilmerHale leads this week's edition of Law360 Legal Lions, after the Federal Circuit vacated a \$300 million patent infringement jury verdict against Apple, based on instructions by a Texas federal judge that the appellate court panel determined to be erroneous.

In a precedential opinion written by U.S. Circuit Judge Sharon Prost, a three-judge panel on Monday wiped out the verdict against Apple in a case brought by Optis Cellular Technology LLC that alleged the major technology company's phones, smartwatches and tablets infringed a group of patents connected to the long-term evolution, or LTE, standard.

U.S. District Judge Rodney Gilstrap erred in his instructions to jurors by lumping all asserted patents into one bulk infringement question, the panel found. Such a question deprives defendants like Apple of their right to a unanimous jury verdict under the Seventh Amendment, because jurors might not necessarily come to agreement on each patent, even if they agree that some infringement took place, the panel said.

Apple is represented by Mark Fleming, Mark Selwyn, Brittany Amadi, Joseph Mueller and Timothy Syrett of WilmerHale.

Ross Aronstam & Moritz LLP, Young Conaway Stargatt & Taylor LLP and Mayer Brown LLP triumphed after Delaware's highest court on Tuesday reversed a Court of Chancery decision that ordered the former TransCanada Corp. to pay \$199 million to former Columbia Pipeline Group Inc. shareholders allegedly shorted in a 2016 merger.

TC Energy is represented by David Ross, S. Michael Sirkin, Roger Stronach and Thomas Barr of Ross Aronstam, James Yoch Jr. of Young Conaway and Brian Massengill, Matthew Sostrin, Nicole Saharsky, Minh Nguyen-Dang and Carmen Longoria-Green of Mayer Brown.

McGuireWoods LLP roared after a Florida federal judge on Tuesday threw out a proposed class action alleging Costa Del Mar Inc. misled buyers about its sunglasses' lifetime warranty, saying the court doesn't have subject matter jurisdiction over the claims.

In the order, U.S. Senior District Judge Timothy J. Corrigan lamented the "unenviable task" of telling the parties the case must be dismissed after nearly seven years of litigation, as the Class Action Fairness Act does not provide federal jurisdiction and plaintiff Troy Smith's allegations are not enough to support jurisdiction under the Magnuson-Moss Warranty Act.

Costa Del Mar is represented by Sara Holladay, Justin Opitz, Mark Anderson and Emily Rottmann of McGuireWoods.

The University of Virginia School of Law's Appellate Litigation Clinic makes this week's list after the U.S. Supreme Court ruled on Wednesday that prisoners have a right to a jury trial when there's a factual dispute over whether they properly exhausted prison grievance procedures — a key requirement before suing over prison conditions under federal law.

Petitioner Kyle Richards is represented by Lori Alvino McGill and Scott Ballenger of the University of Virginia School of Law's Appellate Litigation Clinic.

McDermott Will & Emery LLP and Fridman Fels & Soto PLLC succeeded after a Florida federal jury on Monday **acquitted** a former executive of HealthSun Health Plans Inc. of all charges related to a \$53 million Medicare fraud scheme, including conspiracy to commit healthcare and wire fraud and multiple counts of major fraud against the United States.

Kenia Valle Boza — HealthSun's former director of Medicare risk adjustment analytics — is represented by Franklin Monsour Jr. and Kristin Schwam of McDermott and Adam Fels of Fridman Fels.

Two legal teams roared on Wednesday after securing plaintiff-side victories in personal injury cases.

A jury awarded \$8 million — \$5 million for past pain and suffering and \$3 million for future pain and suffering — to a Massachusetts woman who said Johnson & Johnson's talcum powder caused her mesothelioma. Jurors found that Janice Paluzzi's talcum powder contained asbestos and that a design defect substantially contributed to her mesothelioma, rejecting J&J's attempt to point to her family, specifically, her three sons' work in building services and maintenance at the John Hancock Building in Boston.

Paluzzi is represented by Benjamin Braly and Aaron Chapman of Dean Omar Branham Shirley LLP.

That same day, a Connecticut federal jury awarded retired New York Yankees third baseman Joshua Donaldson more than \$222,000 in a dispute with his former landlord over mold in a Greenwich, Connecticut, mansion. The 10-member panel decided he should get \$82,393.76 for consequential and incidental damages and his full \$110,000 security deposit back.

Donaldson is represented by Craig M. Cepler and James R. Denlea of Denlea & Carton LLP.

Ropes & Gray LLP, Akin Gump Strauss Hauer & Feld LLP, Milbank LLP, Covington & Burling LLP and Wachtell Lipton Rosen & Katz round out this week's pride after Wednesday's announcement that Nippon Steel officially **closed** its purchase of U.S. Steel, forming a global steelmaking partnership backed by \$11 billion in planned U.S. investments and a national security agreement with the U.S. government.

As outlined under the original December 2023 agreement, Nippon acquired Pittsburgh-based U.S. Steel at \$55 per share, representing an equity value of \$14.1 billion, plus the assumption of debt, for a total enterprise value of \$14.9 billion.

Nippon Steel was advised by legal teams headed by Ariel Deckelbaum, Suni Sreepada, Chris Armistead,

Nicholas Roper, Samer Musallam and Ama Adams of Ropes & Gray and Geoff Verhoff of Akin.

U.S. Steel was advised by legal teams headed by Robert Kennedy, Iliana Ongun and Douglas Howell of Milbank, Mark Plotkin and David Fagan of Covington & Burling and Josh Cammaker and Jenna Levine of Wachtell.

--Additional reporting by Theresa Schliep, Jeff Montgomery, Mike Curley, Marco Poggio, Sarah Jarvis, Al Barbarino, Brian Steele and Cara Salvatore. Editing by Nicole Bleier.

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