



Neil Block KC

Year of call: 1980 | Silk: 2002

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“He is an absolutely outstanding litigator who elicits a huge amount of trust and confidence from his clients.” “One of the best silks around – he’s very hard-working, bright, tough and determined.” Chambers and Partners 2021

“He is a sublime barrister: very clever, sensible and concise.” Chambers and Partners 2021

Neil Block KC has a reputation as a sensitive but brave advocate, a skilled negotiator and commercially aware practitioner. For many years, Neil has represented a range of clients involved in substantial and complex disputes which are resolved with or without resort to litigation and/or mediation or other form of alternative dispute resolution (ADR). Historically, his clients have usually been insurers, their insured, defence organisations, the government or other major institutions, and sports regulators, ruling bodies and clubs. He has considerable experience of multi-party litigation and jurisdictional disputes. He is currently representing HM Treasury, HMRC and the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) in the UK Covid-19 Public Inquiry.

Neil is one of the few current practitioners who can properly claim to be a specialist in a number of areas of practice ranging from commercial and insurance to sports law, product liability, personal injury and clinical negligence. His commercial and insurance practice is based in professional indemnity, material damage, fraud and product liability, and insurance coverage disputes.

Neil is consistently ranked highly in the legal directories for his work in insurance and reinsurance, professional negligence, clinical negligence, personal injury, product liability and travel. He continues to be ranked as one of Chambers and Partners’ ‘Star Individuals’. Chambers and Partners also named Neil in the Chambers 100, a list of the top 100 barristers practising at the Bar across all practice areas.

Neil is an accredited mediator and has conducted wide-ranging mediations. He is also a member of the Sports Resolution Legal Arbitrator and Mediation panels. He is a member of the LTA Judicial Panel. He is a member of two Premier League committees.

Neil was named Personal Injury Silk of the Year at the Chambers Bar Awards 2021. He was also awarded Personal Injury & Clinical Negligence Silk of the Year in The Legal 500 UK Awards 2019.

Areas of expertise

Sport
Group Litigation and Multi-party Claims
Clinical Negligence and Personal Injury
Insurance Coverage/Insurance and Reinsurance
Product Liability
Alternative Dispute Resolution
Inquiries and Investigations
Material Damage
Professional Negligence

Sport

Neil has appeared in many of the landmark sports injury cases of the past 40 years. He is currently working on high-profile claims relating to concussion in rugby union and professional football, claims involving training and alleged abuse of gymnasts, and a claim relating to brain injury in professional boxing.

He is also a member of the Sports Resolution Legal Arbitrator and Mediation panels. He is a member of the LTA Judicial Panel. He is a member of two Premier League committees.

Neil has appeared as an expert witness on English law at the Court of Arbitration for Sport (CAS).

Cases of note:

- ***Smolden v Nolan* [Court of Appeal]** - Seminal case on liability of referees for injuries in sport. Involved multiple scrummage collapses in rugby union match.
- ***Watson v British Boxing Board of Control* [Court of Appeal]** - Boxer injured in World Championship bout. Regulatory body held liable for failure to provide adequate medical facilities.
- ***Slack v Glennie* [Court of Appeal]** - Speedway sidecar crash. Claim against organisers and track owners. Issues about duty and standard of care.
- ***O'Neill v Fashanu* [High Court]** - One of numerous claims relating to alleged bad tackles in professional football matches in which Neil has been instructed.
- ***Johnson v Brands Hatch* [High Court]** - Serious crash in motor-cycle grand prix. Claim against organisers and track designers.
- ***Hughes v RFU* [High Court]** - The multi-party claim alleging that rugby causes neuro-degenerative diseases.

Recommendations

"A heavyweight silk for the highest value and most complex of cases. Extremely knowledgeable; excellent negotiator and strategist. He works as a true member of the team with insurers and solicitors." The Legal 500 2021: Personal Injury

"He is never flustered and always understands all the key issues, presenting them succinctly and with reassurance and respect for his audience." The Legal 500 2021: Travel Law

"Instils calm in clients through a measured but confident approach." The Legal 500 2021: Clinical Negligence

"Provides excellent advice and his advocacy skills are impressive." The Legal 500 2021: Insurance & Reinsurance

"He is a sublime barrister: very clever, sensible and concise. He is commercially minded and someone you ultimately trust to give you very good advice."

"He is outstanding and a very smooth operator with an extremely authoritative voice. He is extremely calm when dealing with high-value and complex litigation." Chambers and Partners 2021: Personal Injury

"He is an absolutely outstanding litigator who elicits a huge amount of trust and confidence from his clients." "One of the best silks around – he's very hard-working, bright, tough and determined." Chambers and Partners 2021: Clinical Negligence

"An extremely polished performer." Chambers and Partners 2021: Product Liability

"Very persuasive in court and has excellent client care skills – he is able to put people at ease." Chambers and Partners 2021: Travel: International Personal Injury

"An absolutely outstanding tactician with good understanding of this area of law and a mastery of large-scale litigation." Chambers and Partners 2019: Travel: International Personal Injury

"Neil is incredibly easy to work with, and has excellent client rapport." "He's a very accomplished and engaging advocate, who almost has you doubting your own case when you're against him." Chambers and Partners 2019: Product Liability

"A terrific advocate." "He is vastly experienced in this sphere." Chambers and Partners 2019: Clinical Negligence

"He's very bright and determined." "He is very subtle and quietly impressive." Chambers and Partners 2019: Personal Injury

"An excellent tactician who is exceedingly sound on quantum" Chambers and Partners 2018: Clinical Negligence

"Commercially aware and a robust advocate." A hugely impressive and supportive leading counsel who is respected by his peers." "Unflappable, well respected and extremely talented." Chambers and Partners 2018: Personal Injury

"He is very much a team player, who is excellent with clients and particularly skilled in negotiations." Chambers and Partners 2018: Product Liability

"He is straightforward, knowledgeable and smart." "He is very experienced and brilliant with clients." Chambers and Partners 2018: Travel: International Personal Injury

"He is an arch pragmatist and understands the judicial mind intuitively." The Legal 500 2017: Clinical Negligence

"He is authoritative and his judgement is invariably very sound." The Legal 500 2017: Personal Injury, Industrial Disease and Insurance Fraud

"A versatile commercial barrister with a strong coverage expertise." The Legal 500 2017: Insurance and Reinsurance

"He is very experienced and extremely knowledgeable in his field." The Legal 500 2017: Product Liability

"Impressive." The Legal 500: Professional Negligence

"A forensic and analytical mind, and the number-one silk for the highest value cases." The Legal 500 2017: Travel Law

"He has a wonderful ability to focus on the key issues and see the wood for the trees." *"He is excellent and calm and has experience coming out of his ears."* Chambers and Partners 2017

Memberships

- London Common Law Bar Association
- Professional Negligence Bar Association
- Personal Injury Bar Association

Qualifications

- BA (Hons)
- LLM (Exon)
- Trained Mediator

Appointments

- Master of the Bench, Gray's Inn (2008)
- Sports Resolution Mediator and Arbitrator Panel

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