

ADMINISTRATIVE PANEL DECISION

Turtle Rock Studios, Inc. v. Bryan Cannata
Case No. D2025-5375

1. The Parties

The Complainant is Turtle Rock Studios, Inc., United States of America (the “United States”), represented by Frankfurt Kurnit Klein & Selz PC, United States.

The Respondent is Bryan Cannata, United States.

2. The Domain Name and Registrar

The disputed domain name <back4blood2.com> is registered with Squarespace Domains II LLC (the “Registrar”).

3. Procedural History

The Complaint was filed with the WIPO Arbitration and Mediation Center (the “Center”) on December 22, 2025. On December 23, 2025, the Center transmitted by email to the Registrar a request for registrar verification in connection with the disputed domain name. On December 23, 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 (Redacted For Privacy) and contact information in the Complaint. The Center sent an email communication to the Complainant on December 25, 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 29, 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 January 6, 2026. In accordance with the Rules, paragraph 5, the due date for Response was January 26, 2026. The Respondent did not submit any response. Accordingly, the Center notified the Respondent’s default on January 28, 2026.

The Center appointed Gary Saposnik as the sole panelist in this matter on February 3, 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 California-based video game developer that was founded in 2002. Its games are available to play on major platforms such as Windows, PlayStation, and Xbox, among others. The Complainant's properties include the Left 4 Dead game series, with the first installment launched in 2008. That series has won a number of awards, including the BAFTA Award for Multiplayer in 2008 and 2009, two Spike Video Game Awards (known as "VGX Awards") for Best PC Game and Best Multiplayer Game in 2009, as well as two GameSpot Awards for Best Cooperative Multiplayer and Best Shooter.

In 2021, the Complainant launched its Back 4 Blood video game. Within weeks of its publication, the game had over 6 million players and 10 million players within six months. The Back 4 Blood game currently has more than 53,000 reviews on the Steam online video game store.

The Complainant commenced use of its BACK 4 BLOOD mark in August 2021. The Complainant is the owner of the following two trademark registrations:

- BACK 4 BLOOD, United States Registration No. 6521228, registered October 12, 2021, in classes 9 and 41, including for "Entertainment services, namely, providing an on-line computer game"; and
- BACK 4 BLOOD and Design, United States Registration No. 6822659, registered August 16, 2022, in classes 9 and 41, including for "Entertainment services, namely, providing on-line computer games".

The disputed domain name was registered on May 18, 2023. The disputed domain name has not been associated with 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 name.

Notably, the Complainant contends that the disputed domain name is confusingly similar to the Complainant's BACK 4 BLOOD trademark. The disputed domain name contains the Complainant's mark in its entirety, and merely adds the number "2", which is intended to be descriptive and meaningful to the Complainant's consumers. Consumers are likely to believe that the disputed domain name originates from or is affiliated with, authorized by, or endorsed by the Complainant.

The Complainant alleges that the Respondent has no rights or legitimate interests in respect of the disputed domain name. The Respondent is not commonly known by the disputed domain name or the trademark, and has not acquired any legitimate trademark or service mark rights in the disputed domain name. The Complainant further alleges that the Respondent registered the disputed domain name based on its speculation that the Complainant is developing a sequel to the Back 4 Blood game.

Lastly, the Complainant avers that the disputed domain name was registered or acquired and is being used in bad faith. Given that the disputed domain name mimics the official website of the Complainant's game, at <back4blood.com>, the Respondent was aware of the Complainant's trademark at the time the disputed domain name was registered or acquired, as well as having constructive notice for a number of years. The Complainant believes that the Respondent registered the disputed domain name for the purpose of reselling

it to the Complainant for profit and/or primarily for the purpose of disrupting the Complainant's business. The bad faith is evidenced by: (i) the use of Complainant's identical trademark in the disputed domain name, (ii) the lack of use of the disputed domain name to display any legitimate website, and (iii) the use of the number "2" in the disputed domain name, which is a transparent reference to a sequel to the BACK 4 BLOOD game.

The Complainant believes that the Respondent is knowingly fueling speculation and rumors about a sequel, with at least one reporter attempting to support that rumor by pointing out that the disputed domain name was active. These rumors are causing consumer confusion about the Complainant's activities in a volatile fan environment, where devoted consumers carefully monitor Complainant's activity for possible new releases.

The fact that there is no website available for the disputed domain name supports the Complainant's belief that the Respondent has no legitimate plans to use the disputed domain name. Based on the confusing similarity between the disputed domain name and the Complainant's trademark, Internet users who encounter the disputed domain name will be confused as to the source, sponsorship, affiliation or endorsement of the domain name and any related website.

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 Complainant's BACK 4 BLOOD 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 another term here, the number "2", may bear on assessment of the second and third elements, the Panel finds the addition of such number 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 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 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 not commonly known by the disputed domain name, nor has it come forward with any evidence of a bona fide offering of goods or services. Additionally, the Respondent has not shown a legitimate noncommercial or fair use of the disputed domain name. Rather, the Complainant has provided evidence of articles in the video game world speculating that the Complainant was secretly working on a sequel to its Back 4 Blood game, while pointing out that the disputed domain name had been registered. Such rumors could cause consumer confusion as to the Complainant's future activities in the gaming sector. UDPR panels have found that domain names identical to a complainant's trademark carry a high risk of implied affiliation. Even with the addition of the term "2" to the Complainant's trademark, such use cannot constitute fair use if it effectively impersonates or suggests sponsorship or endorsement by the trademark owner. [WIPO Overview 3.0](#), section 2.5.1. As shown by the Complainant, such suggested affiliation with the Complainant has occurred amongst its relevant consumers, who would view the disputed domain name as being related to a possible sequel to the Complainant's video game.

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 the disputed domain name a number of years after the Complainant attained trademark rights in BACK 4 BLOOD for its video game. The disputed domain name merely adds the number "2" to the domain name <back4blood.com> that the Complainant uses to promote its video game that had achieved notoriety in the video game industry. Such registration is a logical reference to a sequel for the Complainant's game, with the Respondent not responding as to any other reason for its registration of the disputed domain name that is almost identical to the Complainant's distinctive mark.

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. Such circumstances include whether the disputed domain name incorporates the complainant's mark and corresponds to the complainant's natural zone of expansion.

As previously noted, the mere inclusion of the number "2" after the Complainant's mark can be seen, and was seen by the relevant video game consumers, as a likely sequel to the Complainant's video game. As the evidence provided indicates, the gaming community viewed the disputed domain name as linked to the Complainant and/or to a website that is authorized, endorsed or approved by the Complainant. The Respondent's actions make it more likely than not that the Respondent opportunistically registered the disputed domain name based on the Complainant's widely-known trademark in the gaming community. The mere registration of a domain name that is identical or confusingly similar (particularly domain names incorporating the mark plus a descriptive term) to a widely-known trademark by an unaffiliated entity can by

itself create a presumption of bad faith. See [WIPO Overview 3.0](#), section 3.1.4; *Axlebolt Ltd. v. Kirill*, WIPO Case No. [D2022-1649](#).

Based on the totality of the evidence, it is apparent that the Respondent was targeting the Complainant when it registered the disputed domain name. Combined with the clear absence of rights or legitimate interests, coupled with no credible explanation for the Respondent's choice of the disputed domain name, the Respondent's registration of the disputed domain name was in bad faith.

Additionally, 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. The Respondent has failed to submit a Response or provide any evidence of actual or contemplated good-faith use. Having reviewed the available record, the Panel notes the distinctiveness or reputation of the Complainant's BACK 4 BLOOD trademark, and the composition of the disputed domain name, and finds that in the circumstances of this case the passive holding of the disputed domain name does not prevent a finding of 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 <back4blood2.com> be transferred to the Complainant.

/Gary Saposnik/

Gary Saposnik

Sole Panelist

Date: February 17, 2026