

District of Columbia

Superior Court

Cab Passenger Awarded Large Verdict for Disc Injuries

Case Caption:

Blase Cupich v. Natalie K. Smith, et al.

Verdict: \$270,000

Judge: Geoffrey M. Alprin

Date of Verdict: 11/7/2007

Attorneys:

Plaintiff: Paul J. Cornoni, Washington
Thomas Fritz, Rapid City

Defendant: Stephen S. Brown, Silver Spring
Giancarlo M. Ghiardi, Greenbelt

Jury Deliberations: 7 hours

Insurance Carrier: MAIF; State Farm

Expert(s):

Plaintiff: Gregory Scherr, D.C.
Chiropractor – Rapid City, SD

Brett Lawlor, M.D.
Orthopedist – Rapid City, SD

Defendant: N/A

Case Number: 2005CA009232B

Facts: A taxi cab passenger was awarded \$270,000 for injuries sustained in an automobile accident. Defendant admitted liability for the accident, but denied causation.

Plaintiff Blase Cupich was traveling from South Dakota. He was a passenger in a cab driving away from Ronald Reagan Airport. The cab was rear-ended at a stop light by a vehicle operated by Defendant Natalie Smith. Defendant Smith passed away from unrelated causes prior to trial. Plaintiff also sued his underinsured motorist carrier, State Farm

Plaintiff alleged defendant driver was negligent in failing to maintain a proper lookout and an assured clear distance ahead. Plaintiff claimed he sustained two herniated discs in his back resulting in a permanent injury. Plaintiff admitted that, prior to the accident, he had a simple back injury that had resolved, but asserted that the prior injury was not in the same area as the herniated discs.

Defendant admitted liability, but denied causation. Defendant contended that plaintiff's medical records showed plaintiff had a preexisting back condition.

Plaintiff Profile: Plaintiff was a 50 year old single male who was a church employee.

Alleged Injury: Two herniated discs in plaintiff's back. Plaintiff underwent physical therapy and epidural injections. He claimed his injuries were permanent and he was advised surgery was needed to alleviate his pain.

PAUL CORNONI

Attorney At Law



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