

Attorney's suit says he received coffee in the face

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The Bucs' attorney says a season ticket holders' attorney splashed him.

Attorney Arnold Levine assumes that over the years, plenty of lawyers have probably wanted to throw coffee in his face.

In a lawsuit filed Monday, Levine says opposing counsel in a case against the Tampa Bay Buccaneers did just that.

The well-known lawyer alleges that he caught a faceful of coffee Saturday morning, during what was supposed to be an effort to settle a case filed by season ticket holders unhappy with their seats at Raymond James Stadium.

Levine, who represents the Bucs, said there were at least 10 people gathered in the office of a lawyer who had been appointed to mediate the dispute.

On the other side of the conference table sat attorney Jonathan Alpert, who represents the football fans.

Neither Levine nor Alpert would discuss what was said during the meeting, and the mediator could not be reached for comment Monday.

But Levine alleges Alpert suddenly jumped to his feet, yelled at him and then stepped outside the room for a moment. Levine said Alpert returned, "still ranting and raving," and launched the contents of his 20-ounce plastic foam cup into Levine's face.

"It was lukewarm. It had cream," Levine said. "I don't know if it had sugar."

Levine said Alpert and his clients left.

Monday, Alpert would only say that he did not believe the accusations were "accurate." He also said he could not discuss anything that went on in a confidential mediation hearing.

"I'm kind of shocked at this latest stunt," Alpert said.

Levine, who previously filed a defamation lawsuit against Alpert and the fans, sued again Monday, this time asking for civil damages in the alleged coffee incident. Levine said he also filed a battery complaint against Alpert with the Tampa police. He has the short-sleeved green knit shirt he had been wearing, which he says is now stained brown, in his office.

"You never destroy the evidence," Levine said.

For his part, Alpert called it "much ado about coffee," far from the important issues of the lawsuit against the Bucs.

"If Arnie would like me to buy him a cup of coffee," Alpert said, "I'd be happy to buy him a cup of coffee."

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Abstract (Document Summary)

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