

Internet giants eye cheerleader's defamation suit

May 1 2014, by Amanda Lee Myers

An appeals court is considering whether an Arizona-based gossip website should have been allowed to be sued for defamation by a former Cincinnati Bengals cheerleader convicted of having sex with a teenager.

Attorneys for both sides argued their case Thursday before the 6th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals in Cincinnati. The court could rule any time.

Internet giants including Google and Facebook are watching the case to see how it may affect their immunity from many types of lawsuits under a federal Internet law passed in 1996.

In 2012, former Bengals cheerleader Sarah Jones sued Nik Richie, the owner of thedirty.com, over posts about her sex life. In July, a jury found that Richie had acted with malice or reckless disregard, and Jones was awarded \$338,000.

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