

ADMINISTRATIVE PANEL DECISION

Automobile Club de l'Ouest (A.C.O.) v. Angela Monet
Case No. D2026-2311

1. The Parties

The Complainant is Automobile Club de l'Ouest (A.C.O.), France, represented by ARDAN, France.

The Respondent is Angela Monet, France.

2. The Domain Name and Registrar

The disputed domain name <24hlemans.store> is registered with Namify Domains Inc (the "Registrar").

3. Procedural History

The Complaint was filed with the WIPO Arbitration and Mediation Center (the "Center") on May 28, 2026. On May 29, 2026, the Center transmitted by email to the Registrar a request for registrar verification in connection with the disputed domain name. On June 2, 2026, 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 June 2, 2026, 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 June 4, 2026.

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 June 5, 2026. In accordance with the Rules, paragraph 5, the due date for Response was June 25, 2026. The Respondent did not submit any response. Accordingly, the Center notified the Respondent's default on June 26, 2026.

The Center appointed Fabrice Bircker as the sole panelist in this matter on July 1, 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, Automobile Club de l'Ouest (A.C.O.), is the organizer of the 24 H LE MANS motor race.

This race has been held since 1923, and not only enjoys extensive worldwide media coverage, but has also become an iconic event as it has inspired the worlds of art, literature, video games and films (e.g. *Le Mans*, released in 1971 with Steve McQueen or *Le Mans 66* released in 2019 starring Christian Bale and Matt Damon).

The Complainant's activities are notably protected through the following trademarks:



European Union trademark registration No. 012594677 filed on February 13, 2014, registered on August 13, 2014, duly renewed since then, and designating products and services of classes 4, 6, 9, 12, 14, 16, 18, 21, 24, 25, 26, 28, 33, 34, 35, 37, 38, 39, 41, 42 and 43,



International trademark registration No. 1235813 of August 4, 2014, duly renewed since then, covering amongst others Australia, India and the United States of America, and designating products and services of classes 06, 09, 12, 14, 16, 18, 25, 28, 38 and 41.

The disputed domain name, <24hlemans.store>, has been registered on February 17, 2026.

It does not resolve to an active website.

Very little is known about the Respondent, except that, according to the information provided by the Registrar, she is purportedly located in France.

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 its trademark as it reproduces the latter.

Besides, the Complainant argues that the Respondent has no rights or legitimate interests in respect of the disputed domain name, in substance because:

- the Complainant has not granted any authorization to anyone to register domain names containing its trademark,
- the use of the Complainant's trademark precedes by over a century the registration of the disputed domain name,
- the Respondent is not using the disputed domain name,
- the Respondent is not commonly known by the disputed domain name.

Lastly, the Complainant contends that the disputed domain name has been registered and is being used in bad faith, notably because:

- the disputed domain name reproduces the Complainant's distinctive and well-known prior trademark,
- the disputed domain name refers to the official website of the Complainant,
- even a basic search in search engines would have revealed the Complainant's rights,
- bad faith use is established under the doctrine of passive holding.

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 Select UDRP Questions ("[WIPO Overview 3.1](#)"), section 1.7.

The Complainant has shown rights in respect of a trademark or service mark for the purposes of the Policy. [WIPO Overview 3.1](#), section 1.2.1.

The entirety of the 24 H LE MANS 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.

Indeed, it is well established that Top-Level Domains ("gTLDs") do not generally affect the assessment of domain names for the purpose of determining identity or confusingly similarity. [WIPO Overview 3.1](#), 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.

Although the overall burden of proof in UDRP proceedings is on the complainant, panels have recognized that proving that 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 3.1](#), 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.

Indeed, the Complainant contends that it has not given its consent to the Respondent to use its 24 H LE MANS trademark for domain name registration or in any other manner.

Besides, there is nothing in the record of the case likely to indicate that the Respondent may be commonly known by the disputed domain name.

Moreover, the composition of the disputed domain name, in as far as it consists in the mere reproduction of the 24 H LE MANS trademark, carries a high risk of implied affiliation and tends to suggest sponsorship or endorsement by the Complainant, whereas the Respondent is not connected to the latter. This is a further indication of the Respondent's lack of rights or of legitimate interests in the disputed domain name ([WIPO Overview 3.1](#), section 2.5.1).

Lastly, the disputed domain name is not used.

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 disputed domain name consists in the mere reproduction of the Complainant's 24 H LE MANS trademark with the Top-Level Domain ".store",
- the use of this trademark predates the registration of the disputed domain name by more than a century,
- because of the composition of the disputed domain name, Internet users can believe that it is related to the official store for the Complainant's trademark,
- the Complainant has demonstrated that its trademark is not only well-known (e.g. some of its social media accounts have more than a million followers and the car race designated under the 24 H LE MANS trademark is among the most famous sporting events in the world) but also iconic (notably because it has inspired several famous moves),
- according to the information provided by the Registrar, the Respondent is located in France, where the 24 H LE MANS race takes place,
- the Respondent concealed her identity when registering the disputed domain name and, once disclosed, it appeared that the contact details she provided the Registrar with are inaccurate,
- the Respondent has a clear absence of rights and remained silent during the procedure.

In view of these elements, the Panel finds that the Respondent cannot have been unaware of the Complainant's trademark when she registered the disputed domain name, and therefore registered it in bad faith.

Besides, the disputed domain name does not resolve to an active website.

However, panels have found that the non-use of a domain name (including a blank or “coming soon” page) would not by itself prevent a finding of bad faith under the doctrine of passive holding. To the contrary, in looking at the totality of circumstances in each case, panels have found that the registration and non-use of a domain name can still constitute bad faith for purposes of the Policy. [WIPO Overview 3.1](#), section 3.3.

Having reviewed the available record, the Panel notes i) the distinctiveness and reputation of the Complainant’s trademark, ii) the composition of the disputed domain name, in as far as it necessarily and exclusively refers to the Complainant’s online store, iii) the failure of the Respondent to submit a response, and iv) the implausibility of any good faith use of the disputed domain name by the Respondent in this context, 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 <24hlemans.store> be transferred to the Complainant.

/Fabrice Bircker/

Fabrice Bircker

Sole Panelist

Date: July 6, 2026