


# Brian Flores Lawsuit Alleges NFL Racism, Reveals Details of Head Coach Searches

 [bleacherreport.com/articles/10025574-brian-flores-sues-nfl-teams-says-brian-daboll-was-hired-by-giants-before-interview](https://bleacherreport.com/articles/10025574-brian-flores-sues-nfl-teams-says-brian-daboll-was-hired-by-giants-before-interview)

February 1, 2022

Former Miami Dolphins head coach Brian Flores is suing the NFL and all 32 teams, alleging racial discrimination in the hiring process of coaches.

In a [lawsuit filed](#) Tuesday, Flores alleged the Giants had settled on Brian Daboll as their head coach days before they were scheduled to interview him. He [completed](#) his in-person interview with the franchise last Thursday, and Daboll was officially named as the Giants' new coach two days later.

As part of the lawsuit, Flores included evidence that Bill Belichick mistakenly texted him days before his interview congratulating him on getting the job.

"Sorry – I f--ked this up. I double checked and misread the text. I think they are naming Brian Daboll. I'm sorry about that. BB," the text read.

The Giants [released](#) a statement in response saying Flores was "in the conversation to be our head coach until the eleventh hour." The team did not deny it had settled on Daboll before interviewing Flores but noted its "impressive and diverse group of candidates."

The NFL also issued a [statement](#), saying: "The NFL and our clubs are deeply committed to ensuring equitable employment practices and continue to make progress in providing equitable opportunities throughout our organizations. Diversity is core to everything we do, and there are few issues on which our clubs and our internal leadership team spend more time. We will defend against these claims, which are without merit."

Flores spent the previous three seasons as the Miami Dolphins' coach, going 24-25 before being fired. He led the franchise to back-to-back winning seasons in 2020 and 2021, marking the first time since 2002 and 2003 the Dolphins pulled off the feat.

While Flores' stellar job in Miami may have led to him being a candidate for other coaching opportunities—he's considered a candidate for the Houston Texans—the 40-year-old released a statement saying he was focused on the bigger picture of helping end racism in the NFL.

"God has gifted me with a special talent to coach the game of football, but the need for change is bigger than my personal goals," Flores [said](#). "In making the decision to file the class action complaint, I understand that I may be risking coaching the game I love and has done

so much for my family and me. My sincere hope is that by standing up against systemic racism in the NFL, others will join me to ensure that positive change is made for generations to come."

Flores said his tenure in Miami was consistently undermined by upper management, specifically owner Stephen Ross. According to the suit, Ross offered Flores \$100,000 for each loss during the 2019 season to tank for draft position. Dolphins general manager Chris Grier allegedly informed Flores that Ross was "mad" for winning games and "compromising" the tanking effort. The Dolphins ultimately finished 5-11 and picked fifth in the 2020 draft.

Ross also allegedly attempted to force Flores to engage in tampering with an unnamed "prominent quarterback" in 2020. The Dolphins owner allegedly invited Flores to a dinner on his yacht that, upon arrival, Flores said he realized was supposed to serve as a clandestine meeting between the coach and quarterback. Flores said he declined the meeting, which would have constituted a violation of NFL tampering rules.

"After the incident, Mr. Flores was treated with disdain and held out as someone who was noncompliant and difficult to work with," the lawsuit says.

Flores said the incident led to the Dolphins smearing his name through leaked reports of personality conflicts behind the scenes. [Jeff Darlington](#) of ESPN reported Jan. 10 that Flores' relationship with Grier and quarterback Tua Tagovailoa had "deteriorated."

The Dolphins, Giants and Denver Broncos are named in the suit, while the other 29 teams are also included as "John Doe teams." Flores said the Broncos held what he described as a "sham" interview with him in 2019. The suit alleges then-general manager John Elway, president and chief executive officer Joe Ellis and other members of the front office showed up to Flores' interview an hour late and hungover.

"They looked completely disheveled, and it was obvious that they had [been] drinking heavily the night before," the suit says.

The Broncos ultimately hired Vic Fangio as coach, with Flores saying his interview was only done to satisfy the Rooney Rule, which requires teams to interview at least one candidate from a historically excluded group for head-coaching and front-office positions.

There is currently only one Black coach in the NFL: Mike Tomlin of the Pittsburgh Steelers.