

SHIA KAPOS TAKES NAMES



A lawyer revisits Chicago's worst sports scandal (and it's not the Bears' record)

Chicago trial attorney **Adam Hoeflich** has a busy month ahead as he prepares to try one case from Chicago history and a current one that also will make headlines.

The partner at Bartlit Beck Herman Palenchar & Scott will “prosecute” players from the 1919 White Sox team accused of intentionally losing the World Series for money in a mock trial for Chicago Ideas Week. In real life, those players were acquitted, although they were barred from baseball. But Hoeflich wonders if modern technology would change the outcome if the trial were held today.

“Both sides would talk about how fast players ran during certain plays or the velocity of different pitches in the series and compare it to previous games,” says Hoeflich, who will serve as prosecutor while law partner **Phil Beck** will represent the players at the Oct. 13 event.

The two lawyers and fellow partner **Sean Gallagher** also are set to represent billionaire **Ken Griffin** in his high-profile divorce case against **Anne Dias Griffin**, who counts former federal prosecutor **Patrick Collins** as her trial attorney. Barring a settlement, the case is set to go to trial Oct. 5.

Hoeflich declines to discuss that case. “I just don’t want to be part of the publicity,” he says.

A Long Island native, Hoeflich, 51, planned to work in his father’s small tie manufacturing company after earning a degree in philosophy and religion from Colgate University. “Then I realized my dad’s business wasn’t going to survive,” he says, because changes in textile manufacturing meant it couldn’t compete with bigger brands offering lower prices.

Hoeflich, who has a collection of ties made by his father’s company, left for law school at the University of Illinois at

Urbana-Champaign, where a brother was teaching law. After earning his degree, Hoeflich clerked for two federal judges, including **Milton Shadur**, in the Northern District of Illinois.

He considered returning to New York but changed his mind after meeting his future wife, **Denise**, then a Chicago attorney. “It was by far the best break I ever had in my life,” Hoeflich says. Another was meeting **Bill Brodsky**, the Chicago Board Options Exchange chairman who then headed the Chicago Mercantile Exchange.

Brodsky, also a native New Yorker, took Hoeflich under his wing, introducing him around town. The young attorney met venture capitalist **J.B. Pritzker** and his wife, **M.K.**, at a Passover dinner at Brodsky’s home, and the couples have been friends ever since.

Today, the Hoeflichs have two sons attending Northwestern University and are familiar faces on the civic scene. He sits on the boards of the Northwestern Memorial Foundation and the Illinois Holocaust Museum and Education Center. She is an actress and board member of Halcyon Theatre in the Albany Park neighborhood.

Hoeflich has worked for 20 years at Bartlit, handling complex, high-stakes cases across a range of subjects. He was the lead attorney representing DuPont against complaints by consumers that dangerous chemicals were released by Teflon-coated pans. The cases were dismissed six years ago. “I’m proud of that one,” he says, because of the effort it took to learn the science behind the cookware and explain it in an understandable way to the judge.

Bartlit is located in the old Cook County Criminal Court building on Hubbard Street where some of the most famous



Adam Hoeflich

cases in Chicago history were decided. During a walk through the building, Hoeflich talks about each nook and room with tour-guide expertise.

It was the courthouse where Mary Todd Lincoln, widow of President Abraham Lincoln, was committed to a mental institution, and where sausage-maker Adolph Louis Luetgert was found guilty of dissolving his wife’s body in a vat of lye. The Broadway play “Chicago” was based on events at the courthouse. It’s there that Clarence Darrow gave his famous 12-hour summation against the death penalty. And it’s where Shoeless Joe Jackson and his pals were put in the spotlight for cheating—and the mock trial re-examining the case will be held.

Hoeflich has read up on all the cases—in part because of his interest in Chicago history. He says a mock trial on statistics-driven baseball seemed a good fit for the tech-centric Ideas Week.

“Besides,” says the lawyer who played third base in high school, “the Black Sox scandal is really fascinating.”

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