

ADMINISTRATIVE PANEL DECISION

Sun International (IP) Limited v. Bellanger Gauthier
Case No. D2025-4904

1. The Parties

The Complainant is Sun International (IP) Limited, South Africa, represented by Adams & Adams Attorneys, South Africa.

The Respondent is Bellanger Gauthier, United States of America ("United States").

2. The Domain Names and Registrar

The disputed domain names <sunbet.site> and <sunbetslot.com> are registered with NameCheap, Inc. NameCheap, Inc. (the "Registrar").

3. Procedural History

The Complaint was filed with the WIPO Arbitration and Mediation Center (the "Center") on November 25, 2025. On November 25, 2025, the Center transmitted by email to the Registrar a request for registrar verification in connection with the disputed domain names. On November 26, 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 (Privacy service provided by Withheld for Privacy ehf) and contact information in the Complaint. The Center sent an email communication to the Complainant on December 5, 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 amendment to the Complaint on December 8, 2025.

The Center verified that the Complaint together with the amendment to the 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 December 10, 2025. In accordance with the Rules, paragraph 5, the due date for Response was December 30, 2025. The Respondent did not submit any response. Accordingly, the Center notified the Respondent's default on January 5, 2026.

The Center appointed Eva Fiammenghi as the sole panelist in this matter on January 12, 2026. 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 a public company incorporated under the laws of South Africa (registration number 1983/010283/06). It is a wholly-owned subsidiary of the Sun International Group, a major hospitality and entertainment group operating world-class hotels, casinos, and resorts across several countries. The Complainant owns and licenses the Group's portfolio of SUN-prefixed trademarks, including the SUNBET mark used for its online sports betting operations.

The Complaint is based on the Complainant's registered trademark SUNBET, which is widely used in connection with online sports betting, casino-type gaming services, and related entertainment offerings of the Sun International Group. Relevant trademark registrations include:

- South Africa trademark SUNBET, Registration No. 2012/24239, registered on September 7, 2012, in Class 9.
- Botswana trademark SUNBET, Registration No. BW/M/2012/01106, registered on November 28, 2012, in Classes 9, 28, 41 and 42.
- Brazil trademark SUNBET, Registration No. 914410504, registered on September 3, 2019, in Class 9.

The Complainant also owns and operates the domain name <sunbet.co.za>, launched in November 2013, which serves as its primary online sports betting platform.

The disputed domain names <sunbetslot.com> and <sunbet.site> were registered on July 9, 2025, and July 12, 2025, respectively. The disputed domain names resolve to an active website located at <sunbetslot.com>, which displays the Complainant's SUNBET trademark and offers online slot games, betting-related services, and promotional content mimicking the Complainant's official platform.

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 argues that the disputed domain names incorporate the Complainant's registered trademark SUNBET in its entirety, with the mere addition of the descriptive term "slot" in <sunbetslot.com> or no additional wording in <sunbet.site>. The Complainant submits that these additions do not distinguish the disputed domain names from the SUNBET trademark.

The Complainant asserts that the Respondent has no rights or legitimate interests in the disputed domain names. The Complainant has not authorized, licensed, or otherwise permitted the Respondent to use the SUNBET trademark. The Respondent is not commonly known by the disputed domain names, and the websites resolving from them reproduce the Complainant's SUNBET logo without authorization from the Complainant.

The Complainant contends that the Respondent's use of the disputed domain names is intended to deceive consumers into believing that the Respondent is associated with, endorsed by, or otherwise connected to the Complainant, thereby wrongfully benefitting from the Complainant's established reputation and goodwill in the SUNBET brand. The replication of the Complainant's logo, website layout, and promotional style reinforces this false association.

The Complainant further asserts that the Respondent registered and is using the disputed domain names in bad faith. The domain names were registered long after the Complainant acquired trademark rights and launched its SUNBET platform, and they were registered solely to create a likelihood of confusion for commercial gain. The Respondent's website is designed to appear affiliated with the Complainant by using identical branding, adapted text from the Complainant's official website, and references to SUNBET services. Such deceptive practices mislead consumers and divert business away from the Complainant.

Therefore, the Complainant requests that the Administrative Panel order the transfer of the disputed domain names to the Complainant, as per Paragraph 4(i) of the Policy.

B. Respondent

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

6. Discussion and Findings

Under paragraph 4(a) of the Policy, to succeed a complainant must prove that:

- (i) the disputed domain name is identical or confusingly similar to a trademark or service mark in which the complainant has rights;
- (ii) the respondent has no rights or legitimate interests in respect of the disputed domain name; and
- (iii) the disputed domain name was registered and is being used in bad faith.

These elements are discussed in turn below. In considering these elements, paragraph 15(a) of the Rules provides that the Panel shall decide the Complaint on the basis of statements and documents submitted and in accordance with the Policy, the Rules and any other rules or principles of law that the Panel deems applicable.

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 names. Accordingly, the disputed domain names are confusingly similar to the mark for the purposes of the Policy. [WIPO Overview 3.0](#), section 1.7.

Although the addition of other terms (here, "slot") may bear on the assessment of the second and third elements, the Panel finds that such additions do not prevent a finding of confusing similarity between the disputed domain name and the Complainant's mark. [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). [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.

The Respondent is not commonly known by "Sunbet", has no affiliation with the Complainant, and was never authorized to use the SUNBET trademark.

The record further shows that the Respondent used the disputed domain names to operate a website that reproduces the Complainant's SUNBET trademark, brand presentation, and marketing language, offering online slot and betting services closely mimicking the Complainant's own activities. Such use is not bona fide and appears to be designed to impersonate or pass off as the Complainant.

The Panel notes that the composition of the disputed domain names <sunbet.site> being identical to the Complainant's mark and <sunbetslot.com> having the added term "slot", descriptive of the Complainant's services, creates a risk of implied affiliation.

Panels have held that the use of a domain name for illegitimate activity, here, impersonation/passing off and misleading users by mimicking the Complainant's branding and services, 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 registered and used the disputed domain names in bad faith under paragraph 4(b)(iv) of the Policy. The record shows that the Respondent intentionally attempted to attract, for commercial gain, Internet users to its website by creating a likelihood of confusion with the Complainant's SUNBET trademark as to the source, sponsorship, affiliation, or endorsement of the Respondent's website. The disputed domain names resolve to a website that reproduces the Complainant's SUNBET logo, branding, and marketing content, thereby impersonating the Complainant.

Panels have held that the use of a domain name for illegitimate activity, here, impersonation/passing off and misleading users through copied branding and services, constitutes bad faith. [WIPO Overview 3.0](#), section 3.4.

Having reviewed the record, the Panel finds that the Respondent's conduct constitutes bad faith registration and use under the Policy.

The Respondent registered the disputed domain names long after the Complainant established trademark rights in SUNBET and launched its online betting platform. Given the global presence and extensive promotion of the Complainant's SUNBET services, as well as the Respondent's replication of the Complainant's logo and website material, the Panel finds it inconceivable that the Respondent was unaware of the Complainant's rights when registering the disputed domain names. The intentional mimicry of the Complainant's website further demonstrates that the Respondent targeted the Complainant with the aim of exploiting its reputation for commercial gain.

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 <sunbet.site> and <sunbetslot.com> be transferred to the Complainant.

/Eva Fiammenghi/

Eva Fiammenghi

Sole Panelist

Date: January 26, 2026