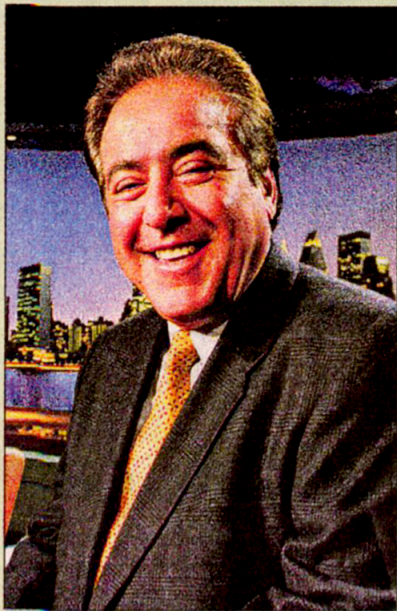


# Lawsuit cries foul in PIX sportscaster's exit



**Sal Marchiano claims he was the victim of age discrimination.** Photo by Shiho Fukada

**BY RICHARD HUFF**  
DAILY NEWS TV EDITOR

VETERAN NEW YORK sportscaster Sal Marchiano has filed a multimillion-dollar age discrimination lawsuit against the woman who used to run WPIX/Ch. 11.

He's seeking unspecified damages, though his lawyer estimates it could be worth \$10 million.

Marchiano, 69, left Ch. 11 in December 2008, when the station decided not to renew his contract.

Station officials initially positioned it as a retirement, though Marchiano said that was not the case at all.

"He thought he was doing a good job; there were no signs to the contrary," said attorney Douglas Wigdor, of the firm Thompson Wigdor & Gilly. "When they give that job to a person who is decades younger with no experience, and there's no legitimate reason not to renew, that's age discrimination."

The lawsuit, filed in the United States District Court in the Southern District of

New York, names as the defendant Betty Ellen Berlamino, the former general manager of the Tribune-owned station. Ch. 11, which is part of Tribune's overall bankruptcy proceedings, is not named.

The lawsuit follows and was inspired in part by one filed in June by former WPIX/Ch. 11 news director Karen Scott, who maintains in her suit that she was pushed out because of age discrimination.

Scott also alleged that the station — led by Berlamino — demoted Marvin Scott and tried to force out Kaity Tong as well as Larry Hoff.

He just "doesn't look good on the air," Berlamino allegedly said of Marchiano, according to Scott's suit.

Marchiano, according to Wigdor, wasn't aware of Berlamino's age-related comments until Scott's suit hit.

"I think the nail in the coffin was when he read and heard about Karen Scott's complaint, and what comments were made in dealing with Sal's termination," Wigdor says. "He then reached out to counsel."

The lawsuit gives no specifics on Marchiano's income or how much he has lost since being dropped.

Wigdor estimates he would have worked another five years, valued at \$1 million, and with other penalties and damages, the price could go upward of \$10 million.

Wigdor filed the suit as a related case to Scott's so it will be handled by the same judge. He admits ultimately it will come down to a she-said/she-said battle between Scott and Berlamino.

Berlamino did not respond to a message for comment yesterday.

Officials at Ch. 11 — who were not named but will likely be drawn in because Berlamino worked for the station at the time of the alleged discrimination — did not respond.

"Sal is a public figure, and he wants to get his story out," Wigdor says. "He wants people to know he didn't want to retire and Berlamino and WPIX took away his job because he was getting older."