



Judge Ejects NBA Star's Suit Over 'Basketball Wives'

Law360, New York (August 18, 2011) -- A federal judge on Tuesday tossed a Miami Heat star's suit accusing a former flame of misusing his name to get on VH1 reality show "Basketball Wives," ruling that the California court had no personal jurisdiction over the dispute.

U.S. District Judge Dolly Gee called Chris Bosh's decision to sue his ex Alison Mathis in California was little more than a fishing expedition and dismissed the case, pointing out that both Bosh and Mathis live in Florida.

Mathis' lawyer Conal Doyle of Willoughby Doyle LLP called the suit an attempt to bully his client, who has filed a retaliatory suit against Bosh in Florida state court for money she says she lost when Bosh pressured "Basketball Wives" not to cast her.

"The judge's ruling validates Alison's position that this was a frivolous case filed just to harass and intimidate her," said Doyle, who represented Mathis pro bono. "There was absolutely no basis for keeping the case in California."

"The guy is a bully," he added. "He needs to work more on his low-post defense than filing lawsuits."

Judge Gee denied Bosh's request for time to build a case for California jurisdiction, calling it "little more than a hunch that [discovery] might yield jurisdictionally relevant facts."

When the suit was filed in May, it included defendant Shed Media U.S. Inc., the Los Angeles production company behind "Basketball Wives," which follows the lives of women who are married to or dating NBA players. But Bosh settled with the studio in May, and Mathis filed for dismissal three weeks later.

The judge's decision does not touch the merits of the case, which Doyle says evaporated once "Basketball Wives" cut Mathis from its upcoming season.

"The case was filed based on the thought process that Alison was going to get on this show and slander [Bosh] or invade his privacy," Doyle said. "Once they cut ties with her, the case should have been dismissed. That it wasn't is just a pattern of behavior by Bosh to harass [Mathis]."

Both Bosh's suit and the one Mathis filed in June in Florida stem from the pair's three-year relationship, during which they had a child together.

According to Bosh's suit, Mathis' appearance on "Basketball Wives" was a stunt aimed at turning her relationship with Bosh — and the details of his private life she learned during their three years together — into a celebrity gig.

“Mathis is attempting to promote her own commercial brand and become a television personality and/or celebrity by exploiting her former relationship with plaintiff, the fact that plaintiff is the father of the minor child, plaintiff's name and/or likeness for commercial gain,” the complaint said.

Bosh still faces accusations of contract interference and emotional distress in Florida state court. Mathis says he threatened to sue Shed Media if they hired her and is seeking about \$250,000 in damages — her estimate of the compensation she would have received for appearing on the program.

Attorneys for Bosh were not immediately available for comment Thursday.

Bosh is represented by Yuo-Fong Chang Amato, C. Anthony Mulrain and Richard Sybert of Gordon & Rees LLP.

Mathis is represented by Conal Doyle of Willoughby Doyle LLP.

The case is Bosh v. Shed Media US Inc. et al., case number 2:11-cv-03782, in the U.S. District Court for the Central District of California.