

# *Sportscasting Fixture Files Age-Discrimination Lawsuit*

By RICHARD SANDOMIR

Sal Marchiano, a decades-long fixture in New York sportscasting, filed suit Wednesday in Manhattan federal court accusing Betty Ellen Berlamino, the former general manager of WPIX-TV/Channel 11, of age discrimination when she did not renew his contract in 2008.

Marchiano, who is 69 years old, is seeking reinstatement to his former position and damages to be determined at trial. He spent 14 years at the station.

"Sal always suspected his termination was unlawful, but he was willing to put it past him and move on with his life," said Douglas Wig-

dor, his lawyer at Thompson, Wigdor and Gilly.

But claims made last June in a federal age-discrimination lawsuit filed by Karen Scott, the station's former news director, included accounts of Berlamino's attitude toward Marchiano and other station personalities like Kaity Tong and Marvin Scott. Scott said that Berlamino told her that because of Marchiano's age, "he doesn't look good on the air."

In a phone interview, Marchiano said: "When I was given notice, I was given no reason. I didn't know there was an ageist attitude against me until Karen Scott's lawsuit." He added. "I'd always understood over

41 years on TV that it's the company's prerogative to keep you, but this had nothing to do with my work."

It was left to Karen Scott, "with tears in her eyes," to tell Marchiano that Berlamino had decided not to renew his contract, his suit says. Karen Scott was dismissed by the station last year.

In his lawsuit, Marchiano said that the station incorrectly told The Daily News that he had voluntarily retired from the station. "WPIX would not have characterized Mr. Marchiano's departure from the station as a 'retirement' if he were an even somewhat younger reporter or

anchor," the suit says.

Berlamino was not immediately available to respond to lawsuit. She was let go in June.

In addition to Channel 11, Marchiano also worked for Channels 2, 4 and 7 in New York and nationally for ESPN. Marchiano, who is working on a screenplay, said that "when big events happen, I think, 'What's going to be my lead?' but I have to remind myself I don't have an outlet."

Wigdor said that Marchiano did not sue the station because its owner, the Tribune Company, is in bankruptcy. Channel 11 did not return a request for comment.