

ADMINISTRATIVE PANEL DECISION

David Daniel Balcorta, International Football Association (IFA7) /
International Football Association Ltd. v. Hugo Loureiro, fif7
Case No. D2026-2605

1. The Parties

The Complainants are David Daniel Balcorta, Canada, and International Football Association (IFA7) / International Football Association Ltd., Canada, self-represented.

The Respondent is Hugo Loureiro, fif7, Brazil, represented by Freitas & Mourão Advocacia, Brazil.

2. The Domain Names and Registrars

The disputed domain name <fif7football7.com> is registered with Wix.com Ltd.

The disputed domain name <football7official.com> is registered with Register.com (the "Registrars").

3. Procedural History

The Complaint was filed with the WIPO Arbitration and Mediation Center (the "Center") on June 15, 2026. On June 16, 2026, the Center transmitted by email to the Registrar a request for registrar verification in connection with the disputed domain names. On June 16, 2026, the Registrars transmitted by email to the Center their respective verification responses confirming that the Respondent is listed as the registrant and providing the contact details. The Center sent an email communication to the Complainants on June 17, 2026, providing the registrant and contact information disclosed by the Registrars, and requesting the Complainants to submit an amendment to the Complaint. The Complainants filed an amended Complaint on June 18, 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 30, 2026. In accordance with the Rules, paragraph 5, the due date for Response was July 20, 2026. The Response was filed with the Center on July 19, 2026. The Respondent sent an email communication to the Center on July 20, 2026. The Complainants submitted a Supplemental Filing on July 30, 2026.

The Center appointed Andrew D. S. Lothian as the sole panelist in this matter on July 30, 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 First Complainant, David Daniel Balcorta, is an individual resident in Calgary, Alberta, Canada. The Second Complainant, International Football Association (IFA7) / International Football Association Ltd., is a corporate entity also based in Calgary, Alberta, Canada, which the Complaint describes as the international governing body for the sport of Football 7. The Complainants assert a common interest in the rights relied upon in this proceeding. The Panel will refer to the Complainants as “the Complainant” when referring to them collectively, and will refer to them individually as “the First Complainant” or “the Second Complainant” as the context requires.

The First Complainant is the registered proprietor of Canadian Trademark Registration Number TMA1141666 for the word mark IFA 7 WWW.IFA7.COM, filed on December 13, 2018, and registered on September 9, 2022, in Class 41.

The Second Complainant is the registered proprietor of Costa Rican Trademark Registration Number 302741 in respect of the word mark FIF7, filed on October 29, 2021, and registered on January 27, 2022, in Class 41. This mark was filed in the name of a third party who assigned it to the Second Complainant on the same date as the date of grant (a copy of the Assignment, being a private instrument, is produced in the Complainant’s Annex A). As of the date of this Decision, the said Assignment has been registered with the competent Trademark Office. The entry in the relevant online database shows the date of transfer being July 24, 2026. This means that when the Complaint was filed, the Complainant was not yet the proprietor, as it did not complete the requisite transfer formalities with the competent Office until after the Response was filed.

The Complainant also relies upon Canadian Copyright Registration Number 1188141 for the literary work titled “FOOTBALL 7 – FUTBOL 7” registered on November 15, 2021, with a claimed first publication date of May 10, 1997, and Canadian Copyright Registration Number 1188232 for the artistic work entitled “FIF7 FEDERATION INTERNATIONALE DE FOOTBALL 7” registered on November 16, 2021, with a claimed first publication date of November 1, 2015. The works covered by these registrations have not been exhibited, only the certificates of registration. The Complainant also relies upon a further Canadian Copyright Registration Number 1219288, but produced neither the corresponding certificate, nor the work covered thereby.

The Respondent is Hugo Loureiro, an individual based in Paraná, Brazil. Verification by the Registrars confirms that the Respondent is the registrant of both of the disputed domain names. The only difference between the respective records of the Registrars, as far as Respondent identity is concerned, is the presence of an organization field in the registrant data relating to the disputed domain name <football7official.com>. The said organization field is completed “fif7”. Nothing turns on this particular difference. The registrant email address is the same for both disputed domain names.

The disputed domain name <fif7football7.com> was registered on December 16, 2021. The Complainant’s screenshot of the associated website, dated February 6, 2026, shows that this relates to the history of football 7 in the world from 2011 to 2024.

The disputed domain name <football7official.com> was registered on August 25, 2022. A screenshot of the associated website dated February 26, 2026 (but confusingly also with the caption “Screenshot 2026-02-06” suggesting a date of February 6, 2026), shows that the site was at that point suspended, although a screenshot later the same day shows a comprehensive site under the logo “FOOTBALL 7”, featuring details about the sport, news, tournaments, history, and awards.

The Respondent describes a course of dealing between the Parties predating the registration of both of the disputed domain names. Notably, according to the Panel’s machine translation of the Respondent’s Annex 2, on May 15, 2014, the First Complainant, in the stated capacity of President of the Canada Soccer Federation, approached the Respondent requesting to become official members of “f7 Worldwide”. In a subsequent email dated May 20, 2014, the First Complainant further explained that its Federation was planning to develop a center focused on 7-a-side football and wanted “to be directly involved with f7ww”. Later the same day, the Respondent issued to the First Complainant what is stated to be an authorization and recognition letter “so that you can develop FUT 7 in Canada”. The Respondent added, “We will soon open our official website with all the guidelines, calendar and planning of international events”. Said letter, dated the same day, states that “The Football 7 Worldwide” is responsible for the organization and standardization of Football 7 in the world, and recognizes “the Football 7 League (LEAGUE F7) headed by CANADA SOCCER FEDERATION” as the single organization responsible for the management of Football 7 in Canada, with rights to use the logo of the League and “F7W” (i.e., the Respondent’s organization, Football 7 Worldwide) with exclusivity in the territory of Canada.

The Respondent produces further correspondence between the Parties in its Annex 3 which concerns tournament logistics. This records the First Complainant’s registration of the domain name <f7league.ca> (at the Respondent’s suggestion) and its reported participation, including as a player, in a December 2014 event.

Further correspondence produced by the Respondent in its Annex 4 indicates that the Parties went their separate ways in about July to August of 2015. In an email of August 13, 2015, the Respondent requested the First Complainant to stop using the Respondent’s logo if it wished to continue with its business projects. On December 3, 2015, the First Complainant had begun to invite applications for participation in its own organization named IFA7, by then using the domain name <ifa7.com> (registered on July 24, 2015), which organization had apparently developed its own IFA7 branded rules and bylaws.

An organization apparently connected with the Respondent, FIF 7 ORGANIZACAO ESPORTIVA EIRELI, is the owner of Brazilian Registered Trademark Number 928885534 for the combined word and figurative mark FOOTBALL 7 WORLD FOOTBALL 7 FEDERATION, filed on December 8, 2022, and registered on May 14, 2024, in Class 41.

The Respondent’s position is that in about April 2017, it rebranded its organization as FIF7 FÉDÉRATION INTERNATIONALE DE FOOTBALL 7. For example, the Respondent produces an email dated April 27, 2017, in which it circulates a corresponding logo to some six recipients under the subject line, “logo FIF7”. The Respondent produces various media articles dated for example December 17, 2018, referring to a “Federación/Fédération Internationale de Football 7” in connection with international competitions, in which the photographs and text show use of the term “FIF7”, including on large banners, in connection with a corresponding tournament organized by the Respondent in the reported capacity of director general of the competition.

The domain name <fif7official.com> was registered on September 24, 2020, presumably by the Respondent (in whose name it is currently held). The Complainant’s Annex F shows a screenshot of the website associated with this domain name dated March 17, 2021 featuring a live site referencing “FIF7” and containing the same “FIF7 / FÉDÉRATION INTERNATIONALE DE FOOTBALL 7” logo shown on the banners in the previously described media photographs.

Both of the Parties exhibit correspondence involving the Fédération Internationale de Football Association (“FIFA”). The Complaint relies upon an email dated August 5, 2022 (Complainant’s Annex D), from Senior Legal Counsel at FIFA to the First Complainant, which it characterizes as FIFA declining to accept a position advanced by the Respondent in trademark opposition proceedings. The Response relies upon a letter from FIFA to the Respondent dated February 1, 2022 (Respondent Annex 11), which it characterizes as FIFA expressing willingness to tolerate the Respondent’s use and registration of “FIF7” and “Federation Internationale de Football 7”, subject to the Respondent’s agreement, recorded in a reply of February 23, 2022, to discontinue use of the terms “World Cup” and “Club World Cup”. The Complaint also relies on a further agreement, described in its own Annex C as a “limited excerpt” of a coexistence agreement; the excerpt as filed appears to be an agreement between the Second Complainant and FIFA which concerns the marks IFA7 and the domain name <ifa7.com> in connection with a 2018 dispute involving a third party. In such agreement, the Second Complainant undertakes not to use or register any logo imitating FIFA’s corporate logo (specifically a logo containing IFA 7 www.IFA7.com in a blue color), not to use the trademark WORLD CUP, to withdraw a trademark application for the word and device mark IFA 7 WWW.IFA7.COM, and to recognize certain of FIFA’s trademark rights. For its part, FIFA agrees not to oppose the registration by the Second Complainant of the word mark IFA 7 www.IFA7.com, and of a logo containing IFA 7 and URL in a green color.

The Complaint refers to an administrative infringement action before the Mexican Institute of Industrial Property, and to civil proceedings said to have been commenced against the Respondent before the courts of Mexico on or about December 13, 2021, (the Complainant’s Annex M), together with a criminal complaint filed regarding the Respondent shortly thereafter (the Complainant’s Annex N). The Response, referring to the same Annex M, claims that this contains a notification slip issued pursuant to a court order dated March 22, 2022, directing that the notification slip be redrawn and that service of process on the Respondent be carried out. The Response separately exhibits, at Annex 9, a Mexican trademark application for FIF7 filed by the Respondent on December 17, 2021, and a further Mexican trademark application for FIF7 filed on November 9, 2021, in the name of a third party, using a contact email address at the same law firm that the Response identifies as having advised the Complainants in the Mexican civil proceedings, which firm is also copied on the Complainant’s correspondence with FIFA (notably, the Complainant’s email of August 1, 2022 (Complainant’s Annex D)).

The Response exhibits records of three proceedings before the Brazilian Courts, each concerning the deactivation of social media or video-hosting accounts associated with the Respondent, and in some cases concerning pages including “FIF7” following third-party complaints, and each resulting in an order for restoration of the accounts.

The Complaint exhibits an email from the Respondent to the First Complainant dated December 1, 2025, in which the Respondent states that it believes that “[...] differences should be left in the past [...]” and seeks a “friendly and respectful dialogue” with the First Complainant.

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 First and Second Complainants contend that they have a common legal interest in the rights asserted in the Complaint and a common grievance against the Respondent arising from the registration and use of the disputed domain names. They contend that the First Complainant is the registered owner of Canadian Trademark Registration No. TMA1141666 for the word mark IFA 7 WWW.IFA7.COM, filed on December 13, 2018, and registered on September 9, 2022, while the Second Complainant is the international governing body operating under the IFA7 designation and authorized to use, administer, enforce, and protect the intellectual property rights associated with the IFA7 and FIF7 brands.

The Complainant contends that the disputed domain names are identical or confusingly similar to a trademark or service mark in which the Complainant has rights. In particular, the First Complainant is the owner of Canadian Trademark Registration Number TMA1141666, and the Second Complainant is the owner of Costa Rican Trademark Registration Number 302741, in respect of the word mark FIF7, filed on October 29, 2021, and registered on January 27, 2022, both described above. The Complainant notes that this latter mark was applied for on October 29, 2021, in the name of a third party who assigned it to the Second Complainant on the same date as the date of grant. The Complainant also relies upon its rights in registered copyright associated with the FIF7 and Football 7 identifiers, including Canadian Copyright Registration Numbers 1188141 and 1188232.

In relation to the disputed domain name <fif7football7.com>, the Complainant contends that it incorporates the Complainant's distinctive FIF7 designation in its entirety together with the designation "Football 7". The Complainant asserts that the dominant element of the said disputed domain name is the Complainant's protected FIF7 identifier and that the addition of the descriptive term "Football 7" does not prevent a finding of confusing similarity.

In relation to the disputed domain name <football7official.com>, the Complainant contends that this incorporates the designation "Football 7" together with the term "official" and asserts that the addition of the term "official" increases, rather than diminishes, the likelihood that Internet users will believe the disputed domain name is associated with, sponsored by, authorized by, or officially connected to the Complainant and its activities.

The Complainant contends that the Respondent has no rights or legitimate interests in the disputed domain names, and in particular that the Respondent has never been authorized, licensed, affiliated with, sponsored by, or otherwise permitted by the Complainant to use the IFA7 or FIF7 designations, or to register and use domain names incorporating such identifiers. The Complainant notes that the Respondent is not commonly known by the disputed domain names and asserts that the Respondent uses the disputed domain names as part of a coordinated online ecosystem that includes websites, social media accounts, and digital platforms utilizing the designations FIF7, Football 7, and Football7 Official.

The Complainant further contends that the disputed domain name <fif7football7.com> incorporates the Complainant's distinctive FIF7 designation in its entirety. The Complainant notes that the Respondent's verified Instagram account operates under the username "football7official" while simultaneously identifying itself as "FIF 7 Football 7 Official", thereby combining the disputed identifiers into a single commercial identity.

The Complainant further contends that the Respondent is not making a legitimate non-commercial or fair use of the disputed domain names, and that the disputed domain names are used in connection with websites, social media accounts, and related digital properties that promote Football 7 activities while creating a likelihood of confusion regarding source, sponsorship, affiliation, endorsement, or official status. The Complainant further asserts that there is no evidence that, prior to notice of this dispute, the Respondent used or prepared to use the disputed domain names in connection with a bona fide offering of goods or services independent of the Complainant's rights.

The Complainant contends that the disputed domain names were registered and are being used in bad faith. Notably, the Complainant contends that the Respondent registered the disputed domain name <fif7football7.com> on December 16, 2021, only three days after receiving notice of legal proceedings concerning the disputed identifiers. The Complainant asserts that this timing is not coincidental but rather, demonstrates the Respondent's actual knowledge of the Complainant, its rights, and the ongoing dispute relating to the FIF7 and Football 7 identifiers at the time of registration, which the Complainant maintains further supports a finding of bad faith registration under Paragraph 4(a)(iii) of the Policy.

The Complainant asserts that its rights in the IFA7 and FIF7 designations predate the registration of both disputed domain names, claiming that the Complainant has used the IFA7 and FIF7 designations in connection with international Football 7 competitions, federations, championships, publications, digital platforms, and related sporting activities since at least 2015.

The Complainant notes that the Parties have been aware of one another for many years and have been involved in prior disputes concerning Football 7 identifiers and related intellectual property rights, and the Respondent was therefore aware of the Complainant, the Complainant's activities, and the Complainant's use of the IFA7 and FIF7 designations prior to the registration and use of the disputed domain names. The registrations therefore cannot reasonably be characterized as coincidental, descriptive, or independently conceived.

The Complainant asserts that the disputed domain names have been used to create a likelihood of confusion regarding source, sponsorship, affiliation, endorsement, or official status and that, by using the disputed domain names in this manner, the Respondent has intentionally attempted to attract Internet users to the Respondent's websites and related online locations. The Complainant produces what it contends is evidence of confusion in search engine results.

B. Respondent

The Respondent contends that the Complainant has not satisfied the elements required under the Policy for a transfer of the disputed domain names, and submits that this is not a cybersquatting case but a longstanding, multi-jurisdictional dispute between two competing Football 7 organizations, noting that the First Complainant began its involvement in the sport as a recognized participant within the Respondent's own organization, years before asserting rights to the identifiers now in dispute.

The Respondent contends that the Complainant has failed to establish that the disputed domain names are identical or confusingly similar to a trademark or service mark in which the Complainant has rights. In particular, in relation to the disputed domain name <football7official.com>, the Respondent contends that no Complainant trademark is reproduced in the said disputed domain name. It contends that the Complainant's IFA7 mark bears no resemblance to "football7official", and notes that the term "Football 7" is the generic name of the sport itself, for which the Complainant holds no registered mark in any jurisdiction. The Respondent submits therefore that the Complainant fails the first element of paragraph 4(a)(i) of the Policy in relation to the disputed domain name <football7official.com>.

With regard to the disputed domain name <fif7football7.com>, the Respondent notes that the Complainant relies upon Canadian copyright registrations Nos. 1188141 and 1188232, of November 15 and 16, 2021, but submits that those are not trademarks and the first element of the Policy requires trademark or service mark rights.

The Respondent further contends that the Complainant is not the original owner of any trademark for the term FIF7. It notes that Costa Rican registration No. 302741 was applied for on October 29, 2021 by a third party and granted on January 27, 2022, and on that day the owner purportedly signed a private instrument assigning to the Complainant rights over the FIF7 mark in five countries. The Respondent contends that there is no evidence showing any use of the FIF7 mark by the third party nor any explanation of how such rights were acquired. The Respondent asserts that both the said Costa Rican application and the assignment postdate the Respondent's public, documented use of FIF7 since April 2017, and the registration and assignment also postdate the registration of the disputed domain name <fif7football7.com> itself on December 16, 2021.

The Respondent further submits that the assignment on which the Complainant rests its claim to the FIF7 mark was never recorded and that the Costa Rican Law on Trademarks and Other Distinctive Signs, Law No. 7978, the law of the only registration invoked, requires that a transfer of a registered mark be made in writing and be recorded with the Registro de Propiedad Industrial in order to produce effects against third parties. The Respondent contends this was not done and submits that without ownership enforceable

against third parties, the Complainant does not have rights in the FIF7 mark in terms of paragraph 4(a)(i) of the Policy and the Complaint should therefore be denied at the first element as regards the disputed domain name <fif7football7.com>.

The Respondent asserts that it has rights and legitimate interests in the disputed domain names. The Respondent states that it has been active in the international organization of football 7 since 2011, initially under the identity Football 7 Worldwide (F7WW), with world championships held in Rio de Janeiro in 2011 and 2012 and in São José dos Pinhais in 2014, in addition to dozens of documented continental competitions through 2023.

The First Complainant became a member of the Respondent's organization in May 2014 and the Respondent states that in August 2015, after commercial disagreements, the Respondent asked the First Complainant to cease using the organization's logo. By December 2015, the Respondent states that the First Complainant was operating its own competing entity, IFA7. The Respondent contends that in April 2017, it rebranded its organization as FIF7, sending out new logos incorporating that brand and using said brand in all of its activities, including the Liga das Américas held in Argentina in July 2017. The Respondent therefore contends that it has both used or made preparations to use the name FIF7 in connection with a bona fide offering of goods or services and has been commonly known by that name, now reflected in the disputed domain name. The Respondent applied for registration of the FIF7 mark in Mexico on December 17, 2021, declaring first use on January 5, 2016. The Respondent notes that the consensus view of panels is that a respondent's own trademark registration does not automatically generate a legitimate interest where obtained merely to create an appearance of legitimacy, but the Respondent submits that is not the case here. Rather, there is massive, prior, public use, acknowledged by independent third parties. The Respondent therefore asserts that its interest in the disputed domain name <fif7football7.com> is genuine, documented and pre-dates the rights the Complainant acquired in late 2021 and early 2022.

The Respondent asserts that, following upon trademark infringement reports emanating from the Complainant, three judicial proceedings before the Court of Appeals of the State of São Paulo, Brazil, have already addressed the successive takedowns of the digital assets of the Respondent's FIF7 operation. In all of them the removal was found unlawful and restoration was ordered. The Respondent submits that said proceedings are evidence of a pattern of harassment by the Complainant of which this Complaint is the most recent example.

The Respondent contends that the disputed domain name was not registered and has not been used in bad faith. It notes that the Complainant submits that bad faith registration should be inferred from the fact that the disputed domain name <fif7football7.com> was registered on December 16, 2021, three days after the Respondent supposedly received notice, on December 13, 2021, of the Mexican civil lawsuit. The Respondent submits that no such inference can be made, first because the Complainants' own Annex M contains a notification slip issued pursuant to a court order of March 22, 2022, in which the Mexican court directs that the notification slip be drawn up anew and that service of process on the defendant be carried out. Since this indicates that service had not yet been carried out, the Respondent submits that no inference can be made as to the timing of the registration of the disputed domain name.

Second, the Respondent contends that the registration of the disputed domain name was part of an ongoing and consistent use of the FIF7 brand since 2017. The Respondent's organization had been operating the site at the domain name <fif7official.com> under the FIF7 mark since at least March 2021 and the Respondent notes that this is evidenced by the Complainant's own Annex F. The Respondent contends that registering the disputed domain name <fif7football7.com> in December 2021 was the natural expansion of a pre-existing digital presence, with real content devoted to the sport's competition history, not an opportunistic creation.

Third, the Respondent contends that on the date the disputed domain name <fif7football7.com> was registered, the Complainant held none of the rights it now invokes over the FIF7 mark, as the Costa Rican application by an unrelated third party was then pending and was not granted and assigned until January 27, 2022. The Respondent submits that registering a domain name corresponding to a mark publicly used for years, against rights the opposing party did not yet hold cannot be considered registration in bad faith.

Fourth, the Respondent contends that it is the Complainant which has engaged in a pattern of attempting to capture FIF7 registrations in multiple jurisdictions and through intermediaries, after more than four years of public use of the sign by the Respondent. In support of this contention, it notes that on November 9, 2021, days before commencing the Mexican litigation against the Respondent, an application to register the mark FIF7 was filed with the Mexican Institute of Industrial Property with a contact email address at the same Mexican firm that advised the Complainant and with an address identical to the procedural domicile of IFA7's counsel in the civil case in the Complainant's Annex M.

Fifth, the Respondent submits that none of the circumstances of paragraph 4(b) of the Policy is present. In particular, in relation to the Complainant's allegation of intentional diversion of users through confusion, the Respondent notes that the disputed domain names have always displayed the substantial, original content of the Respondent's sporting operation, with no imitation of the Complainant's site, logo or identity. The confusion recorded in Google searches, if any, results from two real, competing organizations having used similar signs for a decade, a situation the UDRP is not designed to resolve. Further, the open registration records of the disputed domain name <football7official.com>, showing the Respondent's true name, address and telephone number, is the antithesis of the concealment typical of cybersquatting.

The Respondent seeks a finding of reverse domain name hijacking as it submits that the Complainant withheld from the Panel material facts within its knowledge, including the First Complainant's involvement with the Respondent's Football 7 Worldwide structure in 2014, the recognition letter the First Complainant received, the First Complainant's participation as an official and as a player in the Respondent's events, the public use of FIF7 by the Respondent's organization since 2017, and FIFA's letter of February 2022 expressly tolerating the Respondent's use and registration of FIF7. The Respondent submits that the Complainant asserted to the Panel, without a single document, its own use of FIF7 since 2015, when the contemporaneous records show that in December 2015 the Complainant presented itself solely as IFA7. Further, the Respondent contends that the Complainant failed to acknowledge that the takedowns of the FIF7 operation's pages and channels prompted by platform reports had already been declared unlawful by the Brazilian courts, with restoration orders affirmed on appeal, and that, even aware of the September 2025 judicial decision concerning the "@fif7football7" channel, the Complainant insisted on a new extrajudicial notification in February 2026 and, when that failed, resorted to the UDRP. The Respondent submits that a party who litigates in this manner is not seeking to repress cybersquatting; it is seeking to capture, through the summary avenue of the UDRP, the digital assets of a competitor whose history it knows from the inside, after successive defeats in independent forums.

C. Complainant's Supplemental Filing

Following receipt of the Response, the Complainant sought leave to file a supplemental filing to address what it states are specific evidentiary propositions and legal conclusions first advanced in the Response and its supporting annexes.

The Complainant states that its supplemental filing is limited to four points, namely the historical distinction between Football 7 Worldwide ("F7WW") and the later designation "FIF7"; the Response's interpretation of certain documentary evidence, including the FIFA correspondence and the chronology of the Complainant's intellectual property record; the relevance of the Brazilian judicial decisions to a proceeding under the Policy; and the Respondent's contention that the Complaint constitutes Reverse Domain Name Hijacking.

First, the Complainant submits that the Respondent seeks to suggest a continuous chain of rights extending from the Respondent's historical activities under Football 7 Worldwide ("F7WW") to the later designation "FIF7" and ultimately to the disputed domain names. The Complainant notes that none of the 2014 communications use the designation "FIF7" and therefore do not establish ownership or priority in that term.

The Complainant further asserts that the Complainant's intellectual property record identifies November 1, 2015 as the first publication date of the artistic work "FIF7 – Fédération Internationale de Football 7" and submits that, although that copyright record does not itself determine trademark priority, it is evidence that the FIF7 work was claimed as part of the Complainants' intellectual property portfolio before the Respondent's April 2017 distribution of a FIF7 logo. The Complainant asserts that it thereafter selected IFA7 as its principal public-facing organizational brand while maintaining FIF7 within its intellectual property portfolio. The Complainant contends that the existence of later public activity by the Respondent under the FIF7 brand does not automatically determine rights in the disputed domain names registered years afterward.

The Complainant further submits that the Response relies upon the asserted absence of extensive contemporaneous public-use evidence to challenge the Complainant's claimed pre-2017 connection to and development of FIF7. The Complainant maintains that argument does not distinguish between use as the principal public-facing organizational identity and the separate ownership, publication, registration, maintenance, and protection of a related artistic work or intellectual property identifier.

Second, the Complainant contends that the FIFA correspondence produced by both Parties arose in the context of concerns regarding branding and the coexistence of football-related identifiers. It did not purport to determine ownership of the disputed domain names, adjudicate trademark rights between the Parties, or determine rights or legitimate interests under paragraph 4(a)(ii) of the Policy.

Third, the Complainant submits that the Response places considerable reliance upon judicial proceedings conducted in Brazil. The Complainant states that it fully respects those proceedings and does not ask this Panel to disregard them but notes that said proceedings addressed issues within the jurisdiction of the Brazilian courts, including disputes concerning digital platforms and findings relating to rights asserted under Brazilian trademark law. They did not, however, adjudicate trademark priority between the Parties, determine ownership of the disputed domain names, apply the Policy, or decide any of the cumulative elements prescribed by paragraph 4(a) of the Policy.

The Complainant further submits that the Response places substantial emphasis upon whether formal service of the Mexican civil proceeding had been completed before December 16, 2021. The Complainant acknowledges that formal service and actual knowledge are distinct inquiries but submits that the relevant question is whether the contemporaneous evidence existing before each registration demonstrates that the Respondent knew of the specific competing rights asserted by the Complainant and not merely that the Parties knew of one another generally.

The Complainant acknowledges that the Respondent has submitted evidence of FIF7-related activity from 2017 onward. However, it contends that the existence of such activity does not automatically establish rights or legitimate interests in both disputed domain names. The Complainant submits that the earlier F7WW materials cannot supply missing evidence of FIF7 use before April 2017, nor should evidence relating to the distinct domain name <fif7official.com>, or to activities presented under FIF7 branding, be treated as establishing rights or legitimate interests in the materially different disputed domain name <football7official.com>.

The Complainant submits that the cumulative circumstances surrounding the registration and continued use of the disputed domain names should therefore be evaluated in light of the Parties' prior relationship, their competing claims to intellectual property, the Respondent's knowledge of those competing claims, and the overall presentation of the disputed domain names, rather than by reference to isolated historical events considered individually.

The Complainant contends that the record includes the Rights Assignment & Enforcement Agreement, executed on January 27, 2022, which identifies a third party as the registered owner of the Costa Rican trademark and assigns to the Second Complainant all rights, title, interest, registrations, applications, renewals, and associated goodwill in the FIF7 mark, and grants IFA7 a worldwide exclusive licence and express authority to enforce and defend the mark through litigation, ADR, and administrative proceedings. The Complainant relies upon said agreement for its standing and enforcement authority in this proceeding. It does not rely upon the January 2022 transaction, or any subsequent recordal, as independently establishing trademark priority before the December 16, 2021 registration of the disputed domain name <fif7football7.com>.

Fourth, the Complainant opposes a finding of Reverse Domain Name Hijacking. The Complainant submits that the fact that the Respondent disputes the Complainants' evidence, or advances a different interpretation of historical events, does not transform the filing of the Complaint into an abuse of the administrative proceeding. The existence of competing factual and legal positions is precisely the reason that the Policy provides for independent determination by an administrative Panel.

The Complainant submits that the Respondent's request for Reverse Domain Name Hijacking relies principally upon its contention that the Complaint failed to describe certain historical facts and adverse materials. The Complainant acknowledges the Parties' 2014 relationship, the Respondent's later FIF7-related activities, the FIFA correspondence, the Brazilian proceedings, and the dispute concerning the Costa Rican trademark assignment but submits that those matters do not establish that the Complaint was knowingly unsustainable when filed. The Complainant contends that the Complaint was supported by registered rights, assignment and licensing instruments, evidence of enforcement authority, documented competing claims, and evidence relevant to the Respondent's knowledge and registration intent. The Respondent's contrary interpretation and the possibility that the Panel may ultimately give the Respondent's evidence greater weight do not, without more, establish bad faith in commencing this proceeding.

6. Discussion and Findings

6.1 Procedural Issue: Consolidation

There are two Complainants in the present case. As they are evidently close affiliates with a common interest, the Panel is content for them to proceed as joint Complainants, and has designated them First and Second Complainants respectively. The Panel notes that there is no substantive objection from the Respondent to this.

The Complainant alleges that the domain name registrants are the same entity or mere alter egos of each other, or under common control. The Complainant requests the consolidation of the Complaint against the multiple disputed domain name registrants pursuant to paragraph 10(e) of the Rules.

Paragraph 3(c) of the Rules states that a complaint may relate to more than one domain name, provided that the domain names are registered by the same domain name holder. As noted in the factual background section above, the only difference between the respective records of the Registrars of the disputed domain names, as far as Respondent identity is concerned, is the presence of an organization field in the registrant data relating to the disputed domain name <football7official.com>. The said organization field is completed "fif7". The registrant data for the disputed domain name <fif7football7.com> does not contain an organization field.

As noted in the factual background section, nothing turns on this slight difference between how the disputed domain names are registered, and the Panel is content to treat them effectively as having the same holder for present purposes. The Respondent has filed a Response in respect of both of the disputed domain names and it does not appear to have any objection to the Complainant's position on consolidation, noting that the Respondent specifically states and therefore accepts that "there is a single

Respondent, who admits ownership of the [disputed domain names]”.

Accordingly, considering that the Respondent is the same registrant for both of the disputed domain names, it is unnecessary for the Panel to consider the Complainants’ position as to common grievance and common control.

6.2 Procedural Issue: Complainant’s Supplemental Filing

The Panel must decide as a preliminary matter whether to accept the Complainant’s unsolicited supplemental filing, which was submitted to the Center on July 30, 2026.

Unsolicited supplemental filings are generally discouraged, and in any event, a party submitting or requesting to submit an unsolicited supplemental filing should clearly show its relevance to the case and why it was unable to provide the information contained therein in its complaint or response (e.g., owing to some unforeseen or exceptional circumstance). WIPO Overview of WIPO Panel Views on Select UDRP Questions (“[WIPO Overview 3.1](#)”), section 4.6.

Here, the Complainant’s supplemental filing indicates that it is confined to four issues introduced by the Response. It is perhaps debatable whether at least one of these issues could have been anticipated by the Complainant, namely the historical distinction between Football 7 Worldwide and the later designation “FIF7”, given the Parties’ history of involvement with one another. However, given that, (1) the supplemental filing is confined to matters raised in the Response, (2) taken at its highest, it does not in the Panel’s view affect the outcome of the case, and (3) given that the Complainant was facing an allegation of Reverse Domain Name Hijacking in the Response to which it is reasonable for it to receive an opportunity to reply, the Panel admits the supplemental filing. The Panel considered whether due process would require that the Respondent be provided with an opportunity to respond to the supplemental filing, however, all matters to which the Complainant is reacting in the Response were already known to the Respondent. Furthermore, the Panel considers that the Respondent could reasonably have anticipated all aspects of the Complainant’s reaction to the Response.

6.3 Substantive issues

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 3.1](#), 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.

One particular issue that arises relates to the date on which rights in the Costa Rican trademark vested in the Complainant. Although the assignment between the original trademark owner and the Second Complainant was entered into on January 27, 2022, the Respondent argues that this did not take effect until its deposition with the relevant trademark Office on July 24, 2026. Although the UDRP makes no specific reference to the date on which the holder of the trademark or service mark acquired its rights, such rights must be in existence at the time the complaint is filed. [WIPO Overview 3.1](#), section 1.1.3.

On a strict reading of such section, and on the assumption that the Respondent is correct in its assertion of the relevant national law, the Complainant did not have rights in a trademark within the meaning of paragraph 4(a)(i) of the Policy on the basis of the Costa Rican trademark when it filed the Complaint on June 15, 2026. At most, what the Complainant most probably possessed on that date was a putative right on the basis of the Assignment, which it then perfected via registration of this on July 24, 2026. While this might allow the Panel to reject the Costa Rican mark as providing standing, the Panel considers that this would not be in the Parties’ interests. As the right was perfected before the Panel was appointed, the Panel considers that it makes sense not to reject it out of hand. If it did so, the

Complainant would nevertheless be in a position to refile the Complaint on the basis of a legally relevant development (the perfection of its right) and the Parties would be back where they started. Particularly given that this issue does not affect the outcome of the Decision, as further discussed below, the Panel will proceed on the basis that the Complainant has rights in the mark for the purposes of the Policy, notably which it had perfected before the Panel was appointed.

For completeness, the Panel finds that the Complainant has UDRP-relevant rights in its IFA 7 WWW.IFA7.COM mark by virtue of Canadian Trademark Registration Number TMA1141666 as described in the factual background section above.

Turning to the comparison exercise, the test typically involves a side-by-side comparison of the domain name concerned and the textual components of the relevant trademark to assess whether the mark is recognizable within such domain name. The assessment may also entail a more holistic aural or phonetic comparison of the complainant's trademark and the domain name concerned to ascertain confusing similarity. This test is narrower than and thus different to the question of "likelihood of confusion" under trademark law. Therefore, questions such as the scope of the trademark rights, the date they were acquired, the geographical location of the respective parties, and other considerations that may be relevant to an assessment of infringement under trademark law are not relevant at this stage; such matters, if relevant, may be considered under the other elements of the Policy. [WIPO Overview 3.1](#), section 1.7.

Here, the Panel notes that neither of the Complainant's said marks are recognizable in the disputed domain name <football7official.com>, whether on the typical side by side comparison basis, or on more holistic aural or phonetic comparison. In these circumstances, the Panel finds that disputed domain name <football7official.com> is neither identical nor confusingly similar to either of the two trademarks cited by the Complainant. The Panel does not understand the Complainant to be maintaining that it has any trademark, registered or unregistered, in the term "football7", which appears to the Panel in any event to be descriptive of the sport of seven-a-side football, or in the term "official", or in the term "football7official". Consequently, the Complaint fails in respect of this disputed domain name, and it will not fall to be considered in terms of the remaining elements of the Policy. The Panel notes the position of the Complainant's copyright registration regarding this disputed domain name below.

The Complainant's FIF7 registered trademark is however recognizable as the first part of the disputed domain name <fif7football7.com>. Accordingly, this disputed domain name is confusingly similar to the mark for the purposes of the Policy. [WIPO Overview 3.1](#), section 1.7. Although the addition of other terms, here, "football" and "7" may bear on assessment of the second and third elements, the Panel finds the addition of such terms does not prevent a finding of confusing similarity between the disputed domain name and the mark for the purposes of the Policy. [WIPO Overview 3.1](#), section 1.8.

The Panel notes the Complainant's position that it relies upon the Costa Rican trademark to establish standing in the present proceeding but not necessarily to determine questions of trademark priority. Given that the disputed domain name was registered before the said mark proceeded to grant (as will be discussed under the third element assessment below) it is convenient to consider whether the Complainant has made out any claim to unregistered trademark rights in the FIF7 mark.

As noted in [WIPO Overview 3.1](#), section 1.3, to establish unregistered or common law trademark rights for purposes of the UDRP, the complainant must show that its mark has become a distinctive identifier which consumers associate with the complainant's goods and/or services.

The section goes on to note that relevant evidence demonstrating such acquired distinctiveness (also referred to as secondary meaning) includes a range of factors such as (i) the duration and nature of the use of the mark (which may include social media presence and engagement), (ii) the amount of sales under the mark and during which time period, (iii) the nature and extent of advertising using the mark – including evidence of expenditures over a relevant time period, (iv) the degree of actual public (e.g., consumer, industry such as trade and professional associations, media) recognition, and (v) consumer

surveys. The fact that a respondent is shown to have been targeting the complainant's mark (e.g., based on the manner in which the mark is used on the related website or impersonating documents or other instruments) may also support the complainant's assertion and evidence that its mark has achieved significance as a source identifier.

The problem for the Complainant's case on this topic is that it has produced no evidence that it has used the term "FIF7" in a trademark-like way, whereby it has become the kind of distinctive identifier that is described in [WIPO Overview 3.1](#), section 1.3. The Complainant did produce a copy of a Canadian copyright registration certificate (number 1188232), dated November 16, 2021, which refers to an artistic work "FIF7" along with others. It did not actually produce a copy of the work concerned, although the Panel reasonably surmises that at most it amounts to a logo featuring the term. The certificate contains a claim to first publication of November 1, 2015, but where or how this was said to be published the Panel does not know. Although it is trite to say, it bears repeating for present purposes that a copyright work is not a trademark. There is no evidence that the Complainant's artistic work has been used in a trademark-like manner, or that it has attained the level of a source identifier among consumers. On the contrary, the Complainant's own submissions strongly suggest otherwise, in that the Complainant notes in its supplemental filing that the copyright registration "is evidence that the FIF7 work was claimed as part of the Complainants' intellectual property portfolio before the Respondent's identified April 2017 distribution of a FIF7 logo", and that, "The Complainants thereafter selected IFA7 as their principal public-facing organizational brand while

maintaining FIF7 within their intellectual property portfolio". The inference that the Panel takes from this is that the Complainant's FIF7 work was not used as a public-facing organizational brand and did not attain secondary meaning, and that the Complainant cannot therefore establish unregistered trademark rights in this term.

For completeness, the Panel notes that the same analysis applies to the Complainant's "FOOTBALL 7 – FUTBOL 7" copyright registration of a literary work, i.e., that this does not establish on its own unregistered trademark rights in the terms concerned. This is relevant to both of the disputed domain names, as they each contain the variant "football7".

The Panel finds the first element of the Policy has been established in respect of the disputed domain name <fif7football7.com>. In respect of the disputed domain name <football7official.com>, the Panel finds the first element of the Policy has not been established, and in that respect, the Complaint fails.

B. Rights or Legitimate Interests

The requirements of paragraph 4(a) of the Policy are conjunctive. A consequence of this is that failure on the part of a complainant to demonstrate one element of the Policy will result in failure of the complaint in its entirety. Accordingly, in light of the Panel's findings in connection with the third element assessment under the Policy, as discussed below, it is not necessary for the Panel to address the issue of the Respondent's rights or legitimate interests in the disputed domain name in detail. The Panel nevertheless observes that there is ample evidence in the record of the Respondent's prior use of the term "FIF7", notably in the form of media coverage of football matches dating from 2018 in which the Respondent's "FIF7" banner is clearly displayed, together with evidence of the Respondent's prior use of the domain name <fif7official.com> operated in connection with a website since at least March 2021.

C. Registered and Used in Bad Faith

Subject to scenarios described in [WIPO Overview 3.1](#), section 3.8.2, where a respondent registers a domain name before the complainant's trademark rights accrue, panels will not normally find bad faith on the part of the respondent. (This is separate from, and would not however impact a panel's assessment of a complainant's standing under the first UDRP element.) [WIPO Overview 3.1](#), section 3.8.1. As an exception to the general proposition described above in [WIPO Overview 3.1](#), section 3.8.1, in certain limited circumstances where the facts of the case establish that the respondent's intent in

registering the domain name was to unfairly capitalize on the complainant's nascent (typically as yet unregistered) trademark rights, panels have been prepared to find that the respondent has acted in bad faith.

Such scenarios include registration of a domain name: (i) shortly before or after announcement of a corporate merger, (ii) further to the respondent's insider knowledge (e.g., a former employee), (iii) further to significant media attention (e.g., in connection with a product launch or prominent event), or (iv) following the complainant's filing of a trademark application. [WIPO Overview 3.1](#), section 3.8.2.

Here, the evidence shows that the Respondent adopted the "FIF7" identifier in about April 2017. The media evidence shows that the Respondent was using this in a trademark-like manner from as early as 2018, for example, on prominent banners displayed at football matches. Media articles reporting on such matches associate the term with the Respondent and its activities. The Respondent (presumably) further registered the domain name that incorporates said mark, but is not the subject of this proceeding, <fif7official.com>, on September 24, 2020. The evidence shows that the Respondent proceeded to use this domain name for a website that operated from at least March 2021, according to the Complainant's evidence. All of these activities pre-dated the registration of the Complainant's Costa Rican FIF7 trademark. There is no evidence that the Respondent adopted the term to unfairly capitalize on the Complainant's nascent trademark rights. Indeed, the Complainant's only prior use of the term appears to be in the Canadian copyright registration, and the Complainant does not show how this use would have come to the Respondent's attention, nor, as discussed in the first element assessment, is there any evidence that the Complainant possesses unregistered trademark rights in the terms "FIF7" or "football7".

When the disputed domain name <fif7football7.com> was registered on December 16, 2021, the Respondent had therefore been using the "FIF7" identifier since about April 2017. Although the Costa Rican trademark had been filed on October 29, 2021, there is no evidence that this had come to the Respondent's attention. Notably, the mark had been filed in the name of a third party and there is no evidence that it had been associated with the Complainant or otherwise used by it, save in the copyright registration. There is no basis therefore for the Panel to find that the disputed domain name <fif7football7.com> was registered in a scenario akin to those described in the [WIPO Overview 3.1](#), section 3.8.2, or that the purpose of the Respondent's registration was to take unfair advantage of any nascent rights of the Complainant. While the Complainant asserts that the Respondent's registration was a reaction to the service on it of the Mexican lawsuit, the Complainant did not show to the Panel's satisfaction, for example by way of a suitably translated certificate of service, that such service had taken place in close proximity to the registration date of the disputed domain name. Even if it had, the Panel considers that the Respondent was entitled to register the disputed domain name <fif7football7.com> as an extension of the brand which it had already been developing since 2017, and which was already embodied in another domain name that it had registered over a year earlier and had been using for at least nine months, namely <fif7official.com>.

The Panel finds that the Respondent did not register the disputed domain name in bad faith targeting of the Complainant or its trademark rights because the Complainant had no established trademark rights in the FIF7 mark at the time of registration, and there is no evidence that the Respondent registered the disputed domain name to target any nascent rights associated with the subsequently registered Costa Rican trademark registration.

The Panel finds the third element of the Policy has not been established and the Complaint also fails in respect of the disputed domain name <fif7football7.com>.

6.4. Reverse Domain Name Hijacking

Paragraph 15(e) of the Rules provides that, if after considering the submissions, the Panel finds that the Complaint was brought in bad faith, for example in an attempt at Reverse Domain Name Hijacking or to harass the domain-name holder, the Panel shall declare in its decision that the Complaint was brought in bad faith and constitutes an abuse of the administrative proceeding. The mere lack of success of the

complaint is not, on its own, sufficient to constitute reverse domain name hijacking. [WIPO Overview 3.1](#), section 4.16.

In the present case, the Panel considers that the Complainant clearly ought to have known it could not succeed under any fair interpretation of facts reasonably available prior to the filing of the Complaint. The deficiencies in the Complaint were apparent both from the facts known to the Complainant and from those reasonably available to it at the point when the Complaint was filed.

The Complainant was aware that it possessed no trademark rights in any term corresponding to the disputed domain name <football7official.com>. Turning to the disputed domain name <fif7football7.com>, the Complainant likewise knew that the trademark rights upon which it relied had not accrued prior to the registration date of the disputed domain name. The Complainant knew or should have known that its copyright registrations did not amount to trademark rights in terms of the Policy, even if it considered these to be of other evidential relevance.

Given the longstanding relationship between the Parties, and their mutual interest in 7-a-side football, the Complainant was aware of the Respondent's claim to have adopted the term "FIF7" several years before it registered the disputed domain name, and furthermore, as demonstrated by the Complainant's own evidence, was aware of the Respondent's use of this moniker as part of the domain name <fif7official.com>, operated since at least March 2021.

The Complainant knew and indeed expressly indicated in the supplemental filing that it had not used the term "FIF7" in any manner whereby it could have established unregistered trademark rights, noting that it "selected IFA7 as their principal public-facing organizational brand while maintaining FIF7 within their intellectual-property portfolio".

In all of these circumstances, the Complaint depended either upon trademark rights which did not exist at the material time, or upon a claim to unregistered trademark rights unsupported by evidence that the term(s) concerned had become a distinctive identifier associated with the Complainant's goods or services. The Panel therefore considers that the Complaint had no reasonable prospect of success under the Policy, and that the Complainant knew or ought reasonably to have been aware of that fact when the Complaint was filed.

The Panel finds that the Complaint has been brought in bad faith and constitutes an attempt at Reverse Domain Name Hijacking.

7. Decision

For the foregoing reasons, the Complaint is denied. The Panel further finds that the Complaint was brought in bad faith and constitutes an abuse of the administrative proceeding.

/Andrew D. S. Lothian/

Andrew D. S. Lothian

Sole Panelist

Date: August 13, 2026