

JONATHON E. CROSS

CO-CHAIR, AMUSEMENTS, SPORTS & RECREATION LIABILITY PRACTICE GROUP
SHAREHOLDER



AREAS OF PRACTICE

Amusements, Sports & Recreation Liability
School Leaders' Liability
Hospitality & Liquor Liability
Premises & Retail Liability
Architectural, Engineering & Construction
Defect Litigation
Miscellaneous Professional Liability

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2000 Market Street, Suite 2300
Philadelphia, PA 19103

ADMISSIONS

Pennsylvania
1996

EDUCATION

Villanova University Charles
Widger School of Law (J.D., 1996)

Lafayette College (B.A., 1993)

HONORS & AWARDS

Pennsylvania Super Lawyers
Rising Star
2006-2008, 2010-2011

OVERVIEW

Jon focuses his practice on a wide range of casualty matters, with particular emphasis on amusements, sports and recreation liability claims. As a former athlete, Division-I college baseball coach, and camp owner, Jon brings a unique and comprehensive perspective to representing and defending sports and recreation facility owners, coaches, instructors, youth athletic organizations, professional athletes, educational institutions, and college fraternities against various claims. His extensive background enables him to effectively navigate the complexities of defending against claims within these educational institutions and organizations, including those involving specific sports such as football, soccer, basketball, ice hockey, baseball, lacrosse, and track and field. He also has extensive experience defending a wide range of recreational and entertainment facilities, including trampoline parks, water parks, roller skating centers, amusement parks, zip line adventure courses, rock climbing wall centers, go-kart tracks, golf courses, aquatic clubs, concert venues, sports stadiums, resorts, liquor establishments, and more.

With the emergence of sports related concussion claims, Jon advises and represents school districts, colleges, youth leagues, trainers, referees and recreational parks in claims that arise from failure to recognize a concussion and the failure to follow return-to-play protocol. Further, Jon handles the catastrophic injury related sports and recreation claims sustained by concussions, the second impact syndrome, drownings, and other serious bodily injuries.

Jon also serves as Marshall Dennehey's representative on the [Insurance Law Global](#) Sports and Recreation committee, where he presents and authors articles on emerging sports litigation topics.

On the professional liability side, Jon provides legal counsel and representation to contractors, architects and engineers, accountants, attorneys, insurance brokers, real estate brokers and financial advisors in a wide range of matters including legal malpractice, accounting malpractice, wrongful use of civil process, abuse of process, negligence and breach of contract claims.

Outside of his law practice, Jon serves on the Executive Board of the Richie Ashburn Foundation, which raises funds to provide over 19 free baseball camps and clinics yearly to children throughout the Philadelphia and suburban area. He works with the Foundation to raise funds to support blind and visually impaired children to play "beep" baseball.

Jon coached four seasons of Division-I baseball at the University of Pennsylvania. Previously, he coached for nine years at Germantown Academy, where he also was a member of the Board of Trustees (eight years) and served as chair of the sports/athletic committee. Jon additionally was a head baseball coach at the William Penn Charter School in Philadelphia, and he formerly operated his own winter and summer baseball camps.

ASSOCIATIONS & MEMBERSHIPS

Germantown Academy, Fort Washington, PA, Board of Trustees (1999-2007)

Germantown Academy, Fort Washington, PA, Sports Committee Chair (1999-2007)

Pennsylvania Bar Association

Philadelphia Bar Association

Richie Ashburn-Harry Kalas Foundation, Executive Board Member (1998 - present)

Insurance Law Global - Sports and Recreation Committee, 2020-Present

International Amusement and Leisure Defense Association, Inc. (IALDA), Member

Sports and Entertainment Risk Management Alliance, (SERMA), Member

YEAR JOINED

1997

THOUGHT LEADERSHIP

“No-duty” Rule Is Key to the Successful Defense of Sports Injury Lawsuits in Pennsylvania, U.S.A.

Philadelphia - Headquarters
Amusements, Sports & Recreation Liability
August 1, 2024

CLASSES/SEMINARS TAUGHT

Defensibility Strategies – Reduce Liability: Supervision & Documentation, International Adventure & Trampoline Park Association's (IATP) Annual Conference, September 10, 2025

Litigation Basics - The Complaint, Marshall Dennehey Client Webinar, April 17, 2025

Legal Roundtable, Amusement Industry Manufacturers and Suppliers (AIMS) Conference, Orlando, FL, January 16, 2025

Health Club Claims, Marshall Dennehey Client Webinar, February 5, 2025

Florida Tort Reform, Marshall Dennehey Client Presentation, October 1, 2024

Concussion: Is the Long Ball Game Finally Finished? ILG 360⁹ London Annual Conference 2023, March 15, 2023

Negligent Security Claims, Marshall Dennehey Client Presentation, January 25, 2023

Concussion in Sport - Causation and Risk Management in the Spotlight, Insurance Law Global Webinar, October 6, 2022

Concussion Litigation - It's Heading Your Way, Insurance Law Global Virtual Conference, March 26, 2021

From the NFL to Friday Night Lights...Tackling Concussion Litigation, Philadelphia Insurance Companies, October 4, 2017

The Present and Future of Concussion Litigation, Philadelphia Insurance Companies' Continuing Education Program, May 2017

Sports Tort Liability and Risk Management, University of Delaware, Sports & Facility Management Department, November 2016

What Insurance Professionals Should Know About Emerging Sports Liability Issues, A.M. Best Webinar, October 13, 2016

From the NFL to Friday Night Lights...Emerging Youth Sports Concussion Claims and Risk Management, Insurance Casualty Actuaries of New England, April 7, 2016

Athletic Risk Management and Concussion Litigation, University of Delaware, Sports & Facility Management Department, October 2015

Youth Sports Risk Management, New Jersey Recreation & Park Association's 2015 Annual Conference, Atlantic City, NJ, March 2015

Tackling Concussion Litigation, New Jersey Recreation & Park Association's 2015 Annual Conference, Atlantic City, NJ, March 2015

Youth Sports Risk Management, University of Delaware, Sports & Facility Management Department, March 2015

Tackling Concussion Litigation, University of Delaware, Sports & Facility Management Department, March 2015

Emerging Claims -- Youth Sports Concussion Litigation, Casualty Actuarial Society's Centennial Conference, New York, NY, December 2014

PUBLISHED WORKS

"'No-duty' Rule is Key to the Successful Defense of Sports Injury Lawsuits in Pennsylvania, U.S.A.," *The Sports Bulletin* 3rd Edition, Insurance Law Global, August 2024

"Parents Are Precluded From Waiving Child's Rights to Jury Trial in Pennsylvania," *The Sports Bulletin*, 2nd Edition, January 2024, Insurance Law Global

"Appellate decision in the Pennsylvania zipline case may permit general pleadings for recklessness and gross negligence, which may nullify the early effectiveness of the defense of waiver and release," *The Sports Bulletin*, 1st Edition 2023, Insurance Law Global, March 2023.

"Heads Up and Watch Out! Potential Liability for Traumatic Brain Injury Pursuant to the Safety in Youth Sports Act," *Defense Digest*, Vol. 23, No. 4, December 2017

"Boom! Lightning Liability at University Athletic Events," *URMIA Journal*, September 2015

"Fair Game? Legal Exposures Alter the Playing Field for Youth Sports," *Defense Digest*, Vol. 21, No. 1, March 2015

"Cover All The Bases," Avoiding Youth Sports Injury Lawsuits, *Camp Business Magazine*, August 2014

"Fair Game? Legal Exposures Alter the Playing Field for Youth Sports," *PropertyCasualty360.com*, May 2014

"Court Recognizes Misconduct When Jurors Seek Out Their Own Expert Opinion," *Defense Digest*, Vol. 11, No. 2, June, 2005

"The Witness Immunity Doctrine Does Not Preclude Experts From Being Sued for Professional Malpractice," Professional Liability Underwriting Society, *PLUS Journal*, May 2000

"Obtaining Records With Fewer Headaches," (Co-Author), *Defense Digest*, Vol. 4, No. 6, 1998

"New Procedures Complicate Production of Documents By A Non-Party," *Defense Digest*, Vol. 3, No. 6, 1997

"Pennsylvania Superior Court Rules On Statute of Limitations For Defendants Who Leave The Commonwealth," *Defense Digest*, Vol. 3, No. 5, 1997

"Procedural Difficulties with New Discovery Rule", *MDWCG Legal Malpractice Handbook*, October 1998

"Effect of Fiorantino on Legal Malpractice Claims for Breach of Contract", *MDWCG Legal Malpractice Handbook*, October 1998

"Legal Malpractice Defense that a Claim is Premature", *MDWCG Legal Malpractice Handbook*, 1999

"Continuous Representation Rule Still Not the Law in Pennsylvania", *MDWCG Legal Malpractice Handbook*, 1999

RESULTS

Company under fire in product liability suit had no duty to install or advise to install new valves.

Product Liability

July 25, 2019

We were successful on a motion for summary judgment that was granted dismissing all claims against our client, an environmental compliance services and tank testing company, in a case where the plaintiff made an \$8.75 million settlement demand. The plaintiffs, a minor mother and child, were at a gas station in Philadelphia when a vehicle inadvertently struck a fuel dispenser, knocking it over and causing a fire and explosion.

SIGNIFICANT REPRESENTATIVE MATTERS

Success in defending trampoline parks in large loss lawsuits.

Success in defending indoor water parks.

Success in defending indoor athletic recreation facility.

Success in defending indoor rock-climbing facilities.

Success in defending amusement parks.

Success in obtaining an defense verdict for major league baseball team and a former professional player.

Success in obtaining an order to dismiss a multi-million dollar gas station fire lawsuit.

Success in defending construction contractor for alleged OSHA violations.

Success in defending a multi-million dollar lawsuit relating to defective fireworks.

Success in obtaining a dismissal of a lawsuit against a security guard company.

Success in handling multi-million dollar claims and obtaining favorable outcomes.

Success in obtaining a dismissal of a legal malpractice case pursuant to plaintiff's failure to comply with the Pennsylvania Rules of Civil Procedure.

Success in defending a golf club at trial for premises liability.

Success in litigating numerous cases involving school districts and universities involving claims for negligence, discrimination and athletic field liability.

Success in obtaining a jury verdict in favor of a major check cashing company.

Success in obtaining defense verdict in a wrongful use of civil proceedings claim.