

ADMINISTRATIVE PANEL DECISION

Consorzio di Tutela Barolo Barbaresco Alba Langhe e Dogliani v. Justin R
Case No. D2026-0185

1. The Parties

The Complainant is Consorzio di Tutela Barolo Barbaresco Alba Langhe e Dogliani, Italy, represented by Società Italiana Brevetti S.p.A., Italy.

The Respondent is Justin R, China.

2. The Domain Name and Registrar

The disputed domain name <barolo.store> is registered with GoDaddy.com, LLC (the “Registrar”).

3. Procedural History

The Complaint was filed with the WIPO Arbitration and Mediation Center (the “Center”) on December 29, 2025. On January 19, 2026, the Center transmitted by email to the Registrar a request for registrar verification in connection with the disputed domain name. On January 20, 2026, the Registrar transmitted by email to the Center its verification response confirming that the Respondent is listed as the registrant and providing the contact details. The Center sent an email communication to the Complainant on January 22, 2026, providing the registrant and contact information disclosed by the Registrar.

The Center verified that 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 January 23, 2026. In accordance with the Rules, paragraph 5, the due date for Response was February 12, 2026. The Respondent did not submit any response. Accordingly, the Center notified the Respondent’s default on February 13, 2026.

The Center appointed Mehmet Polat Kalafatoğlu as the sole panelist in this matter on February 16, 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, the Consorzio di Tutela Barolo Barbaresco Alba Langhe e Dogliani, is the sole official body appointed by Decree of the Italian Ministry of Agriculture, Food Sovereignty and Forests for the protection, promotion, consumer information and the general care of the interest regarding the wine designation Barolo. Moreover, the Complainant states that pursuant to article 41 of Italian Law No. 238/2016 (also referred to as “Testo Unico Vino”), the bodies recognized as “Consorzio di Tutela” are authorized to act erga omnes in all legal and administrative proceedings to protect the relevant designation of origin as well as the interest and the rights of the relevant producers. Hence, the Complainant itself has the duty to verify that whoever uses the Protected Designation of Origin (“PDO”) respects its specification of use and to act against all the illicit uses referred to in article 103 of the European Union (“EU”) Regulation No 1308/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 December 2013 establishing a common organization of the markets in agricultural products and repealing Council Regulations (EEC) No 922/72, (EEC) No 234/79, (EC) No 1037/2001 and (EC) No 1234/2007 (the “EU Regulation No. 1308/2013”).

The Complainant notes that Barolo has acquired the recognition of PDO, and this recognition requires strict rules for soil, elevation, and climate in order to ensure the quality of the government-sealed bottles. The Complainant is also titled as Recognized producer group pursuant to the EU Regulation No. 1308/2013, as of 1973.

The Complainant asserts that it is the owner of several trademark registrations in Italy and other jurisdictions for BAROLO, including the following:

- the Italian trademark registration (collective trademark) for BAROLO, No. 302020000055873, registered on October 7, 2021, in class 33 (alcoholic beverages (except beers)); and
- the International trademark registration for BAROLO, No. 1022062, registered on September 29, 2009, in class 33 (for wines).

It appears that the Respondent is an individual located in China. The disputed domain name was registered on September 24, 2025. It resolves to a website connected to the Registrar where the disputed domain name is offered for sale for USD 1,450 or for lease in the amount of USD 182 per month.

Although it is not explicitly indicated by the Complainant, the Panel is aware that Barolo is also the name of a *comune* (municipality) in Italy. In addition, the Panel also notes that Barolo is the name of a specific type of wine and the website located at the domain name <langhevini.it> (which appears to be the official website of the Complainant) presents the Barolo PDO in these terms: “This is the Grand Italian Wine by definition, also produced entirely with Nebbiolo grapes. Barolo wine comes from the village in the Langa bearing the same name a few kilometers south of Alba. It is now made in eleven ‘communes’ or village territories, all situated on the scenic Langa hills shaped by centuries of vine cultivation and dominated by medieval castles – including Barolo’s own. [...] Communes included in the Barolo production area are: Barolo, La Morra, Monforte, Serralunga d’Alba and part of Castiglione Falletto, Novello, Grinzane Cavour. Verduno, Diano d’Alba, Cherasco and Roddi. [...]”

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. The Complainant’s contentions are summarized below.

First, the Complainant states that its Complaint is based on the Complainant’s prior rights in the trademark BAROLO. The Complainant notes that numerous UDRP panels have held that a domain name is confusingly similar to a company’s name and trademark where, as in the case at hand, the domain name incorporates the whole company name and trademark. It also asserts that when confronted with the

disputed domain name, Internet users and consumers will inevitably associate it with the Complainant's identical and well-known trademark BAROLO. Therefore, the disputed domain name is identical or at least confusingly similar to the BAROLO trademark.

Second, the Complainant contends that the Respondent has no rights or legitimate interests in respect of the disputed domain name. In this regard, the Complainant submits that it has neither authorized nor given its consent to the Respondent to register and use the disputed domain name. The disputed domain name has been registered and is being used to exploit the reputation of the Complainant's trademarks and company name in order to attract current and potential Complainant's clients. The Complainant also notes that the disputed domain name resolves to a webpage where it is offered for sale at the unfair price of USD 1,450. The Complainant further asserts that the Respondent is not making a legitimate noncommercial or fair use of the disputed domain name without intent for commercial gain, as the disputed domain name points merely to an inactive website where it is sold at a high price. There is no evidence of any use of the disputed domain name as a bona fide offering of goods or services, nor of any demonstrable preparations for such an offering. It is evident that the use of the disputed domain name for pages that are built on and around the Complainant's trademarks and company name does not establish rights or legitimate interests and cannot constitute a bona fide offering of goods or services or a legitimate noncommercial or fair use. Lastly, the Complainant refers to the results of a database search, which shows that there are no BAROLO or BAROLO-formative trademark applications or registrations in the name of the Respondent.

Third, the Complainant claims that the disputed domain name was registered and is being used in bad faith. In this regard, the Complainant asserts that the disputed domain name fully reproduces the well-known BAROLO trademark, it corresponds to the Complainant's trade name, and it resolves to the Registrar's page where it is offered for sale, exploiting the BAROLO trademark's reputation. The Complainant adds that there is no connection between the Respondent and the Complainant's BAROLO trademark. The Complainant notes that the disputed domain name is offered for sale for an amount that is obviously very high compared to the normal costs of registration. This shows that the disputed domain name has been offered for sale for profit for a sum in excess of out-of-pocket costs, which is not a bona fide offering of goods or services or a legitimate non-commercial or fair use. The Complainant adds that the Respondent acts in bad faith as the disputed domain name is not used in good faith for the offer of goods and services to the public, nor is it used for legitimate commercial or non-commercial use without the intention of misleading the Complainant's customers or infringing the BAROLO trademarks. The Complainant contends that the disputed domain name does not lead to an active website, and this passive holding is a clear indication of bad faith. The Complainant states that "'BAROLO' is not a common or descriptive term, but it is obviously a trademark in and to which the Complainant has demonstrated to have rights". Because of the Complainant's intensive use, the trademark BAROLO is well-known. In registering the disputed domain name, the Respondent had knowledge or at any rate exercised a willful blindness to the Complainant's earlier rights in and to the trademark BAROLO. Lastly, the Complainant submits that the Respondent is unfairly and intentionally taking advantage of, and exploiting without authorization, the reputation and distinctiveness of the Complainant's trademarks to attract Internet users to its website creating a likelihood of confusion with the Complainant's trademarks as to the source, sponsorship, affiliation, or endorsement of the Respondent's website and depriving the Complainant of the possibility to register the disputed domain name.

B. Respondent

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

6. Discussion and Findings

A. Identical or Confusingly Similar

The Panel considers the following points as the basis for his determinations in the present case. First, the term "Barolo" is a geographical term referring to a location in Italy. Second, the Panel notes the Complainant's assertions that the term "Barolo", as a specific wine designation, is recognized and protected

as a PDO under the relevant Italian and EU regulations. Lastly, the Complainant also owns trademark registrations for BAROLO in Italy and other jurisdictions.

Regarding the protection of geographical terms under the Policy, the WIPO Overview of WIPO Panel Views on Select UDRP Questions ([“WIPO Overview 3.1”](#)), section 1.6 states that “Geographical terms used only in their ordinary geographical sense, except where registered as a trademark, would not as such provide standing to file a UDRP case. [...] Under the UDRP however, it has generally proven difficult for an entity affiliated with or responsible for a geographical area (which has not otherwise obtained a relevant trademark registration) to show unregistered trademark rights in that geographical term on the basis of secondary meaning. [...] It is further noted that the Report of the Second WIPO Internet Domain Name Process ultimately declined to recommend specifically extending protection to geographical terms as such under the UDRP”. In parallel with this position, a panel also decided that “geographical terms, even if used in their ordinary geographical sense, provide standing for the purposes of this first element of the Policy if registered as trademarks”. (See *Regulatory Board of the Rioja Qualified Designation of Origin (D.O.CA) v. Domain Hostmaster, Customer ID: 43528876679114, Whois Privacy Services Pty Ltd / Privacy.co.com, Inc Privacy ID# 1027108 / Kevin Daste*, WIPO Case No. [D2018-0168](#) concerning the domain name <rioja.com>.)

This Panel follows the same approach in the present case. As noted above, the Complainant has also registered trademarks for BAROLO, and accordingly, it has shown rights in respect of a trademark for the purposes of the Policy. (For the same determination, see *Consorzio di Tutela Barolo Barbaresco Alba Langhe e Dogliani v. Qingqing Yu*, WIPO Case No. [D2025-5339](#) concerning the domain name <barolo.online>.)

The entirety of the mark is reproduced within the disputed domain name. Accordingly, the disputed domain name is identical to the mark for the purposes of the Policy. [WIPO Overview 3.1](#), section 1.7.

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

B. Rights or Legitimate Interests

Pursuant to paragraph 4(a) of the Policy, the Complainant must prove that each of the three elements of the Policy is present in order to succeed in its Complaint. A failure to establish one of the conjunctive elements of the Policy will result in the failure of the Complaint in its entirety. Considering the Panel's determinations under the third element below, the Panel does not see it necessary to address the question of the Respondent's rights or legitimate interests in the disputed domain name.

C. Registered and Used in Bad Faith

[WIPO Overview 3.1](#), section 3.1 states that the notion of “bad faith” under the Policy, “is broadly understood to occur where a respondent takes unfair advantage of or otherwise abuses a complainant's mark, [...] and the burden of proof rests with the complainant”. In addition, under the UDRP, the applicable standard of proof is the “balance of probabilities” or “preponderance of the evidence”, which is generally accepted as the case where a party demonstrates to a panel's satisfaction that it is more likely than not that a claimed fact is true. (See [WIPO Overview 3.1](#), section 4.2.) Lastly, [WIPO Overview 3.1](#), section 4.3 notes that “a respondent's default [...] would not by itself mean that the complainant is deemed to have prevailed; a respondent's default is not necessarily an admission that the complainant's contentions are accurate”.

First of all, with the Respondent's failure to submit a response, the Panel does not have any explanation from the Respondent's side about its choice and the circumstances surrounding the registration of the disputed domain name. Second, from the case file, we know that the Complainant is the owner of registered trademarks for BAROLO, which predate the registration of the disputed domain name. The record also shows that the disputed domain name resolves to a webpage where it is offered for sale or for lease. In addition, the Panel notes that the term “Barolo” is, at the same time, a geographic term and refers to a specific wine designation protected under the relevant PDO regulations. Therefore, the Panel understands in part but cannot fully agree with the Complainant's assertion that “‘BAROLO’ is not a common or

descriptive term, but it is obviously a trademark in and to which the Complainant has demonstrated to have rights”.

The Panel further notes that it is a common practice for registrants to register and sell domain names composed solely of geographical or descriptive terms, and such domain names may be seen as having inherent value. As noted in the [WIPO Overview 3.1](#), section 3.1.1, “the practice as such of registering a domain name for subsequent resale (including for a profit) would not by itself support a claim that the respondent registered the domain name in bad faith with the primary purpose of selling it to a trademark owner (or its competitor)”. Although the Complainant would likely be a potential buyer of the disputed domain name, the Panel considers that the Respondent’s offer for sale or lease is general, and the case file does not include any evidence, such as the Respondent’s direct communication with the Complainant or its competitors, to prove that the Respondent individually or specifically approached the Complainant or its competitors with an offer. (For a similar determination, see *Consorzio di Tutela Barolo Barbaresco Alba Langhe e Dogliani v. Qingqing Yu*, WIPO Case No. [D2025-5339](#).)

In light of the above, the Panel considers that the Complainant, in order to establish the bad faith of the Respondent under the Policy, must prove that the Respondent acted with the intent of targeting or exploiting the Complainant and the reputation of its mark and protected designation of origin, rather than based on the geographical meaning of the term “Barolo” or its renown as a specific type of wine. In the Panel’s view, this distinction is the main issue in the present case and is where the Complaint fails. (For similar determinations, see *Regulatory Board of the Rioja Qualified Designation of Origin (D.O.CA) v. Domain Hostmaster, Customer ID: 43528876679114, Whois Privacy Services Pty Ltd / Privacy.co.com, Inc Privacy ID# 1027108 / Kevin Daste*, WIPO Case No. [D2018-0168](#) and *Consorzio di Tutela Barolo Barbaresco Alba Langhe e Dogliani v. Qingqing Yu*, WIPO Case No. [D2025-5339](#).)

Considering the entirety of the evidence submitted and assertions made by the Complainant, the Panel determines that the Complainant has not provided relevant evidence to clearly prove that the Respondent’s aim in registering the disputed domain name was to target or take unfair advantage of the Complainant or its trademark rights in BAROLO.

Accordingly, and based on the available record, the Panel finds the third element of the Policy has not been established.

7. Decision

For the foregoing reasons, the Complaint is denied.

/Mehmet Polat Kalafatoglu/

Mehmet Polat Kalafatoglu

Sole Panelist

Date: March 2, 2026