

PLAYBOY BARES ITS CASE AGAINST SEXY WEB SITE; [SPORTS FINAL Edition]

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Judge Julie and Judge Jill, meet Judge Dearie.

We're not kidding. "Sex Court" is headed for Brooklyn Federal Court today - where Judge Raymond Dearie will have to choose between two fellow jurists named . . . er . . . Judge Julie and Judge Jill.

At issue is whether Playboy Enterprises or a Web company has the rights to the "Sex Court" name.

Playboy claims the trademark belongs to its racy cable TV show - featuring Judge Julie, who resolves disputes of a sexual nature.

"It sounds a lot more interesting than the things I deal with from time to time," quipped Dearie, warming up at an earlier hearing on the case.

But the head of On-Line Entertainment - purveyor of the Web site sexcourt.com - says his cybersmut venture went up months before Playboy's show aired.

The Web site - its homepage screams, "If sex is a crime . . . find us guilty" and costs \$39.95 a month to view - features a character called Judge Jill.

The leggy blond's association with the law pretty much ends at her title, conceded On-Line honcho Mario Cavalluzzo. "Anything with the word 'sex' in it is a very valuable Web property to have," he told the Daily News. "Anything with 'sex' sells."

Playboy is accusing On-Line of "cybersquatting" and attempting to confuse consumers who might think there is an affiliation between the TV show and the Web site.

"[Judge] Jill sitting on a judicial dais is a clear attempt to evoke the image of the character Judge Julie," Playboy lawyer John Rawls argued in court papers. Rawls did not return a call for comment.

Seeing is believing

At another hearing, Dearie logged on to the Web site to see the evidence for himself. When he reached the homepage, he found the scantily clad Judge Jill reclining on a judicial bench. "If that's a judicial robe, it's not a robe that I am familiar with," Dearie said.

Cavalluzzo has filed a counterclaim against Playboy. "It's my name, and I have a right to it," he said.

On-Line's lawyer John Bostany has argued that sexcourt.com made its debut on the Internet on May 14, 1998, about three months before the TV show hit the small screen.

Playboy argues that a press release touting the show was sent out before May 14, 1998.

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