

FLORIDA

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POWER PLAYERS 100 A-LIST FLORIDIANS

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Roy Black
A-List Legal Eagle, Miami

When William Kennedy Smith needed an attorney to defend against rape allegations in 1991, he called Roy Black. Smith didn't know that Black had the highest score on the Florida bar in 1970 or that judges and prosecutors alike had much respect for his litigating skills. He just knew he wanted to win, and Black was the man for the job. Subsequently, the case garnered Black national prominence as the latest defense attorney-cum-celebrity (before Mark Geragos and Johnny Cochran, there was Roy Black). He has since been retained by Kelsey Grammer, rightwing radio pontificator Rush Limbaugh, NBC sportscaster Marv Albert and Miami power boat racer Salvador Magluta, who was found innocent of smuggling 75 tons of cocaine in 1996. Years in the media spotlight has made Black a sought-after legal analyst often seen on NBC's Today show. But don't let his easy demeanor fool you. "My cases are World War III to me," Black has said. "I don't take prisoners when I go to trial." Born in New York, Black hopped from Connecticut to Jamaica to the Bahamas, where he received his secondary education. When it came time for college, his penchant for the tropics made him choose the University of Miami over Columbia University in New York, and he has studied and worked here since 1963. When not in court or on TV, "I read a lot. I crave information and knowledge," Black says. He also works with his wife Lea (who was a juror for the Smith trial) on their Bay Point Schools charity, which offers educational and therapeutic services to at-risk adolescents. Says Black, "What drives me is giving hope to people who don't see the chance for it." >

