

SANFORD
vs.
KEYSTONE FREIGHT, ET AL

In the early morning of July 31, 1995, Ben Sanford was driving his semi-tractor trailer rig on his way to Okeechobee. As he approached a curve on U.S. 27 near South Bay, he saw an oncoming semi travelling in his lane as it attempted to pass another truck. Although he took evasive action, he was unable to avoid a head-on collision.

The force of the collision separated a portion of Mr. Sanford's cab from the rest of his vehicle. The semi that struck him erupted into flames covering him with diesel fuel. Emergency workers had to remove Mr. Sanford from his rig and air lift him to Delray Community Hospital. Doctors diagnosed him with multiple fractures including a closed fracture of the second cervical vertebra (a "hangman's frac-

ture"), an open transvertical fracture of the hip, multiple rib fractures, closed fracture of the knee cap, fractures of the left ankle, left fibula and left femur, the last of which required the insertion of an intramedullary rod. The C2 fracture required him to wear a halo brace for nearly four months following the accident. Because his lungs were damaged, he needed 96 hours of treatment on a mechanical ventilator. He is now dependent on medications and inhalers to fight asthmatic reactions which developed.

Although Mr. Sanford worked hard at his rehabilitation, it became clear that he would never be able to return to his work as a professional trucker.

Keystone Freight and its driver contended that a nearby construction project and improper road signs had contributed to the accident. Despite a vigorous defense, Greg Barnhart settled Mr. Sanford's suit against Keystone Freight and its driver for \$1,100,000. The contractor for the construction project contributed another \$10,000 to the settlement. ■