[SE] Zlatan Ibrahimović wins slander lawsuit

IRIS 2017-3:1/27

Erik Ullberg and Christoffer Lundmark
Wistrand Advokatbyrå

On 9 January 2017, the Swedish District Court of Värmland sentenced the athletics coach, lecturer and former CEO of the Swedish National Cross Country Skiing Team, Ulf Karlsson, to fines amounting to a total of SEK 24,000 for gross slander of the footballer Zlatan Ibrahimović. Mr Karlsson had been charged with making statements during a debate on doping in team sports in which he claimed that Mr Ibrahimović had used doping during his time as a player in Juventus FC.

The case against Mr Karlsson included two separate charges: according to Mr Ibrahimović, Mr Karlsson had slandered him both during the debate and in an interview with a reporter in connection with the debate; this interview was eventually published in a newspaper.

Mr Karlsson was convicted for gross slander with regard to the debate. However, he was acquitted on the other charge with reference to the fact that the statements in question were made by Mr Karlsson to a journalist; by making the statement directly to a journalist, the statement was covered by the Swedish Freedom of the Press Act. This meant in turn that liability for the published statement was with the editor in chief of the newspaper.

Neither of the parties has appealed against the judgment.

Case nr B 1576-16, 9 January 2017

http://www.varmlandstingsratt.domstol.se/Om-tingsratten/Nyheter-och-pressmeddelanden/Dom-i-Zlatanmalet/

Case nr B 1576-16, 9 January 2017

© European Audiovisual Observatory (Council of Europe) 2026

© European Audiovisual Observatory (Council of Europe) 2026