Paul Gilroy KC

Head of Employment Group

YEAR OF CALL 1985 YEAR OF SILK 2006

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AREAS OF EXPERTISE

Inquiries and Investigations, Employment and Workplace Mediation, Mediation, Employment



Sport CV

Memberships

Employment Lawyers Association Employment Law Bar Association

Profile

Paul Gilroy is renowned for his sports law practice, covering advisory work, litigation and all regulatory aspects of sport.

His experience covers football, rugby union, rugby league, cricket, tennis, cycling, boxing, athletics, weightlifting, gymnastics, and table tennis. He has extensive experience of issues relating to selection/non-selection, anti-doping and safeguarding in sport.

He has advised and acted for a stellar list of football clients, including Roy Hodgson, Martin O'Neill, Gianfranco Zola, Henning Berg, David O'Leary, Sir Alex Ferguson, Harry Redknapp, Mark Hughes, Roberto Di Matteo, Roy Keane, Alan Curbishley, Gerard Houllier, Ray Wilkins, Eric Cantona, Colin Bell, Steve Clarke, Owen Coyle, Roberto Martinez, Sam Allardyce, Brendan Rodgers, Tim Sherwood, Michael Laudrup, Alex McLeish, Sean Dyche, Paul Lambert, Neil Warnock, Chris Hughton, David Moyes, Nigel Adkins, Alan Pardew, Phil Brown, Darren Ferguson, George Burley, Nigel Pearson, Brian Flynn, Steve McClaren, Mick McCarthy, Jimmy Floyd Hasselbaink, Paul Hart, Martin Allen, Phil Neville, Gary Neville, Nigel Clough, Ray Clemence, Malky Mackay, Gus Poyet, Stuart Pearce, Rene Meulensteen, Brian McDermott, Kit Symons, and Simon Grayson, amongst others.

He has advised on the appointment and dismissal of Managers and Coaches working for clubs and national associations in continental Europe, the USA (principally in the MLS), Africa, Asia (including India - in particular in the Indian Super League - and China), Australia and the Middle East.

Paul Gilroy's football practice covers the High Court and arbitration proceedings, principally FA Rule K8 matters and proceedings before the FA Premier League Managers Arbitration Tribunal.

He has the most appearances as Counsel before the FA Premier League Managers Arbitration Tribunal (7).

He is a regular speaker on sports related topics.

Notable Cases

- Curbishley v West Ham United [2009] (FA Premier League) (Wrongful Constructive Dismissal).
- Magilton v Ipswich Town [2011] (QBD) (Wrongful Dismissal).
- O'Neill v Aston Villa [2011] (FA Premier League) (Wrongful Constructive Dismissal).
- O'Leary v Al Ahli FC (Dubai) [2011-2014] Successful representation of Head Coach in wrongful dismissal claim before FIFA and on appeal to the Court of Arbitration for Sport in Lausanne.
- Norwich City v Lambert and Aston Villa [2012-2013] (FA Premier League) (Breach of Contract).
- Adkins v Southampton [2012-2013] (FA Premier League) (Breach of Contract).
- Henning Berg v Blackburn Rovers [2013] Successful damages claim for breach of contract.
- Mackay v Cardiff City [2014] (FA Premier League) (Breach of Contract).

Appointments

In addition to sitting as a Part-time Judge of Employment Tribunals (appointed 2000), Paul Gilroy holds the following sports law appointments:

- Legal Arbitrator for Sport Resolutions UK.
- Member of
- Athlete Selection & Eligibility
- Commercial
- Employment & Discrimination
- Football
- Integrity & Discipline, and
- Paralympic and Disability

Thematic Arbitration Panels of Sport Resolutions UK.

- FA Judicial Panel Specialist Member.
- FA Judicial Appeal Board Specialist Member.
- Retained Counsel to the League Managers Association (since 2009).

Paul Gilroy also practices at Littleton Chambers in London.

Quotes

Sport: Band 1 - Ranked Chambers and Partners 2024 Edition

- Chambers and Partners 2024

Employment: Band 1 "Paul is a pleasure to work with. He exudes calm authority and completely reassured the client at a stressful time for them." "Paul is the best advocate I've come across in 20 years. He's very good with clients." "Paul is absolutely superb. His knowledge of employment law and his commercial acumen are second to none."

- Chambers and Partners 2024

Sports Law: Paul is an extremely able and effective advocate who intuitively knows how to get the judge on side. A powerful cross-examiner."

- Legal 500 2024

Employment: "Paul is right on top of case law and the attitude of judges regarding industrial relations injunction applications. He is pragmatic and commercial, and also delivers his advice in conference in a very down-to-earth way while at the same time exuding a calm authority."

- Legal 500 2024

Employment - Northern (Bar): "Paul Gilroy is excellent. He's superbly knowledgeable, clients warm to him and he consistently delivers results in big cases that merit his involvement. He's a great team player who does what he says he will do and always within agreed timescales." "Paul Gilroy is a top-class operator who delivers exceptional advice and support in a clear and concise manner. Without a doubt, Paul is one of the best employment barristers we have ever had the pleasure of working with."

- Chambers and Partners 2023

Sport: "A genuine heavyweight KC. Paul is the leading light in acting for football managers and head coaches, and has acted for so many managers in the Premier League and Championship. It is easy to see why: his written submissions are excellent, he is the complete all-rounder, and he is genuinely an opponent to fear."

- Legal 500 2023

Employment: "Paul is outstanding and has no weaknesses! A phenomenal legal brain who is commercially astute and always client focused. He is quick to understand the detailed background of complex factual matters, the intricate details of a client s business model, and the significant repercussions for the client in the event of an adverse finding. He puts the client completely at ease and is a top-class operator who delivers exceptional advice and support in a clear and concise manner. Without a doubt, Paul is one of the best employment barristers."

- Legal 500 2023

Sports Law: Band 1 Prominent employment silk who regularly acts for football manager clients in matters concerning appointments and dismissals. He is also valued for his work in discrimination and breach of contract cases. **Strengths:** "He is really technically able."

- Chambers and Partners 2022

Employment: "He is a barrister who you would always want in your corner and the leading light in my area of practice." "I can see why he is a leader at the Employment Bar: he is a great advocate with a reputation entirely merited." "He is a heavyweight employment lawyer - top draw."

- Chambers and Partners 2022

Employment: "Paul's strengths are most definitely the way he builds relationships with both solicitor and client. It felt very much as though we were a team. He was brilliant with my client, for whom this was extremely stressful and arduous. He has a relaxed advocacy style but can be pugilistic when the situation calls for it. I was very happy with his work and will instruct him again."

- Legal 500 2022

Sport - The Regions (Bar): Leading Silk Band 1: "He remains the leading expert in manager disputes and other employment-related issues within football."

- Chambers and Partners 2021

Employment (Northern Bar): Leading Silk Band 1 "He has gravitas and he is tenacious on his feet." "He is absolutely first-class. He is our go-to barrister. He is accessible, sensible and a very strong advocate."

- Chambers and Partners 2021

Employment - Northern (Bar): Leading Silk Band 1 "He is always very eloquent in his advocacy. He cuts through to the client's objective and gets to the crux of the issue. He is very personable and he does a very serious job while putting his

clients at ease."

- Chambers and Partners 2020

Sport - The Regions (Bar): Leading Silk Band 1 "Trusted by our board, not only because of the gravitas he has as counsel, but also because of his wider reputation in football arbitration. User-friendly and cost-effective, and gets good results."

- Chambers and Partners 2020

"He is very hands on, approachable, knows the sector very well, and he is combative when you require him to be."

- Chambers and Partners 2018 (Sport - The Regions)

"He is a leading light in football cases."

- Chambers and Partners 2018

"He is brilliant on his feet. He has gravitas and can hold his ground when faced with challenging questions and interruptions from the Bench."

- Chambers and Partners 2018

'Renowned for employment matters.'

- Legal 500, 2017

"Prominent employment silk with a wealth of experience, who acts for football manager clients in cases of appointment and dismissal. Also valued for his work on discrimination and breach of contract cases. 'If you've got a case you need to fight he's an excellent choice'"

- Chambers and Partners 2017

"Paul has a very robust and persuasive style." "He has a well-deserved reputation here in the North West."

- Chambers and Partners 2017

A nationally recognised employment advocate with expertise in football cases.

- Legal 500 2016

"He is incredibly knowledgeable, very approachable and a supreme advocate."

- Chambers & Partners 2014

Paul Gilroy KC is a topclass strategist and the go-to barrister in the North West for employment work, who gains plaudits for his gravitas in court as well as his approachable manner out of it. He is especially commended for his ability to explain the intricacies of the law in an easily digestible way. A major focus of his practice is sports related employment law, and he has represented both top level football managers and players.

- Chambers & Partners 2013

"has extensive experience in the field"

- Legal 500 2012

A lawyer who "has the gravitas and standing that comes from years of battling away in the employment trenches," he is "a peerless performer before the tribunal."

- Chambers & Partners 2011

Paul Gilroy KC performed brilliantly in a recent high-value case.

Paul Gilroy KC is, according to feedback, an excellent performer who is a cut above other silks... His "sharp, quick-witted style is entertaining to watch, even from the other side".

- Chambers & Partners 2010

Solicitors and clients admire the "robust, user-friendly and extremely commercial" Paul Gilroy KC, who remains "top of the list" for many interviewees. They admire "his willingness to really roll up his sleeves" and his capacity for bridging the gap between solicitors and barristers.

- Chambers & Partners 2009
- "...the strongest silk on (the Northern) circuit for employment."
- Legal 500 Directory 2009

Class act Paul Gilroy KC wins high praise for his "speed, robustness and excellent grasp of detail." Appointed silk in 2006, he is deemed to have "enormous experience" and an "appropriate tenacity in court."

- Chambers & Partners 2008

The "excellent and evergreen" Paul Gilroy KC thrives in the market and remains the principal player here due to his comprehensive employment and tribunal experience.

- Chambers & Partners 2007

Paul Gilroy was applauded for his "depth of expertise across a wide range of traditional employment law issues." Apart from his obvious intellectual ability, the market commended his client-friendly, commercially astute approach.

- Chambers & Partners (*Starred - ie. higher than Grade 1 - rating) 2006

Paul Gilroy "stands head and shoulders above the rest" say solicitors. Researchers heard that his ability to pick up a case and knock it into shape is "phenomenal." Interviewees commented: "He is great at taking something shapeless and giving it the 'Armani' touch." A combination of high intellect, a down-to-earth manner and impressive client skills make sources "sing his praises from the rooftops." The bulk of his work is on behalf of respondents, although he also undertakes instructions from applicants as well. TUPE, discrimination, including sexual orientation cases, class actions. Paul Gilroy is renowned for his disciplinary work, and acted on two class actions over the past year. Solicitors praised him as outstanding, with a brilliant commercial slant.

- Chambers & Partners 2005

"Performs cross-examination by scalpel."

- Legal 500 Directory, 2005