

Press Release

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High Court awards Ken Bates £150,000 in libel damages against Tom Rubython and Business F1 magazine

Ken Bates, the former owner and Chairman of Chelsea Football Club, has today been awarded £150,000 in damages by the High Court in London in respect of a May 2023 article published by Tom Rubython and Business F1 magazine. The article made extremely serious, yet entirely false, allegations against Mr Bates, including the absurd suggestion that he had almost certainly had business rivals murdered.

The Judge described the article as a ‘comprehensive character assassination’ of Mr Bates. The allegations were not put to Mr Bates in advance of publication and the Defendants did not seek to defend the allegations as being in any way true or rely on any other substantive defence. The Defendants attempted to argue that the allegations had not caused serious harm to Mr Bates’ reputation – an argument that the Judge wholly dismissed.

As well as awarding very substantial damages, the Judge granted an injunction against the repetition of the libels. The Judge also ordered the Defendants to publish a summary of the judgment in their magazine, and pay Mr Bates’ legal costs.

Mr Bates said ‘*I am very pleased with the decision of the court today. This is an article that should never have been published, and the judgment makes that clear*’.

The full judgment [2024] EWHC 2706 (KB) can be found [here](#).

Mr Bates is represented by [Antonia Foster](#) and [Caitlin Harris](#) of Carter-Ruck and [William McCormick KC](#) of Selborne Chambers.

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