

Auto Crash Case Yields Seven Figure Verdict

On Sept. 20, 1999, at 1:45 p.m., Doric Lee was traveling on Pembroke Road in Broward County in his 1982 Toyota. It was daylight, but after two days of rain, the roads were very wet. As Mr. Lee traveled straight, an oncoming car driven by Cresswell Scott spun directly into his path. The two vehicles collided violently, and Mr. Lee lost consciousness on impact.

Mr. Lee was rushed by ambulance to Memorial Regional Hospital in Hollywood. Despite having worn his seat belt, Mr. Lee struck his face and head on the steering wheel of his car. He sustained bleeding in the frontal lobes of his brain, a fracture of his left orbital floor, upper and lower jaw fractures, several damaged teeth, and numerous facial lacerations. In addition, he suffered from a collection of fluid in his abdomen, likely caused by the seat belt, and a displaced fracture of one of his kneecaps.

Within hours of his hospital admission, Mr. Lee underwent two surgeries. He underwent an emergency exploratory abdominal surgery, during which a rupture in his lower intestine was identified and repaired. A nasogastric feeding tube was also installed. Simultaneously, he had lacerations to his left lip and chin repaired, and hardware was surgically installed to stabilize fractures of his jaw and teeth.

Over the next several days, Mr. Lee underwent additional surgical procedures. His left eye socket fracture was repaired with the installation of titanium mesh and three screws. His left upper jawbone was also repaired with the utilization of hardware, and the shattered portion of his right kneecap was removed. Soft tissues surrounding his kneecap were also repaired and reattached. Mr. Lee was eventually discharged from the hospital 12 days after his admission.

After being discharged from the hospital, Mr. Lee followed up with a number of physicians in a variety of specialties. He underwent care specifically for his neck and back, his knee, and pain in his jaw and teeth. He also began experiencing changes in his short-term memory and he developed problems with

his behavior, for which he sought treatment from both a neurologist and a neuropsychologist. In fact, neuropsychological testing revealed that Mr. Lee was suffering from moderate organic brain damage.

Despite receiving extensive medical care, Mr. Lee was left with permanent disabilities for his cognition, as well as his neck, back, and knee injuries.

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***The Lees l. to r. (front row)
Celecia, Dorique, and Danielle;
l. to r. (back row) Doric and Jennifer***

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He remains scarred across his face, abdomen, and knee, and he has cognitive and physical impairments. He is also unable to resume his life as a truck driver, a vocation he enjoyed for many years prior to this crash.

Not long after the crash, Mr. Lee and his wife, Jennifer, hired attorney Steven Lubell of Ft. Lauderdale to investigate their case. Mr. Lubell made a demand upon the insurance company representing Mr. Scott, but the terms of the demand were not met. A lawsuit against Mr. Scott was then filed, after which Mr. Lubell referred Mr. Lee to the SDSBS firm.

Numerous experts were retained throughout the litigation of this case, which spanned almost three years. Accident reconstructionists, vocational rehabilitation experts, economists, neurologists, and neuropsychology and neuropsychiatry experts were called by both sides to testify. The defendant not only disputed the extent of Mr. and Mrs. Lees' damages, but he also denied fault for the crash.

After three years of litigation, attorneys Karen Terry and Harry Shevin tried the Lees' case in Broward County before Judge Robert Carney. The jury, which consisted of three men and three women, found Mr. Scott 100% at fault for the crash. Mr. and Mrs. Lee were awarded a total of \$1.038 million in compensatory damages. ■