

Twitter denies settling baseball manager's lawsuit

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Twitter has denied settling a lawsuit with Tony La Russa, seen here in 2007, over the impersonation of the St. Louis Cardinals manager on the micro-blogging service.

Twitter has denied settling a lawsuit with Tony La Russa over the impersonation of the St. Louis Cardinals manager on the micro-blogging service.

La Russa told reporters on Friday that San Francisco-based [Twitter](#) had agreed to pay his legal fees and make a donation to his animal shelter, the Animal Rescue Foundation.

But Biz Stone, a co-founder of Twitter, said in a blog post over the weekend it was not true. "Twitter has not settled, nor do we plan to settle or pay," he wrote.

La Russa sued Twitter in a California court last month after an unidentified person created an account in his name and sent posts that La Russa described as "derogatory and demeaning."

Stone, in his blog post, said impersonation was a violation of Twitter's terms of service and "we suspend, delete, or transfer control of accounts known to be impersonation."

"When alerted, we took action in this regard on behalf of St. Louis Cardinals manager Tony La Russa," he said.

"Reports this week that Twitter has settled a law suit and officially agreed to pay legal fees for an impersonation complaint that was taken care of by our support staff in accordance with our terms are erroneous," Stone said.

"With due respect to the man and his notable work, Mr. La Russa's lawsuit was an unnecessary waste of judicial resources bordering on frivolous."

"Twitter's terms of service are fair and we believe will be upheld in a court that will ultimately dismiss Mr. La Russa's lawsuit," Stone wrote.

One entry sent from the since-discontinued account which sparked the lawsuit read: "Lost 2 out of 3, but we made it out of Chicago without one drunk driving incident or dead pitcher."

Josh Hancock, a Cardinals pitcher, was killed in a car accident in April 2007 while another Cardinals pitcher, Darryl Kile, was found dead in his Chicago hotel room in June 2002.

La Russa, who guided the Cardinals to the 2006 World Series title, pleaded guilty in November 2007 to drunken driving charges.

Lots of celebrities and athletes, including seven-time Tour de France winner Lance Armstrong and NBA star Shaquille O'Neal, are using Twitter but there have been several other notable impersonation cases on the micro-blogging service.

Stone said Twitter planned to launch a test later this year called "Verified Accounts" which will "feature a special seal."

"The experiment will begin with public officials, public agencies, famous artists, athletes, and other well known individuals at risk of impersonation," Stone said. "We hope to verify more accounts in the future but due to the resources required, verification will begin only with a small set."

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