

ADMINISTRATIVE PANEL DECISION

GRUMPY RHINO GAMES LIMITED v. Hlib Dorozhkin, dantetraffic
Case No. D2025-5058

1. The Parties

The Complainant is GRUMPY RHINO GAMES LIMITED, United Kingdom, represented by Sheridans Solicitors, United Kingdom.

The Respondent is Hlib Dorozhkin, dantetraffic, Ukraine.

2. The Domain Name and Registrar

The disputed domain name <necromerger.net> is registered with NameCheap, Inc. (the “Registrar”).

3. Procedural History

The Complaint was filed with the WIPO Arbitration and Mediation Center (the “Center”) on December 5, 2025. On December 5, 2025, the Center transmitted by email to the Registrar a request for registrar verification in connection with the disputed domain name. On December 5, 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 (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 8, 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 December 9, 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 Respondent of the Complaint, and the proceedings commenced on December 15, 2025. In accordance with the Rules, paragraph 5, the due date for Response was January 4, 2026. The Respondent did not submit any response. Accordingly, the Center notified the Respondent’s default on January 5, 2026.

The Center appointed Edoardo Fano as the sole panelist in this matter on January 9, 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.

The Panel has not received any requests from the Complainant or the Respondent regarding further submissions, waivers or extensions of deadlines, and the Panel has not found it necessary to request any further information from the Parties.

Having reviewed the communication records in the case file provided by the Center, the Panel finds that the Center has discharged its responsibility under the Rules, paragraph 2(a) "to employ reasonably available means calculated to achieve actual notice to [the] Respondent". Therefore, the Panel shall issue its Decision based upon the Complaint, the Policy, the Rules and the Supplemental Rules and without the benefit of a response from the Respondent.

The language of the proceeding is English, being the language of the Registration Agreement, as per paragraph 11(a) of the Rules.

4. Further Procedural Considerations

Under paragraph 10 of the Rules, the Panel is required to ensure that the Parties are treated with equality and that each Party is given a fair opportunity to present its case, and that the administrative proceeding takes place with due expedition.

Although the Respondent's mailing address is stated to be in Ukraine (though such fact is not possible to verify), which is subject to an international conflict at the date of this Decision which may impact case notification, it is appropriate for the Panel to consider, in accordance with its discretion under paragraph 10 of the Rules, whether the proceeding should continue.

The Panel is of the view that it should. Further to the Rules, the Center transmitted written notice of the Complaint to the Respondent. While it is noted that the registered courier unsuccessfully sent to the Respondent's physical address, the Panel notes that the Notification of the Complaint sent via the Respondent's Registrar-confirmed email address was successfully transmitted to the Respondent.

The Panel moreover notes that it is clear the Complainant has been targeted and that this is not a coincidental domain name registration, as is further described herein.

The Panel concludes that the Parties have been given a fair opportunity to present their case, and so that the administrative proceeding takes place with due expedition the Panel will proceed to a Decision accordingly.

5. Factual Background

The Complainant is GRUMPY RHINO GAMES LIMITED, a United Kingdom company operating in the field of mobile idle games, "necromerger" being one of its first merge game whose name enjoys common law/unregistered rights due to its public recognition, followers on social media accounts and number of views on the game announcement video. The Complainant developed and released the game under the mark NECROMERGER on August 8, 2022.

The Complainant also operates on the Internet, its official website being "www.grumpyrhinogames.com", and it owns the domain name <necromerger.com>, used to redirect Internet users to the Complainant's official website.

The Complainant has provided evidence in support of the above.

According to the Whois records, the disputed domain name was registered on April 12, 2025, and it is inactive. However, when the Complaint was filed, the disputed domain name was resolving to a website in which the Complainant's unregistered trademark and unauthorized copyrighted material belonging to the Complainant were reproduced.

6. 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 states that it has unregistered trademark rights in the NECROMERGER trademark. The Complainant developed and released the game under the mark on August 8, 2022, which is available on Google Play and the App Store, amassing 2.4 million downloads and over 370,000 App Store downloads Respectively. The Complainant also argues that the disputed domain name and the website resolved therefrom, directly imitates the Complainant's mark and includes links to the Complainant's game, which supports an assertion that its mark has achieved significance as a source identifier.

The Complainant claims that the disputed domain name is identical to its unregistered trademark NECROMERGER and domain name <necromerger.com>.

The Complainant asserts that the Respondent has no rights or legitimate interests in respect of the disputed domain name since it has not been authorized by the Complainant to register the disputed domain name or to use its unregistered trademark within the disputed domain name, and it is not making either a bona fide offering of goods or services or a legitimate noncommercial or fair use of the disputed domain name. The disputed domain name resolved to a website in which the Complainant's unregistered trademark and unauthorized copyrighted material belonging to the Complainant were reproduced.

The Complainant finally submits that the Respondent has registered the disputed domain name in bad faith, since the Complainant's unregistered trademark NECROMERGER is well known in the mobile idle games field. Therefore, the Respondent targeted the Complainant's trademark at the time of registration of the disputed domain name and the Complainant contends that, by resolving to a website in which the Respondent reproduced the Complainant's unregistered trademark and unauthorized copyrighted material belonging to the Complainant, trying to impersonate the Complainant, the use of the disputed domain name to attract, for commercial gain, Internet users to the Respondent's website, creating a likelihood of confusion with the Complainant's unregistered trademark, qualifies as bad faith registration and use.

B. Respondent

The Respondent has made no reply to the Complainant's contentions and is in default. In reference to paragraphs 5(f) and 14 of the Rules, no exceptional circumstances explaining the default have been put forward or are apparent from the record.

A respondent is not obliged to participate in a proceeding under the Policy, but if it fails to do so, reasonable facts asserted by a complainant may be taken as true, and appropriate inferences, in accordance with paragraph 14(b) of the Rules, may be drawn. WIPO Overview of WIPO Panel Views on Selected UDRP Questions, Third Edition ("WIPO Overview 3.0") section 4.3.

7. Discussion and Findings

Paragraph 4(a) of the Policy lists three elements, which the Complainant must satisfy in order to succeed:

- (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 has been registered and is being used in bad faith.

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 3.0](#), section 1.7.

The Panel finds the Complainant has established unregistered trademark or service mark rights for the purposes of the Policy. The fact that a respondent is shown to have been targeting the complainant's mark (e.g., based on the manner in which the related website is used) may support the complainant's assertion that its mark has achieved significance as a source identifier. [WIPO Overview 3.0](#), section 1.3.

The entirety of the mark is reproduced within the disputed domain name. Accordingly, the disputed domain name is identical to the Complainant's unregistered trademark NECROMERGER for the purposes of the Policy. [WIPO Overview 3.0](#), section 1.7.

It is well accepted that a generic Top-Level Domain ("gTLD"), in this case ".net", is typically ignored when assessing the similarity between a trademark and a domain name. [WIPO Overview 3.0](#), section 1.11.1.

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.

While the overall burden of proof in UDRP proceedings is on the complainant, UDRP panels have recognized that proving a respondent lacks rights or legitimate interests in a domain name may result in the often impossible 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. 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 present 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 disputed domain name resolved to a website in which the Complainant's unregistered trademark and unauthorized copyrighted material belonging to the Complainant were reproduced. Panels have held that the use of a domain name for illegal activity, here impersonation/passing off, can never confer rights or legitimate interests on a respondent. [WIPO Overview 3.0](#), section 2.13.1.

The Panel therefore concludes that the disputed domain name is not being used in connection with a bona fide offering of goods or services.

Moreover, the Panel finds that the composition of the disputed domain name carries a high risk of implied affiliation as it effectively impersonates or suggests sponsorship or endorsement by the Complainant. [WIPO Overview 3.0](#), section 2.5.1.

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.

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.

In the present case, regarding the registration in bad faith of the disputed domain name, the reputation of the Complainant's unregistered trademark NECROMERGER in the mobile idle games field is clearly established, and the Panel finds that the Respondent likely knew of the Complainant and deliberately registered the confusingly similar disputed domain name, especially because the disputed domain name, when the Complaint was filed, resolved to a website in which the Complainant's unregistered trademark and unauthorized copyrighted material belonging to the Complainant were reproduced, pretending to be a Complainant's official website.

As regards the use in bad faith of the disputed domain name, the Panel notes that the Respondent was trying to attract Internet users to its website by creating likelihood of confusion with the Complainant's unregistered trademark as to the disputed domain name's source, sponsorship, affiliation or endorsement, an activity clearly detrimental to the Complainant's business.

Panels have held that the use of a domain name for illegal activity, here impersonation/passing off, 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 above suggests to the Panel that the Respondent intentionally registered and was using the disputed domain name in order both to disrupt the Complainant's business, in accordance with paragraph 4(b)(iii) of the Policy, and to attract, for commercial gain, Internet users to its websites in accordance with paragraph 4(b)(iv) of the Policy.

As regards the current use of the disputed domain name, being inactive, panels have found that the non-use of a domain name (including a blank or "coming soon" page) would not prevent a finding of bad faith under the doctrine of passive holding. [WIPO Overview 3.0](#), section 3.3. Having reviewed the record, the Panel notes the reputation of the Complainant's unregistered trademark in the field of mobile idle games, the prior use of the disputed domain name and the failure of the Respondent to submit a Response or provide any explanation for its motivations in registering the disputed domain name, and finds that in the circumstances of this case, the current passive holding of the disputed domain name does not prevent a finding of bad faith under the Policy.

Furthermore, the Panel considers that the nature of the inherently misleading disputed domain name, which is identical to the Complainant's unregistered trademark NECROMERGER and domain name <necromerger.com>, further supports a finding of bad faith. [WIPO Overview 3.0](#), section 3.2.1.

Having reviewed the record, the Panel finds the Respondent's registration and use of the disputed domain name constitute bad faith under the Policy.

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

8. 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, <necromerger.net>, be transferred to the Complainant.

/Edoardo Fano/

Edoardo Fano

Sole Panelist

Date: January 10,2026