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Leg injury to bicyclist brings deal for \$17.5M

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A woman who had her right leg amputated below the knee after she was hit by a semitrailer tractor truck while riding her bike has settled her lawsuit for \$17.5 million.

Cook County Associate Judge Mary R. Minella signed off on the settlement Oct. 15 just before jury selection was to begin.

The case is higher than any previously reported Illinois bicycle verdict or settlement, according to John L. Kirkton, editor of Jury Verdict Reporter, a product of Law Bulletin Media.

It is also higher than any previously reported Illinois verdict or settlement involving a single leg amputation, Kirkton said.

On Sept. 23, 2016, Danielle Palagi was riding her bike north on Wood Street to the right of defendant Sucha Singh, who was driving a semitrailer for his employer, RAI Corp.

When they both reached the street's intersection with Roosevelt Road, Singh started to turn right and Palagi was hit by one of the serrated metal steps on the passenger side of the truck, causing her to fall off of her bike and into the path of the truck's rear tires.

Palagi sustained severe injuries, crushing her right lower leg which led to a below the knee amputation. She also suffered road rash on her right side from her pelvic bone to her foot, fracture and tendon damage to her right arm and a right pelvic fracture.

One of Palagi's attorneys, Joseph A. Power Jr. of Power Rogers & Smith LLP, said he intended to argue at trial that Singh accelerated when making the right turn and was not keeping a lookout when he turned into Palagi.

Power contended based on state law and municipal ordinances Palagi was correctly riding next to the curb. There was no designated bike lane on the road.

The defense contended she should not have been directly next to the truck and was not following proper bicycling etiquette.

"[The settlement] allows her to move forward in her life and get the care that she needs," Power said.

Palagi was also represented by James I. Power and Kurt Ensign of Power Rogers & Smith.

Singh was represented by Daniel L. Boho, Diane E. Edwards and Kellie L. Mazzarella of Hinshaw & Culbertson LLP. They could not be reached for comment.

His employer RAI Corp and Hub Group Transportation were represented by Robert M. Burke, Michael J. Linneman, Shana J. Scheid and Catherine P. Gorman of Johnson & Bell.

Burke declined to comment on the case.

The case is *Danielle F. Palagi v. Sucha Singh, et al.*, 17 L 469.

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