

ADMINISTRATIVE PANEL DECISION

Hippo Bear B.V. v. Nguyen Thanh Long, Nguyen Mai Hoa
Case No. D2025-3589

1. The Parties

The Complainant is Hippo Bear B.V., Curaçao, Netherlands (Kingdom of the), represented by LegalMatters.com B.V., Netherlands (Kingdom of the).

The Respondents are Nguyen Thanh Long, Viet Nam, and Nguyen Mai Hoa, Viet Nam.

2. The Domain Names and Registrar

The disputed domain names <hardwellmerchandise.shop> and <hardwellmerch.shop> are registered with Dynadot LLC (the “Registrar”).

3. Procedural History

The Complaint was filed with the WIPO Arbitration and Mediation Center (the “Center”) on September 4, 2025. On September 5, 2025, the Center transmitted by email to the Registrar a request for registrar verification in connection with the disputed domain names. On September 8, 2025, the Registrar transmitted by email to the Center its verification response disclosing registrant and contact information for the disputed domain names which differed from the named Respondent (Super Privacy Service LTD c/o Dynadot) and contact information in the Complaint.

The Center sent an email communication to the Complainant on September 9, 2025 with the registrant and contact information of nominally multiple underlying registrants revealed by the Registrar, requesting the Complainant to either file separate complaints for the disputed domain names associated with different underlying registrants or alternatively, demonstrate that the underlying registrants are in fact the same entity and/or that all disputed domain names are under common control. The Complainant filed an amended Complaint on September 15, 2025.

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 Respondents of the Complaint, and the proceeding commenced on September 17, 2025. In accordance with the Rules, paragraph 5, the due date for Response was October 7, 2025. The Respondents did not submit any response. Accordingly, the Center notified the Respondents’ default on October 10, 2025.

The Center appointed Sebastian M.W. Hughes as the sole panelist in this matter on October 17, 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

A. Complainant

The Complainant is the corporate entity of the globally-renowned DJ known professionally as “Hardwell”. The Complainant markets and sells Hardwell merchandise worldwide under the trade mark HARDWELL (the “Trade Mark”).

The Complainant is the owner of numerous registrations in jurisdictions worldwide for the Trade Mark, including International registration Nos. 1255475 and 1251529, both with registration dates of September 24, 2014.

B. Respondents

The Respondents are apparently individuals located in Viet Nam.

C. The Disputed Domain Names

The disputed domain names <hardwellmerchandise.shop> and <hardwellmerch.shop> were registered on August 25, 2025 and August 7, 2025, respectively.

D. Use of the Disputed Domain Names

The disputed domain names were previously resolved to virtually identical English language websites (the “Websites”) featuring prominently the Trade Mark and portraits of DJ Hardwell, and purportedly offering for sale HARDWELL merchandise. Both of the Websites displayed the same copyright notice “Hardwell Shop [...] Officially Licensed Hardwell Merch Store 2025 all rights reserved”.

At the date of this Decision, the disputed domain names no longer resolve to an active website.

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 names.

Notably, the Complainant contends that the Respondents have registered and used the disputed domain names, in bad faith, in order to pass off the Websites as websites of, or authorised or approved by, the Complainant.

B. Respondents

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

6. Discussion and Findings

Consolidation: Multiple Respondents

The amended Complaint was filed in relation to nominally different domain name registrants. The Complainant alleges that the domain name registrants are the same entity or mere alter egos of each other, or under common control. The Complainant requests the consolidation of the Complaint against the multiple disputed domain name registrants pursuant to paragraph 10(e) of the Rules.

The disputed domain name registrants did not comment on the Complainant's request.

Paragraph 3(c) of the Rules states that a complaint may relate to more than one domain name, provided that the domain names are registered by the same domain name holder.

In addressing the Complainant's request, the Panel will consider whether (i) the disputed domain names or corresponding websites are subject to common control; and (ii) the consolidation would be fair and equitable to all Parties. See WIPO Overview of WIPO Panel Views on Selected UDRP Questions, Third Edition ("[WIPO Overview 3.0](#)"), section 4.11.2.

As regards common control, the Panel notes that:

- (1) The Websites are virtually identical (with the exception of the contact details);
- (2) Both of the Websites were taken down following the filing of the Complaint in this proceeding; and
- (3) The disputed domain names share the same Registrar and are hosted on the same name servers.

As regards fairness and equity, the Panel sees no reason why consolidation of the disputes would be unfair or inequitable to any Party.

Accordingly, the Panel decides to consolidate the disputes regarding the nominally different disputed domain name registrants (referred to below as "the Respondent") in a single proceeding.

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 Trade Mark and the disputed domain name. [WIPO Overview 3.0](#), section 1.7.

The Complainant has shown rights in respect of the Trade Mark for the purposes of the Policy. [WIPO Overview 3.0](#), section 1.2.1.

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

Although the addition of other terms (here, the words “merchandise” and “merch”, respectively) may bear on assessment of the second and third elements, the Panel finds the addition of such terms does not prevent a finding of confusing similarity between the disputed domain names and the Trade 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 recognized 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 names. 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 names such as those enumerated in the Policy or otherwise.

Panels have held that the use of a domain name for illegal activity (as applicable to this case: impersonation/passing off) 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 light of the manner of registration and use of the disputed domain names, the Panel finds that the requisite element of bad faith has been made out pursuant to paragraph 4(b)(iv) of the Policy.

Further, panels have also held that the use of a domain name for illegal activity (as applicable to this case: impersonation/passing off) constitutes bad faith. [WIPO Overview 3.0](#), section 3.4.

The fact that the Websites have been taken down following the filing of the Complaint provides further support for a finding of bad faith.

Accordingly, 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 names <hardwellmerchandise.shop> and <hardwellmerch.shop> be transferred to the Complainant.

/Sebastian M.W. Hughes/

Sebastian M.W. Hughes

Sole Panelist

Date: October 31, 2025