

Axinn Achieves Complete Antitrust Victory for Chess Grandmaster Magnus Carlsen in \$100 Million Lawsuit Over Cheating Allegations

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PRACTICE AREAS

Antitrust

Litigation

On June 27, 2023, the United States District Court for the Eastern District of Missouri dismissed Hans Niemann’s \$100 million lawsuit against Magnus Carlsen and four other co-defendants. Niemann’s lawsuit arises out of alleged statements and conduct following the 2022 Sinquefeld Cup chess tournament. Carlsen and the other defendants moved to dismiss the case in its entirety on multiple grounds, including on the grounds that Niemann’s antitrust claims are not legally cognizable and Connecticut’s anti-Strategic Lawsuits Against Public Participation (“anti-SLAPP”) statute bars all of Niemann’s state-law claims.

Judge Audrey G. Fleissig dismissed all of Niemann’s antitrust claims, holding that, as an individual chess player, Niemann is not a “competitor” to recreational and professional chess platforms, and his alleged “individualized professional and reputational injuries are [not of] the type that the antitrust laws were intended to prevent.” In addition, the Court declined to exercise supplemental jurisdiction and dismissed Niemann’s state-law claims as well.

Partners Craig Reiser and Denise Plunkett led the team representing Magnus Carlsen, alongside associates Eva Yung, Caroline Boisvert, and Claire Haws.

Press Coverage:

- Agence France-Presse/France24
- Associated Press
- BBC
- Chess.com
- CNN
- Forbes
- Global Competition Review

- Law360
- NBC News
- Reuters
- Rolling Stone
- Sky News
- The Guardian
- The Wall Street Journal
- The Washington Post
- USA Today

