

What are experts and consumers saying?

To preserve ownership of his name and protect Chinese consumers from being misled, Michael Jordan filed suit in a Chinese court against Qiaodan Sports Company Limited, a Chinese sportswear and footwear manufacturer, for unauthorized use of his name and identity.

Here is what experts and consumers are saying about the case:

Yao Ming: NBA Legend

"Behind my name is my experience, and my blood, sweat and pain. I take this very seriously, and that's why I've decided to defend my rights. I am confident that Michael Jordan and many others like us feel the same way. And it's important to help everyone understand this in order to protect consumers and stop companies that are purposefully misleading them." (Xinhua Sports, 12 April, 2012)

Web link: http://news.xinhuanet.com/sports/2012-04/12/c_122969437.htm

Shan Junwei: founder and design director of Beijing Danchun Design Studio

"Honestly, I've been misled into believing Qiaodan Sports is Michael Jordan's firm. I can't believe I've been fooled for all these years. Qiaodan Sports' response to the lawsuit makes me sick, and it even plans to get an IPO. For Michael Jordan, an icon for all basketball fans, we should say no to all Qiaodan Sports' products." (Sina Weibo, 6 March, 2012)

Web link: <http://weibo.com/1280484280/y8F8IzDUI>

Gao Peng: event director at ARTLINKART

"I'm not sure whether Michael Jordan will win the case, but too many people around me have, in fact, been misled by Qiaodan Sports. If Qiaodan Sports claims to be a national brand, why doesn't it learn from Peak Sports? Peak has signed many NBA players to endorse its products; this is truly a success for national sports brands, not like Qiaodan Sports misleading conducts." (Sina Weibo, 1 March, 2012)

Web link: <http://weibo.com/1716309251/y7QWI4y11>

Liu Guofeng: reporter at China Securities Journal

"I started to buy products of Qiaodan Sports from the first year of my senior middle school. It took me a dozen years to discover that the brand is fake, out and out. As a senior middle school student, I thought that there would not be Qiaodan Sports if it had not been given authorization by Jordan. But it turned out that everything is possible. Come to think of it, I nearly fainted, like lightning striking you out!" (Sina Weibo, 26 February 2012)

Web link: <http://weibo.com/2230370473/y7qP32fVl>

Zhao Hu: lawyer at Beijing H&J Law Firm

"The biggest victim of this way of doing things is, in fact, not the proprietor, but the consumer. The consumers buy such products in that they mistake the products for being authorized by Jumpman Jordan as they trust Jordan and know the value of Jordan. They believe that an enterprise that has the honor to cooperate with Jordan should be credible. In this way, the brand value of Qiaodan has been infused into the commodities. Now that everything has come into the open—the two have nothing to do with each other. People have been misled." (Sina blog post, 25 February 2012) Web link:

http://blog.sina.com.cn/s/blog_4e0248da0102dz87.html

Yang Xiaolong: general manager at Chengdu Liuyaosu Financial Management Co., Ltd.

"Qiaodan Sports is not endorsed by Michael Jordan. I've been misled for years." (Tencent Weibo, 25 February 2012)

Web link: <http://t.qq.com/p/t/127060072393443>

Yuan Xueshi: law professor at Renmin University of China

"Qiaodan Sports Co. has done enough to mislead consumers in terms of its trademark, areas of operation and trademark logo, suspect of stealing the name of others, thus constituting right infringement." (The Beijing News article, 24 February 2012)

Web link: <http://www.bjnews.com.cn/opinion/2012/02/24/184354.html>

Deng Xinglu: Tencent Digital Channel Mobile Phone commentator

"I thought Qiaodan was founded by Michael Jordan, the name of the company is Qiaodan Investment Co., Ltd. It's misleading the consumers!" (Tencent Weibo, 24 February 2012)

Web link: <http://t.qq.com/p/t/40256042691825>

Mr. Yang: consumer

"Before I saw the news of the litigation, I thought Qiaodan Sports had been endorsed by Michael Jordan." (China News, 24 February 2012)

Web link: <http://world.chinanews.com/stock/2012/02-24/3694208.shtml>

The Wall Street Journal Asia

"Mr. Jordan doesn't hold a registered trademark for his Chinese name in China, but legal experts said that might not matter. In most cases, Chinese law protects parties who hold registrations and who file early for them, but a provision says businesses can't freely use the names of famous people, even if the people don't have a registered trademark. A Chinese court in December ruled for former NBA player Yao Ming, who challenged Wuhan Yunhe Sharks Sportswear Co. for using his name and the logo 'Yao Ming Era' on its products. The company was forced to stop using the name. Another NBA player from China, Yi Jianlian, last April prevailed over defendant Fujian Yi Jianlian Sport Goods Co., when a court held that an 'Individual's name right should be recognized as a prior right'." (The Wall Street Journal article, 24 February 2012)

Web link: <http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052970204778604577240991687647450.html>

Ma Guangyuan: scholar, CCTV commentator

"I have always thought that Qiaodan Sports is a company run by Michael Jordan, a foreign brand. But I learned today when I went to the CCTV for a program recording that it turned out to be a national brand. Now that Jordan has sued the company, Qiaodan Sports says: Qiaodan is a surname. Many people have such surname. How do you establish that it is the name of that basketball superstar? There is also English media personality and former glamour model Katie Price under the pseudonym Jordan. But in the sports world, the mention of Jordan with a stance of walking the ball, who would think that he is somebody else?" (Sina Weibo, 24 February 2012)

Web link: <http://weibo.com/1435160552/y6SdoqwdD>

Lu Jinyong: professor at the School of International Trade and Economics, University of International Business and Economics

"The case involves two questions. Question one, the name is not a general one. It is the name of a noted basketball star. At the mention of the name, people would think that he is a super basketball star. Question two, his name was used as a registered trademark, while he neither has any equity in the company nor has given any authorization. It easily causes misleading." (CCTV2 Global Finance Live-Cross, 23 February 2012)

Web link: <http://jingji.cntv.cn/20120224/100013.shtml>

Tang Wensheng: financial commentator at Shenzhen TV

"The company misleads consumer into believing that Qiaodan is a Chinese brand created under the banner of Jordan. On the other hand, the company tried to portray itself a national brand in its IPO prospectus. It cannot get through ethically and it also lacks integrity." (China Radio International web article, 23 February 2012)

Web link: http://finance.cnr.cn/jjpl/201202/t20120223_509199358.shtml

Bloomberg Businessweek

"Some other NBA stars have already shown that China is making progress in protection of IPR. Last May, Yao Ming sued Wuhan Yunhe Sportswear, based in central China's Hubei province, for using his name in its brand, Yao Ming Era. On Dec. 28, Yao Ming, the player, was victorious over Yao Ming Era with a Wuhan court ruling for him and ordering the company to pay 300,000 yuan. A year earlier, a court ruled in favor of another Chinese player trying to protect his name, Yi Jianlian, who now plays for the NBA champion Dallas Mavericks." (BusinessWeek article, 23 February 2012)

Web link: <http://www.businessweek.com/asia/michael-jordan-wants-respect-for-his-brand-in-china-02232012.html>

NBC News Behind the Wall Blog

"Since that time, Qiaodan has borrowed heavily from the Jordan mystique to drive sales in China. His iconic number 23 is on much of their sportswear, while advertisements and equipment often sport a logo which greatly resembles Nike's iconic 'Jumpman' logo, which accompanies virtually all of Jordan's branded gear." (NBC News article, 23 February 2012)

Web link: <http://behindthewall.msnbc.msn.com/news/2012/02/23/10484957-jordan-sues-for-control-of-his-name-in-china?chromedomain=worldnews>