

Colin Buckle

Year of Call: 2002



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CHAMBERS

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Colin Buckle is a specialist criminal barrister who both prosecutes and defends in cases of the utmost severity.

His practice centres around Bolton and Manchester Crown Courts and recent cases include high profile murders; defences of sexsomnia; organised crime; drug importation; regulatory cases surrounding care home prosecutions; fraud and the full spectrum of sexual offences.

He has experience as a leading junior and regularly appears in heavyweight cases.

Colin is known for his personable and relaxed approach with juries. He is fastidious in his preparation of cases. Feedback from instructing solicitors and Judges repeatedly makes reference to his precise and thorough preparation.

He is repeatedly requested to prosecute cases where family liaison is a key component of the overall case due to his calm and friendly manner. He is regularly called upon to review convictions due to his eye for detail and skills of examination of evidence.

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Education

University of Northamptonshire
Manchester Law School

Professional Memberships

Northern Circuit
Criminal Bar Association

Notable Cases

SERIOUS CRIME

R v Kelly (2023) – Counsel appeared in the case (without the assistance of leader or junior) to prosecute a case of a double attempted murder. The first attempt upon the life of the victim was with a sworn-off shotgun at close range. Only minutes later, the second attempt was with a machete where the victim had his throat cut and was caused a number of life threatening injuries. The case included detailed ballistic evidence concentrating upon multiple ‘test-firing’ evidence to re-create for the jury, the circumstances of the offence.

R v Iqbal and Hussain (2021) – A unique case of causing death by dangerous driving where Counsel secured a conviction against the main driver but also, a second driver whose car was stationary at the time that the death was caused. The case was prosecuted on the basis of the joint-culpability of defendants involved in competitive driving. The victim in the case was a former Mayoress of Bolton.

R v Walters and others. "Operation Utopia". Counsel prosecuted the culmination of a 3-year operation utilising over 200 police officers deployed to infiltrate drug dealers in the Salford area. The main evidence in the case came from anonymous undercover operatives posing as drug addicts, equipped with high quality surveillance technology. All members of the group were convicted. Mr Buckle advised on evidence and procedure from the beginning of the case in 2015 until the conclusion in 2018.

R v Knowles – Leading Junior – Counsel Mr Buckle led fellow member of chambers Miss Evans in the prosecution of 6 members of an organised crime group selling class A drugs in Greater Manchester. The estimated value of the drugs said to have been sold was in excess of £1 million. The leader of the group, convicted after a 4 week trial received 13 ½ years imprisonment.

Boyle and Ford v The United Kingdom – This case concerned an allegation of murder and a specific point of law in the Court of Appeal, the House of Lords and in late 2010 the European Court of Human Rights. The case specifically concerned the question of what might constitute a jury misdirection when dealing with a defendant's silence in the face of questioning in the police station. The case of Boyle and Ford now features in Archbold and was subsequently followed in two further authorities.

R v Stones – Led junior – murder. The prosecution alleged the uncommon offence of matricide. The case included the preparation for and cross-examination of two expert witnesses in the field of neuropharmacology.

R v Thew – Court of Appeal – heard by the Lord Chief Justice. The case was connected to the murder of two female police officers in Manchester and the appeal was reported in the national newspapers.

R v Dean – Successful defence – arson with intent to endanger life. The prosecution case concerned an allegation that against the background of a turf war in the Kurdish community the defendant had thrown a Molotov cocktail into a restaurant. The case rested on forensic evidence.

R v Scrivens – Defending a care home manager accused of perverting the course of justice and obstructing the coroner. The case against the defendant was that she and other colleagues at a care home had covered up circumstances of the death of an elderly resident and moved his body.

Reports: Mirror Online The Bolton News The Sun

R v Wilkes – Successful defence of a male alleged to have used extreme violence with a samurai sword.

R v Hare – Defending a 66 year old long-standing treasurer of a Bolton social club who siphoned over £130,000 from the club's bank account over five years.

Report: {The Bolton News}

R v Cracknell – The successful defence of a young female alleged to have attacked another female causing multiple glass lacerations.

Report: The Sun Online

R v Horrocks – A successful defence of a man charged with racially aggravated public order offences and an offence under the Dangerous Dogs Act. Following a 15 month battle, counsel and his instructing solicitor brought about a stay to proceedings on the basis that the defendant could no longer receive a fair trial. Counsel and those who instructed him had spent 15 months fighting to obtain appropriate and complete disclosure under the provisions of the CPIA1996 and the Criminal Procedure Rules. Having listed the case repeatedly to force disclosure issues the prosecution found themselves unable to justify the failures in the case. The Judge delivering the judgement noted that he had never anticipated that he would have to give such a judgement and take such an exceptional step. Counsel was instructed by Mrs Tracy Haslam of AFG Law, Bolton.

R v Peake – Defence instructions received to represent a defendant charged with benefit fraud in the amount of £70,000. The defendant had claimed that he could not walk, bathe or use the toilet without assistance. The prosecution ultimately proved that during the period of his claim to disability benefit the defendant had represented Great Britain in the Commonwealth games. The case was widely reported in the national newspapers.

R v V – St Helens Magistrates Court. Successful defence of a serving Magistrate accused of a racially aggravated public order offence.

SEXUAL OFFENCES

R v GD – The successful prosecution of a male charged with the rape of his 3 year old granddaughter. The prosecution case was that whilst caring for his granddaughter, the defendant would sexually abuse her and rape her. The disclosure came due to the child describing these acts to her parents and also images that the defendant had taken of himself with the child. The defendant denied the offences and the matter was fought at trial. Two experienced and dedicated police officers led the investigation encompassing hundreds of man hours to prove that the defence being raised by the defendant was untrue. The defendant received 15 years imprisonment under section 236A CJA 2003 as an offender of 'particular concern'. Counsel subsequently proposed to the Chief Constable that both officers should receive commendations which they duly did.

R v FMc – The successful defence of an 85 year old male accused of serious sexual abuse against his daughter and 2 granddaughters.

R v AS – The defence of a male in the British Army who was accused of befriending a juvenile female cadet and causing her to engage in sexual activity.

Report: Daily Mail

R v DS – A successful defence of a male charged with sexual activity with a child. This is the second instruction received by Counsel in the area of sexsomnia. The defence at trial was one of non-insane automatism in that the defendant's act had occurred in sleep and that he was experiencing a parasomnia.

R v A – A defence of a male charged with the rape and sexual assault of two separate partners. The defence raised the rare defence of 'sexsomnia' a condition like sleepwalking where the sufferer can engage in sexual activity in their sleep. The condition has only ever been diagnosed 80 times in its history and counsel was required to conduct detailed cross-examination of a leading expert in the condition of sleep.

Read Colin Buckle's 'Inside 18' Newsletter "Sleep Sex – Waking Up to a New Dawn in the Criminal Courts" here

R v Curnock – The successful prosecution of an education welfare official who installed secret spy cameras around a primary school to operate as a peeping tom.

Reports: {Mirror Online} {Daily Mail} {The Bolton News}

R v Needham – The successful prosecution of a retired driving instructor who 'started abusing a girl after he was diagnosed with cancer'.

Report: {The Bolton News}

R v J – Successful defence of man accused of the rape of his own daughter.

R v R – defence of a male accused of the rape and sexual assault of a child family member.

R v B – Defence instructions to represent a male charged with a stranger rape which was said to have been caught on CCTV.

R v S – A successful defence in a case of historic sexual abuse concerning the alleged abuse of a young male pupil by a male sports teacher.

R v S – Led junior in a two week trial concerning allegations of rape and sexual assault.

R v F – Defence of a male accused of kidnap and attempted rape. The prosecution alleged that the defendant had approached women in Manchester city centre and had dragged them towards secluded alley-ways.

R v J – "News of the World" newspaper sting targeting internet paedophiles.

R v H – Led junior in a two week trial defending a male accused of numerous sexual offences against children.