

Mark Wahlberg, Dwayne Johnson Sued for \$200 Million in HBO "Ballers" Lawsuit

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Looking fly as hell, Dwayne "The Rock" Johnson plays Spencer Strasmore in HBO's comedy series, "Ballers." Photo courtesy of HBO.[/caption]

Summary: The Rock and Markie Mark are being sued by two writers who say they stole their ideas for the HBO television series, "Ballers."

If you want to be a "Baller," big shot caller... well, prepared to get sued.

According to The Wrap, Mark Wahlberg and Dwayne Johnson, a.k.a. The Rock, may have to pay \$200 million in damages if they lose the case of copyright infringement filed against them. The two men were named defendants along with writer Stephen Levinson, 7 Bucks Entertainment, Leverage Management, and HBO.

The actors/producers are being sued by two writers, Everette Silas and Sherri Littleton, who claim Wahlberg and Johnson's HBO series "Ballers" stole elements from their script "Off Season." The pair originally filed their suit in December, but on Tuesday, they added that they were seeking \$200 million in damages.

"Ballers" focuses on the personal and professional lives of football players. Johnson stars as a former player turned agent who has to deal with his crazy clients and clean up their sordid messes. The show has just been renewed for a second season, and it is produced by Wahlberg who was a producer on HBO's "Entourage" which was based on his Hollywood life. Anyone who has seen "Ballers" could easily say it's "Entourage" meets football players, and you'd get the idea of what the show is about.

The suit claims "Ballers" "borrows heavily" elements from "Off-Season," which include the looks of the characters, the cars, the plots, scenes, and story lines. The writers say that in May of 2007 they personally gave the script to Steve Mayer, an executive at IMG Productions, a sports production company, and to Chris Albrecht, a fellow IMG executive and also acting CEO of HBO at the time. The writers thus claim that the makers of "Ballers" had access to their work.

When the lawsuit was originally filed, HBO said the suit had "no merit," but it'll be interesting to see how this all plays out. After all, the topic of football players behaving badly doesn't seem that groundbreaking of an idea. There have already been shows on the same topic--i.e. BET's "The Game," ESPN's "Playmakers," and USA's "Necessary Roughness"-- but on the other hand, the writers did give HBO-related people access to their work. Guess you could say, the ball is in the courts' court.

Source: [The Wrap](#)