

Olympians sue Samsung over Facebook app

April 27 2012



This file photo shows US swimmer Mark Spitz, getting out of the pool after winning the gold medal in the 100m butterfly event at the Olympic Games in Munich, in 1972. Eighteen US Olympians including swimming greats Spitz and Janet Evans are suing Samsung Corporation, saying its US Olympic Genome Project Facebook app misuses their names and images.

Eighteen US Olympians including swimming greats Mark Spitz and Janet Evans are suing Samsung Corporation, saying its US Olympic Genome Project Facebook app misuses their names and images.

Spitz and Evans are joined as plaintiffs in the lawsuit filed Wednesday in [Los Angeles Superior Court](#) by diver Greg Louganis, athletics great Jackie Joyner-Kersey, beach volleyball player Phil Dalhausser and 13 other swimmers.

The suit alleges that the app, unveiled by Samsung earlier this month, uses their names, images and background information "in an attempt to link plaintiffs to consumers".

The complaint claims that Samsung "has used plaintiffs' names and [images](#) to create the impression that plaintiffs endorse Defendants' products and business."

A section of the California Civil Code makes it unlawful to use someone's name or likeness for commercial purposes without that person's consent.

The plaintiffs are seeking license fees, a percentage of interest in sales and punitive damages.

Samsung, an Olympic sponsor, launched the [app](#) with the blessing and help of the US Olympic Committee.

It's designed to allow people to find connections between themselves and US Olympians, and USOC spokesman Patrick Sandusky said it was not intended to commercialize the sports figures' names.

"We have honored the requests of the athletes who have filed suit to remove their names, as we offered to do months ago, and of course we will remove any athletes that do not wish to be listed," Sandusky said in a statement Thursday.

A Samsung spokesperson said the company was "disappointed" by the lawsuit.

(c) 2012 AFP

Citation: Olympians sue Samsung over Facebook app (2012, April 27) retrieved 20 April 2024

from <https://phys.org/news/2012-04-olympians-sue-samsung-facebook-app.html>

This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.