

SPORTS LITIGATION ALERT

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Jani Memorich Discusses the Unique Niche Involving Professional Athletes and Insurance



Jani Memorich

Professional athletes and entertainers have unique needs when it comes to insurance, primarily because of the high-profile nature of their profession and rapid rise in wealth. Finding someone with experience in addressing those insurance needs is a challenge.

A challenge that Jani Memorich, the Director of Commercial Division of Professional Athletes and Entertainers Insurance Solutions at McGowan PAE, is well-equipped to handle. We recently visited with Memorich to learn more about this particular niche with the sports and entertainment industries. The interview follows below.

Question: How did you get started in the business?

Answer: Jim Convertino, our Director, asked me to join him at PAE to head up our commercial division. I had significant insurance experience and Jim and I share the same vision when it comes to our unique PAE service model.

As professional athletes, entertainers and internet influencers continue to grow their brands and profiles, there became a significant need to provide coverage for their commercial liability exposures as much as their personal exposures.

Q: How has your practice changed through the years?

A: Insurance is seen more and more as a commodity as more individuals go online for their insurance coverages. Ironically, the higher profile the client, the more liability and property exposures we find when providing our review for our advisor partner and their client, especially when looking at their Foundations, charity events and personal appearances.

Many of our clients were with the same carrier and coverages they had when they were much younger and had less exposure. Advisors often let us know they have been looking for someone like us and appreciate what we add to their business model. We are also now providing business and personal insurance coverages for NIL college players and a wide variety of social influencers.

Q: Who are your typical clients?

A: We work with professional athletes, entertainers, social media influencers, actors, Family Offices, coaches, broadcasters, spokesmodels, directors, TV and movie producers, screen writers, ballclub owners, front office personnel and ultra-high net-worth individuals, which allows us to dedicate our time to their unique schedules and both commercial and personal liability exposures.

Q: What keeps your clients up at night?

A: Our clients and their advisors are often concerned they do not have the proper coverages in place to keep up with their increasing profiles and exposures.

Many advisors tell us it's simply because they do not have the confidence in finding an insurance broker who understands the business of sports and entertainment and is willing to provide the type of service required to meet their clients' extraordinary demands.

Q: What do you like most about your work?

A: Changing the perception of what insurance is and providing a unique service for our partners and clients. I love being available for our clients and earning their trust. Integrity is so important in this business. Many of our clients had never had an insurance consultant advise them about the risks and exposures they face with their unique lifestyles.

I am especially proud of our service team of Client Consultants who specialize in providing coverages for our clients' Foundations, disability risks and commercial ventures. We have received tremendous positive feedback when we discuss our unique service model with agents and advisors, and they appreciate we understand we are representing them to their clients. Our service model also provides our partners with a competitive edge when recruiting prospects and having us as part of their team for their existing clients.

Q: How do you see the industry changing over the next few years?

A: Educating our advisor partners and clients that insurance isn't a commodity. It is an integral part of their financial portfolio and something they should look at before there is a significant loss of personal wealth that could have been covered with the right insurance program. That reflects back on the advisors, which can cost them their clients and reputation.

Unfortunately, we see many advisors who do not make an insurance review part of their clients' financial plan. We would like to see more advisors look at insurance differently and have an insurance review done for all of their clients, especially those with Foundations, charity events, websites, and sports camps. Social Media influencers and NIL exposures for college athletes will also need to have the proper advisors and insurance professional who appreciates their increasing exposures.

Insurance carriers will continue to tighten their underwriting guidelines and make it more difficult to secure liability coverages and property coverages in coastal states. The influx of NIL college players and social media influencers will also affect the insurance markets available to provide the appropriate coverages for high profile individuals. Many of our competitors have exited this space due to the difficulty in securing coverage for this niche.

We are hopeful all advisors see insurance as an integral part of their clients' wealth management team, and we are proud to be an asset as opposed to just an added service.