

B E T W E E N:

THOMAS CLEVERLEY

Claimant

- and -

NEWS GROUP NEWSPAPERS LTD

Defendant

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STATEMENT IN COURT

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**Claimant's Solicitor - Advocate, David Price QC:** In this claim for libel I appear for the Claimant, Thomas Cleverley. The Claimant is a professional footballer who plays for Manchester United and for his national side England. The Defendant is the publisher of *The Sun*, a newspaper with a large and influential circulation in England and Wales.

This claim arises from an article headed "*MAN U ACE BEGGED ME FOR SEX AT 5AM (Even though he's dating Page 3 Emily)*" which was published on page 9 of *The Sun* on 16 August 2011 and on its website. The article alleged that Mr Cleverley had met a girl in a Blackpool nightclub and bombarded her with text messages offering her sex. Mr Cleverley was then alleged to have taken the girl to a B&B where he introduced her to his bodyguard and did a Google search on his name to demonstrate to her that he was a famous footballer. Most seriously, the article then alleged that he repeatedly badgered her for sex despite her saying no.

The truth is that, contrary to the article, Mr Cleverley had never met the girl involved and was at home with his girlfriend in Manchester at the time of the alleged incident. It transpires that, entirely unknown to the girl involved, an individual from Shipley, West Yorkshire, who resembles Mr Cleverley, was impersonating him, while another individual from the same town pretended to be his bodyguard. While these two individuals are from Mr Cleverley's local area, he does not know them and had no knowledge that they were practising such deception.

The Claimant was extremely upset and embarrassed by the article. He was not prepared to allow the article to remain unchallenged and therefore brought this claim for libel.

I am pleased to tell your Lordship that the Defendant has made an offer of amends which has been accepted by the Claimant. Pursuant to that offer, the Defendant has agreed to publish an apology in *The Sun*. They have also agreed to pay the Claimant a substantial sum in damages, to be assessed if not agreed, and his legal costs. While the Claimant would have preferred that the article had never been published, he accepts that he has achieved all that he can by bringing these proceedings and feels suitably vindicated. He is prepared now to let the matter rest.

In the circumstances, I simply ask your Lordship for permission to withdraw the record.

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David Price QC of David Price Solicitors & Advocates on behalf of the Claimant