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Law360's Weekly Verdict: Legal Lions & Lambs

By **Aebra Coe**

Law360, New York (April 21, 2016, 6:31 PM ET) -- Attorneys from Cleary Gottlieb Steen & Hamilton LLP, White & Case LLP and six foreign law firms secured a spot on Law360's list of legal lions this week by getting a \$50 billion shareholder judgment against Russia overturned while Kelley Drye & Warren LLP and Stafford Rosenbaum LLP landed on the list of lambs after a jury handed a \$940 million trade secrets verdict to their clients' opponents.

Legal Lions

White & Case and Cleary Gottlieb flaunted their international arbitration might Wednesday when the District Court of The Hague overturned a record-breaking \$50 billion award issued to former shareholders of Russian-owned Yukos Oil Co. after the court determined that Russia had never agreed to be bound by the arbitration regulations of a treaty under which claims against the nation had been brought. Russia is represented by attorneys at Cleary Gottlieb Steen & Hamilton LLP, White & Case LLP, Hanotiau & van den Berg, Houthoff Buruma, De Gaulle Fleurance & Associates, 7 King's Bench Walk, Blackstone Chambers and 3 Verulam Buildings.

Weil Gotshal & Manges LLP sauntered onto the list of legal lions this week by securing two favorable judgments in a matter of four days for Apple Inc. in two separate putative class actions. The law firm helped Apple dodge consumer allegations that it concealed a bug in the iPhone 5 and 5S and that it deceived consumers about the risks of its Wi-Fi Assist feature in the new iOS 9 mobile operating system. In both cases, Apple is represented by David Ramraj Singh and Diane P. Sullivan of Weil Gotshal and Manges LLP.

Also nabbing a spot on this week's list of lions is Carlton Fields, which knocked down a disqualification bid brought against it by BlueCross BlueShield of Tennessee in an insurance liability suit, when a federal judge found that the firm's relationship with a BlueCross affiliate doesn't create a conflict of interest. U.S. District Judge Travis R. McDonough found that Carlton Fields' participation in a joint defense agreement in ongoing antitrust multidistrict litigation involving BlueCross BlueShield of Delaware does not constitute a prior relationship with the Tennessee medical insurer. Allied World Specialty Insurance Co. is represented by Steven J. Brodie, Heidi H. Raschke, Meredith W. Caiafa of Carlton Fields and M. Andrew Pippenger of Leitner Williams Dooley & Napolitan PLLC.

In a year when legal industry experts predicted pay for first-year associates would float up to about \$143,500 on average for the largest law firms, intellectual property boutique Dovel & Luner LLP stepped outside the norm and raised salaries for its entry-level attorneys to \$190,000 in 2016. In addition to the above-average salaries, the firm's website also boasts that it offers bonuses that have "historically exceeded those of any other firm, often by multiples," ranging from \$50,000 to \$700,000.

Attorney from Bancroft PLLC, Paul Weiss Rifkind Wharton & Garrison LLP and Dechert LLP fought off objections to an uncapped settlement between their client, the NFL, and several former players over head injuries. The Third Circuit on Monday affirmed class certification for the former players suffering from various ailments tied to repeated head injuries and concussions and affirmed an uncapped settlement reached between the league and class representatives Kevin Turner and Shawn Wooden. The NFL is represented by Paul Clement of Bancroft PLLC, Brad S. Karp, Theodore V. Wells Jr., Beth A. Wilkinson, Bruce Birenboim and Lynn B. Bayard of Paul Weiss Rifkind Wharton & Garrison LLP and Judy L. Leone and Robert C. Heim of Dechert LLP.

Legal Lambs

Topping the list of legal lambs this week are Kelley Drye & Warren LLP and Stafford Rosenbaum LLP for their performance defending two units of Indian superconglomerate Tata Group, which were accused of stealing information related to Epic Systems Corp.'s health care software. The units were hit Friday with a \$940 million trade secrets jury verdict, including \$700 million in punitive damages, by a Wisconsin federal jury. Tata is represented by Kelley Drye & Warren LLP and Stafford Rosenbaum LLP.

MoloLamken LLP and Chaffetz Lindsey LLP earned the title of lambs Wednesday when the U.S. Supreme Court found that their client, Iran's Bank Markazi, must turn over a \$1.75 billion award — discovered in a Citibank NA account — to families of the victims of the 1983 Beirut Marine Corps barracks bombing. Bank Markazi is represented by Jeffrey A. Lamken, Robert Kry, Sarah Newman and Lauren Weinstein of MoloLamken LLP and Andreas A. Frischknecht and David M. Lindsey of Chaffetz Lindsey LLP.

The Florida Supreme Court on Tuesday suspended a Miami-Dade County judge who is on her second round before the Judicial Qualifications Commission for allegedly berating restaurant staff who cut her off when she was visibly drunk and for taking the bench while impaired. The state's highest court suspended Judge Jacqueline Schwartz with pay pending the disposition of the JQC's charges and ordered both the judge and the JQC to tell the court why she should keep her salary during the investigation.

Edelson PC's softer side was exposed this week when a California federal judge on Wednesday disqualified the technology litigation boutique as defense counsel in a putative class action, finding that the firm's long-held practice of applying for out-of-state court admission by using a so-called "virtual office" address for designated local counsel amounts to bad faith conduct. U.S. District Judge Percy Anderson also imposed sanctions against Edelson in the amount of \$5,265 and denied a partner's pro hac vice application to the Central District of California.

Rounding out the list of legal lambs this week are three California class action plaintiffs attorneys who earned the title after the Ninth Circuit on Wednesday vacated a \$2.3 million fee award in their favor, finding that the award can't stand because the defendant in the case, Nobel Biocare Holding AG, wasn't allowed to see the records the award was based on. The plaintiffs are represented by William M. Audet of Audet & Partners LLP, Jonas Palmer Mann formerly of Audet & Partners LLP and Myron Moskovitz.

--Additional reporting by Kat Greene, Carolina Bolado, Evan Weinberger, Suevon Lee, Zachary Zagger, Kali Hays, Brandon Lowrey and Caroline Simson. Editing by Christine Chun.

Correction: A previous version of this story incorrectly reported the firms involved in the Nobel Biocare Holding AG case.