

Charles Oakley suing MSG for libel, slander

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Charles Oakley filed a lawsuit against Madison Square Garden and James Dolan on Tuesday. (Photo: Getty Images)

Former New York Knicks Charles Oakley filed a civil lawsuit against Madison Square Garden, MSG Networks and team owner James Dolan after being forcibly removed and arrested from a Feb. 8 game.

According to [NBC New York](#), Oakley is suing for libel and slander. He is also seeking compensation for "emotional distress and/or mental anguish."

During that February game at MSG, Oakley had taken his seat near the court when he was confronted by arena security. After an altercation, he was removed and handcuffed before being taken from the arena.

The 53-year-old was charged with three counts of assault and also faced criminal trespassing charges. However, he accepted a plea deal that in August that stated all charges would be dropped if he wasn't arrested for six months while staying out of Madison Square Garden for one year.

Instead of trying to smooth over the situation, Dolan and the Knicks further inflamed it by [going on the offensive](#) shortly after the incident:

"Charles Oakley came to the game tonight and behaved in a highly inappropriate and completely abusive manner. He has been ejected and is currently being arrested by the New York City Police Department. He was a great Knick and we hope he gets some help soon... There are dozens of security staff, employees and NYPD that witnessed Oakley's abusive behavior. It started when he entered the building and continued until he was arrested and left the building. Every single statement we received is consistent in describing his actions. Everything he said since the incident is pure fiction."



[Oakley rebutted](#) by saying he was there for only four minutes and that MSG security initiated the fracas.

In the meantime, Dolan speculated without any evidence while speaking with ESPN New York Radio's Michael Kay that Oakley "may have a problem with alcohol."

The actions by Dolan and MSG in the aftermath is where the lawsuit stems from as the suit alleges:

"By propagating these blatant lies about Mr. Oakley, Defendants Dolan and MSG have caused irreparable harm to his name and career and discriminated against him based on the false perception that he is an alcoholic, all in a transparent attempt to denigrate his standing among Knicks fans."

Oakley and Dolan have had a publicly strained relationship for the better part of seven years now. Oakley advised then-free agent LeBron James in 2010 to stay away from the Knicks and had rarely minced words when it came to describing the team's owner.