
STUART RITCHIE QC

Call: 1995



Overview

For many years Stuart has been recognised in Chambers & Partners and in the Legal 500 as a leading junior in both commercial and employment litigation where his abilities as an advocate and a tactician have been highly praised:

“Sources say as an advocate he is superlative to work with, as he has enormous judgement and speaks beautifully.”

“The man you want in your corner if you have a case you need to win at all costs”.

His practice covers a broad range of commercial and employment litigation. Details are to be found in the entries separately made on the Chambers website.

He has a particular expertise in cases involving breaches of fiduciary duty, having co-authored (with Andrew Stafford QC) *Fiduciary Duties: Directors and Employees* (Jordans 2008), now the leading practitioner work in the area.

Stuart has also been noted in the legal directories for the “lack of flannelling that characterises his approach to litigation”. Often as frustrated as litigants by the uncommerciality of litigation, his approach is to identify the end-game at an early stage, and to get there as efficiently and cost-effectively as possible.

Leading Cases

Amongst the leading recent cases in which Stuart has been instructed are:

Employment

Tullett Prebon v BGC, Verrier & others [2010] IRLR 648, [2010] EWHC 989; [2009] EWHC 819 (leading Chris Newman). The longest ever inter-dealer broker case and now the leading authority on “team moves”: a 45 day conspiracy claim in which 33 witnesses gave evidence. Notable for colourful allegations made against all parties, it was widely reported in the broadsheets and in the financial press.

Weight Watchers (UK) Ltd v Revenue and Customs Commissioners [2010] STI 1620. Dispute concerning the employment status of Weight Watchers meeting leaders (led by Jonathan Peacock QC).

A-Z Restaurants Ltd v X, Y & Z (QBD, 2009). Claim against leading Michelin starred chef and senior employees of leading UK restaurant group; obtained injunction to preclude their starting up in competition (leading David Lascelles)

Crystal Palace (2000) Ltd v Dowie [2007] IRLR 682. Deceit in relation to compromise agreement between football club and its former manager (led by John Davies QC)

Thomas v Farr plc [2007] ICR 932; [2007] IRLR 419 Court of Appeal. Claim concerned the enforceability of a “non-compete” restrictive covenant in employment contract of managing director of an insurance company (led by Selwyn Bloch QC)

Commercial

Meinl Bank AG v AI Airports International Limited (Chancery Division - ongoing). Dispute concerning the enforceability of a licence agreement allegedly vitiated by breach of fiduciary duty on the part of the directors of the Defendant subsidiary of the Bank.

Lakeside Foods v Mastergood Kft (Mercantile Court 2010). Dispute between supplier and wholesaler concerning “open book” pricing agreement re supply of poultry products for Tesco and other leading retailers (leading Brian Lacy).

Hotel Cipriani Srl v Cipriani & others (Chancery Division 2010): resisting application for worldwide freezing order (led by Charles Samek QC).

Abela v Hammonds (Chancery Division 2009) led by Clive Freedman QC: claim for in excess of £10 million against national firm of solicitors for deceit and breach of fiduciary duty in connection with share sale agreement (led by Clive Freedman QC).

Total S&P Soudan SA v Edmonds [2007] 104(9) LSG 30 Court of Appeal: claim for pre-action disclosure in relation to multi-billion dollar dispute concerning the right to exploit oil rights in Sudan (led by Selwyn Bloch QC).

Singer v Beckett & others [2007] 2 BCLC 287: the leading authority on directors wrongful trading under the Insolvency Act 1986 (led by John Davies QC).

Education and Professional Qualifications

School

Radley College (1983-1988): academic and music scholar

University

Christ Church Oxford (1989-1993): BA Hons Modern Languages (French and German)

Diploma in Law

CPE at College of Law in London (1994): commendation.

Bar Vocational Course

Inns of Court School of Law (1995): very competent. Everard der Heyden prize for advocacy (3rd in year)

Pupillage

Brick Court Chambers (1995-1996): pupil masters Michael Swainston, Neil Calver, Harry Matovu (now all QCs)

Tenancy

Littleton Chambers (1996 to date).

Professional

Member of Commercial Bar Association, London Common Law and Commercial Bar Association, Employment Law Bar Association.

ADR Qualified Mediator

Trainer of advocates for Middle Temple

Pupil supervisor since 1993

Author of *Fiduciary Duties: Directors and Employees* (with Andrew Stafford QC): Jordans 2008

Personal

Stuart is married with a young son.

He is a school governor, and a trustee of two other charitable trusts.

He served for many years on the management Committee of Littleton Chambers and has recently completed a term as Equal Opportunities Officer.

His hobbies include:

Classical music: concerts and opera: he plays the piano (Associated Board Grade 8), and has performed in a number of concerts in the Inns of Court and beyond as an accompanist. He was formerly the rehearsal pianist for the EC4 choir. He also plays the organ.

Sport, in particular golf. Having once captained Oxford University, he now plays infrequently and erratically as an outlet for the masochistic streak in his personality. He is the secretary of the Middle Temple Golfing Society.