

WINNER

Ogier

JULIAN CLYDE-SMITH, STEVEN MEIKLEJOHN AND JONATHAN WHITE

Merger and Esteem case

Jersey firm Ogier, one of the elite offshore providers of legal and administration services, had a truly momentous year. Not only did the firm secure an innovative transatlantic merger with respected Cayman Islands law firm Boxalls, but it was also involved in the headline trusts case, *Esteem Settlement*.

The merger with Boxalls, effective from 1 February 2004, is a shrewd move, and may lead to further market consolidation. In one stroke, Ogier clients get access to three of the world's leading offshore centres:

principles of trust law. Julian Clyde-Smith said: 'The judgment can only enhance the reputation and standing of Jersey.'

STAR PERFORMERS

ALLEN & OVERY

Clare Maurice

Allen & Overy was nominated for recognition of the depth of work covered by its 17 specialist private client lawyers. Their department is strategically split between the private wealth group, the charity and not-for-profit group, and the partnership and commercial trusts group. In 2003, Clare Maurice and Ceris Gardner advised a valued private client on the sale of Rubens' *The Massacre of the*

planning, tax controversy and international private banking, heads up the private client team at Baker & McKenzie's London office. The practice is truly global, and is able to liaise with offices in 36 jurisdictions world-wide. One highly complex assignment in 2003 involved co-ordinating private client specialists from the US, Canada, Switzerland, Hong Kong, Singapore and Australia. The team has also advised major Middle Eastern clients, and last year Stibbard lectured on Sharia law in London, Switzerland and Singapore.

LAWRENCE GRAHAM

Andrew Young

It was an exceptional year for Andrew Young and his now 50 strong tax and private capital team at Lawrence Graham. Last year the department hit the headlines for its acquisition of what was previously Eversheds' Monaco office, increasing fee-earner numbers within the firm by eight. The new international office will pick up instructions from the rich and famous who benefit from Monaco's tax-free status. By the end of the 2003/2004 financial year, the dynamic team's annual turnover will have reached a staggering £10m.

MILLS & REEVE

Michael Aubrey

With an impressive commitment to private client work, 2003 saw Mills & Reeve move a step closer to its ambitious plans 'to become the pre-eminent private client firm outside London and to be in the top five nationally' over the next five years. The Birmingham office boosted its presence with the high-profile hire of Matthew Hansell, a tax and trusts partner, from rival firm Martineau Johnson. The firm's clients describe 'a good balance between formality and informality', tempered by 'pragmatic advice'.

Innocents, for just under (an allegedly record-breaking) £50m. Maurice's team also discovered a lacuna in inheritance tax law that the Inland Revenue accepted needs to be addressed.

BAKER & MCKENZIE

Paul Stibbard

Paul Stibbard, an expert in tax



Martin Ellis (centre left) of Alexander Forbes Professions, presents the Private Client award to Julian Clyde-Smith (centre right) and Steven Meiklejohn of Ogier

Jersey, Guernsey and the Cayman Islands. The firm is now ideally placed to serve the two major legal markets in the world, North America and Europe.

With a combined total of more than 370 lawyers and staff worldwide, the firm is a force to be reckoned with. 'A wider span of ability in two centres is extremely important to us,' noted one. Others describe the firm as being 'extremely commercial' and having a 'friendly and commercial "can do" approach'. The firm's very impressive work in the landmark *Esteem Settlement* case stands out for having led to a reformulation of certain

Ogier is a firm that has a friendly and commercial 'can do' approach.



Alexander Forbes

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