

ADMINISTRATIVE PANEL DECISION

Harley-Davidson Motor Company, Inc. v. William L Laporte
Case No. D2025-1826

1. The Parties

The Complainant is Harley-Davidson Motor Company, Inc., United States of America (“United States”), represented by Briffa, United Kingdom.

The Respondent is William L Laporte, Afghanistan.

2. The Domain Name and Registrar

The disputed domain name <harley-davidsonlife.com> is registered with Sav.com, LLC (the “Registrar”).

3. Procedural History

The Complaint was filed with the WIPO Arbitration and Mediation Center (the “Center”) on May 7, 2025. On May 7, 2025, the Center transmitted by email to the Registrar a request for registrar verification in connection with the disputed domain name. On May 7, 2025, the Registrar transmitted by email to the Center its verification response disclosing registrant and contact information for the disputed domain name which differed from the named Respondent (Unknown) and contact information in the Complaint. The Center sent an email communication to the Complainant on May 13, 2025, providing the registrant and contact information disclosed by the Registrar, and inviting the Complainant to submit an amendment to the Complaint. The Complainant filed an amended Complaint on May 20, 2025.¹

The Center verified that the Complaint together with the amended Complaint satisfied the formal requirements of the Uniform Domain Name Dispute Resolution Policy (the “Policy” or “UDRP”), the Rules for Uniform Domain Name Dispute Resolution Policy (the “Rules”), and the WIPO Supplemental Rules for Uniform Domain Name Dispute Resolution Policy (the “Supplemental Rules”).

In accordance with the Rules, paragraphs 2 and 4, the Center formally notified the Respondent of the Complaint, and the proceedings commenced on May 27, 2025. In accordance with the Rules, paragraph 5, the due date for Response was June 16, 2025. The Respondent did not submit any response. Accordingly,

¹The Complainant removed several domain names from the proceeding upon receipt of the Center’s notice of multiple underlying registrants.

the Center notified the Respondent's default on June 17, 2025.

The Center appointed Andrea Cappai as the sole panelist in this matter on July 1, 2025. The Panel finds that it was properly constituted. The Panel has submitted the Statement of Acceptance and Declaration of Impartiality and Independence, as required by the Center to ensure compliance with the Rules, paragraph 7.

4. Factual Background

The Complainant is Harley-Davidson Motor Company, Inc., a company incorporated under the laws of the State of Wisconsin, United States.

The Complainant is a well-known manufacturer, retailer, and distributor of motorcycles and related merchandise, including apparel and accessories. The mark HARLEY-DAVIDSON has been used in commerce since 1903 and enjoys widespread recognition. In 2024, worldwide sales under the mark exceeded USD five billion, and previous panels have consistently recognised the reputation of the HARLEY-DAVIDSON mark.

The Complainant is the owner of various trademark registrations for the sign HARLEY-DAVIDSON, including:

- United Kingdom trademark No. UK00901172329, filed on May 14, 1999, in Classes 12, 14, and 34; and
- United Kingdom trademark No. UK00001271222, filed on July 12, 1986, in Class 25.

These registrations predate the registration of the disputed domain name.

The Complainant's main online presence is via the domain name <harley-davidson.com>, registered on November 8, 1994, through which it markets and sells its products globally. It also operates popular social media accounts under its brand.

The disputed domain name is <harley-davidsonlife.com>, registered on March 26, 2025.

The disputed domain name is not currently associated with an active website. However, according to the information provided in the Complaint, it appears to have been associated with an online store displaying the Complainant's mark and offering purported the Complainant's products at the prices with heavy discount.

No further information is available about the Respondent.

5. Parties' Contentions

A. Complainant

The Complainant contends that it has satisfied each of the elements required under the Policy for a transfer of the disputed domain name.

Notably, the Complainant contends that it holds prior rights in the HARLEY-DAVIDSON trademark, in continuous use since 1903 for motorcycles and related merchandise, and widely recognised as well known.

The Complainant argues that the disputed domain name is confusingly similar to its mark, incorporating it in full, with the addition of the descriptive term "life", which, rather than dispelling confusion, may reinforce the association with the brand.

It maintains that the Respondent lacks rights or legitimate interests in the disputed domain name, is neither affiliated nor authorised, and is not commonly known by the name. The disputed domain name has allegedly been used to offer counterfeit goods, priced well below market value and including items not produced or licensed by the Complainant.

The Complainant submits that the disputed domain name was registered and used in bad faith, citing the mark's notoriety, the disputed domain name's composition, the use of a privacy service, and the connection to infringing goods as cumulative indicators of deliberate targeting and bad faith conduct.

B. Respondent

The Respondent did not reply to the Complainant's contentions.

6. Discussion and Findings

A. Identical or Confusingly Similar

It is well accepted that the first element functions primarily as a standing requirement. The standing (or threshold) test for confusing similarity involves a reasoned but relatively straightforward comparison between the Complainant's trademark and the disputed domain name. WIPO Overview of WIPO Panel Views on Selected UDRP Questions, Third Edition, ("[WIPO Overview 3.0](#)"), section 1.7.

The Complainant has shown rights in respect of a trademark or service mark for the purposes of the Policy. [WIPO Overview 3.0](#), section 1.2.1.

The entirety of the mark is reproduced within the disputed domain name. Accordingly, the disputed domain name is confusingly similar to the mark for the purposes of the Policy. [WIPO Overview 3.0](#), section 1.7.

Although the addition of other term such as "life" may bear on assessment of the second and third elements, the Panel finds the addition of such term does not prevent a finding of confusing similarity between the disputed domain name and the mark for the purposes of the Policy. [WIPO Overview 3.0](#), section 1.8.

The Panel finds the first element of the Policy has been established.

B. Rights or Legitimate Interests

Paragraph 4(c) of the Policy provides a list of circumstances in which the Respondent may demonstrate rights or legitimate interests in a disputed domain name.

Although the overall burden of proof in UDRP proceedings is on the complainant, panels have recognised that proving a respondent lacks rights or legitimate interests in a domain name may result in the difficult task of "proving a negative", requiring information that is often primarily within the knowledge or control of the respondent. As such, where a complainant makes out a prima facie case that the respondent lacks rights or legitimate interests, the burden of production on this element shifts to the respondent to come forward with relevant evidence demonstrating rights or legitimate interests in the domain name (although the burden of proof always remains on the complainant). If the respondent fails to come forward with such relevant evidence, the complainant is deemed to have satisfied the second element. [WIPO Overview 3.0](#), section 2.1.

Having reviewed the available record, the Panel finds the Complainant has established a prima facie case that the Respondent lacks rights or legitimate interests in the disputed domain name. The Respondent has not rebutted the Complainant's prima facie showing and has not come forward with any relevant evidence demonstrating rights or legitimate interests in the disputed domain name such as those enumerated in the Policy or otherwise.

The Respondent is neither a licensee of the Complainant nor otherwise authorised to use the HARLEY-DAVIDSON trademark. There is no evidence that the Respondent is commonly known by the disputed domain name or holds any relevant trademark rights.

The disputed domain name combines the Complainant's well-known mark with the dictionary term "life", a pairing that does not reduce the risk of confusion but rather amplifies the association with the Complainant. The inclusion of "life" may convey the idea that the products promoted through the associated website are aimed at consumers who identify with the lifestyle embodied by the Complainant's brand, thereby creating a false impression of affiliation.

In addition, according to the Complainant, the disputed domain name has been used in connection with an online store displaying the Complainant's mark, and purportedly offering the Complainant's goods sold at unusually low prices or of a nature not consistent with the Complainant's official product range, making it reasonable to infer that the items are not genuine. The Respondent, for its part, has not submitted any argument or evidence to suggest otherwise.

Panels have held that the use of a domain name for illegal activity – such as the claimed sale of counterfeit goods – can never confer rights or legitimate interests on a respondent. [WIPO Overview 3.0](#), section 2.13.1.

The Panel finds the second element of the Policy has been established.

C. Registered and Used in Bad Faith

The Panel notes that, for the purposes of paragraph 4(a)(iii) of the Policy, paragraph 4(b) of the Policy establishes circumstances, in particular, but without limitation, that, if found by the Panel to be present, shall be evidence of the registration and use of a domain name in bad faith.

In the present case, the Panel notes that the Respondent has registered a domain name that incorporates the Complainant's well-known trademark in its entirety, coupled with a term suggestive of the lifestyle typically associated with the brand. The Complainant's mark enjoys longstanding international recognition, particularly in relation to motorcycles and related branded merchandise.

Given the distinctive nature of the mark and its strong public recognition, the Panel considers it unlikely that the Respondent selected the disputed domain name without knowledge of the Complainant or its rights. The structure of the disputed domain name suggests intentional targeting.

As for use, the disputed domain name has been associated with an online store displaying the Complainant's mark and allegedly offering counterfeit goods.

Paragraph 4(b) of the Policy sets out a list of non-exhaustive circumstances that may indicate that a domain name was registered and used in bad faith, but other circumstances may be relevant in assessing whether a respondent's registration and use of a domain name is in bad faith. [WIPO Overview 3.0](#), section 3.2.1.

The Panel finds the Respondent's use of the disputed domain name constitutes bad faith under paragraph 4(b)(iv) of the Policy.

Panels have held that the use of a domain name for illegal activity – such as the claimed sale of counterfeit goods – constitutes bad faith. [WIPO Overview 3.0](#), section 3.4. Having reviewed the record, the Panel finds the Respondent's registration and use of the disputed domain name constitutes bad faith under the Policy.

The Panel finds that the Complainant has established the third element of the Policy.

7. Decision

For the foregoing reasons, in accordance with paragraphs 4(i) of the Policy and 15 of the Rules, the Panel orders that the disputed domain name <harley-davidsonlife.com> be transferred to the Complainant.

/Andrea Cappai/

Andrea Cappai

Sole Panelist

Date: July 15, 2025