

Hinshaw Legal Team Secures Directed Verdict in Florida Equine Fraud Case

Press Release | 1 min read

Feb 5, 2026

A Hinshaw legal team consisting of Yvonne Ocrant and Cameron Trahey recently obtained a directed verdict in a Marion County, Florida, jury trial, which resulted in the dismissal of all claims against the firm's client and the seller arising from the sale of a show jumping horse.

Following the presentation of plaintiff's case, our team filed a motion for a directed verdict on the basis that plaintiff failed to prove knowledge of any undisclosed pre-existing medical condition required for fraud. The judge agreed and granted a directed verdict in favor of our client and the seller.

Case Overview

Plaintiff purchased a show jumping horse for her daughter with the assistance of our client, her riding instructor. Prior to the sale, the horse's pre-existing navicular disease was disclosed, and a pre-purchase examination conducted by plaintiff's veterinarian confirmed the condition and advised that, with proper care, it would not affect the horse's intended use.

During the seven months the horse remained in our client's program, it experienced intermittent performance-related lameness that was never diagnosed as navicular-related and did not prevent the horse from competing. After plaintiff removed the horse from the program, the horse developed chronic lameness. An MRI later revealed a foot injury unrelated to navicular disease, and complications arising from the MRI procedure ultimately led to euthanasia.

Plaintiff filed suit against our client and the seller, alleging fraud based on purported undisclosed knowledge of a pre-existing foot injury and misrepresentation of the horse's fitness for competitive show jumping. The court granted a directed verdict in favor of our client and the seller, finding no evidence that either had knowledge of any undisclosed condition.

Case Significance

The directed verdict, which was secured before the defense presented its case, confirms that our client acted honestly and professionally throughout the transaction. The ruling reinforces the burden of plaintiff to actually prove fraud, not merely make unfounded allegations, and affirms the absence of evidence supporting plaintiff's claims known by our team from the beginning.

The case is *Dugan v. Schroeder, et al.*, filed in Marion County, Florida.

Hinshaw & Culbertson LLP is a U.S.-based law firm with offices nationwide. The firm's national reputation spans the insurance industry, the financial services sector, professional services, and other highly regulated industries. Hinshaw provides holistic legal solutions—from litigation and dispute resolution, and business advisory and transactional services, to regulatory compliance—for clients of all sizes. Visit www.hinshawlaw.com for more information and follow @Hinshaw on LinkedIn and X.

Related People



Yvonne C. Ocrant

Partner

📞 312-704-3080



Cameron Trahey

Associate

📞 312-704-3916

Related Capabilities

Equine

Litigation & Trial

Related Insights

Hinshaw Client Secures a Complete Jury Verdict in Fraudulent Misrepresentation Horse Sale Case