

Litigator of the Week Runners-Up and Shout-Outs

By Ross Todd

July 17, 2026

➤ Shout-out to a **Latham & Watkins** team led by partners **Patricia Young** and **Michael Bern** and associates **Christine Smith** and **Uriel Hinberg** for securing an appellate ruling overturning a \$40 million trade secrets verdict against client XP Power and knocking out an attorney fees award of more than \$17 to computer chip rival Comet Technologies. This week, a divided Ninth Circuit panel held that the trial court erred by instructing jurors that XP bore the burden of “disproving an essential element of Comet’s claims, namely, that its trade secrets were not readily ascertainable by proper means.” The appellate court remanded the case for further proceedings.

➤ Shout-out to a separate Latham team led by **Kevin Jakopchek** and **Katie George**, who represented truck maker Navistar at trial against two trucking companies that brought fraud and breach-of-contract claims over the delayed delivery of trucks earlier this decade during the pandemic. But after three weeks of testimony and more than eight hours of deliberations, federal jurors in Michigan this week sided with Navistar on all claims and awarded no damages. The team included Latham associates **Andrej Novakovski**, **Erin Embrey**, **Jilliann Pak** and **Ryan Maamoun**, with co-counsel **Scott Murphy** and **Anthony Sallah** of **Barnes & Thornburg**.