

# Ex-Dolphins Coach Brian Flores Sues Giants, NFL For Racial Discrimination, Cites Belichick Text

---

 [dailyvoice.com/pennsylvania/chester/news/ex-dolphins-coach-brian-flores-sues-giants-nfl-for-racial-discrimination-cites-belichick-text/825168](https://dailyvoice.com/pennsylvania/chester/news/ex-dolphins-coach-brian-flores-sues-giants-nfl-for-racial-discrimination-cites-belichick-text/825168)

February 1, 2022

**BOMBSHELL:** Former Miami Dolphins head coach Brian Flores is suing the NFL, the New York Giants, his former team and the Denver Broncos for what he contends is a "painful history of racism that continues through the present day."

Flores was three days away from a final interview for the Giants' head coaching job when New England Patriots Head Coach Bill Belichick mistakenly sent a text congratulating him, according to a class-action lawsuit he filed in the Southern District of New York in Manhattan on Tuesday, Feb. 1.

Belichick apparently thought he was texting Brian Daboll, the man whom the Giants hired for the job, the suit contends.

That means that Giants owners John K. Mara and Steve Tisch and their new general manager, Joe Schoen, had already made their choice -- and told certain people -- before their dinner interview with Flores, it says.

Both Brians previously had been on Belichick's staff in New England.

The Giants "would likely have gotten away with this most insidious form of discrimination if New England Patriots Coach Bill Belichick had not mistakenly disclosed it to Mr. Flores in the below text messages," says the 58-page suit, filed on the first day of Black History Month.

## **Purported texts from New England Head Coach Bill Belichick to Brian Flores.**

---

Southern District U.S. Court of New York

Flores, who has more than a decade of coaching experience in the NFL, was fired as the Dolphins' head coach last month despite winning eight of the team's last nine games this past season and 19 games over two seasons. The 40-year-old Brooklyn native had two years left on a five-year contract.

Speculation spread over what effect the lawsuit would have on interviews he had scheduled with the New Orleans Saints on Tuesday and the Houston Texans.

Flores said that doesn't matter.

“God has gifted me with a special talent to coach the game of football, but the need for change is bigger than my personal goal,” he said in a statement. “In making the decision to file the class action complaint today, I understand that I may be risking coaching the game that I love and that 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.”

The suit calls the NFL “racially segregated and managed much like a plantation,” with all of its 31 white owners profiting from a labor force of players who are 70% Black (the Green Bay Packers are the only community-owned major league sports team in the United States).

White men have filled four of nine head coaching spots that opened in the league this year, leaving Mike Tomlin of the Pittsburgh Steelers as the NFL’s only Black coach after David Culley was fired by the Texans and Flores by the Dolphins.

Two of the six new general managers just hired by NFL teams are Black: Terry Fontenot with the Atlanta Falcons and Brad Holmes with the Detroit Lions. That makes five altogether.

The NFL’s “Rooney Rule,” established nearly two decades ago, was designed to remedy the disparity in the front offices as well as on the field by requiring teams to interview at least two external minority candidates for executive and coaching roles.

The Giants interviewed three minority head coach candidates after firing Joe Judge. Besides Flores, they spoke with Buffalo Bills defensive coordinator Leslie Frazier. They also interviewed a Black internal candidate, defensive coordinator Patrick Graham.

“We interviewed an impressive and diverse group of candidates,” the Giants said in the statement. “The fact of the matter is, Brian Flores was in the conversation to be our head coach until the eleventh hour. Ultimately, we hired the individual we felt was most qualified to be our next head coach.”

Flores would’ve been the first Black head coach in the Giants’ 97-year history.

Instead, he contends, the league has systematically rejected him and other Blacks for positions as head coaches, offensive and defensive coordinators and quarterback coaches, as well as general managers, after conducting interviews for no other reason than to satisfy the “Rooney Rule.”

“The owners watch the games from atop NFL stadiums in their luxury boxes, while their majority-Black workforce put their bodies on the line every Sunday, taking vicious hits and suffering debilitating injuries to their bodies and their brains while the NFL and its owners reap billions of dollars,” his lawsuit contends.

“On the first day of Black History Month, it is our great privilege to represent Brian Flores in his class action complaint against the NFL...” [pic.twitter.com/QUvNrBjUO7](https://pic.twitter.com/QUvNrBjUO7)

— Elefterakis Elefterakis & Panek (@Eepnyc) [February 1, 2022](#)

Flores's suit seeks unspecified compensatory and punitive damages for all Black head coaches, offensive and defensive coordinators, quarterback coaches and general managers, as well as all Black candidates for the positions.

It also asks a federal judge to declare that the NFL and its franchises violated federal law, as well as state laws in New York and New Jersey -- in a bid that would open the suit for other plaintiffs to join.

The NFL vowed to fight the claims, which it said are "without merit."

"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," the league said in a statement. "Diversity is core to everything we do, and there are few issues on which our clubs and our internal leadership team spend more time."

Several current and former NFL players expressed support for Flores.

Flo has always been a special individual...has been pivotal in my career and love that I can support him for calling out what we all already know -Dmac <https://t.co/kwKefZVg4R>

— Devin&Jason McCourty (@McCourtyTwins) [February 1, 2022](#)

Elefterakis, Elefterakis & Panek, the law firm representing him, said in a statement: “Having discovered what the Giants and the rest of the NFL had hoped to keep in the dark, Mr. Flores now brings this Class Action Complaint to shine a light on the racial injustices that take place inside the NFL and to effectuate real change for the future.

“As alleged, management does not conduct these interviews in good faith,” the statement continued. “Which creates a stigma that these Black candidates are only interviewed to comply with the Rooney Rule and not because of their qualifications.”

Besides the Giants, Flores also targeted Stephen Ross, the owner of the Miami Dolphins, claiming that Ross offered him \$100,000 for every loss during the 2019 season to help secure a higher draft pick and was angered when they didn't tank.

The suit accuses Ross of pressing Flores to violate NFL tampering rules by recruiting an unidentified "prominent" quarterback. When he refused, it says, Ross cast him as an "angry Black man" who was non-compliant and "difficult to work with," leading to his firing.

Flores also accuses Denver Broncos General Manager John Elway and President Joe Ellis of conducting a "sham interview" for a head-coaching job in 2019 that went to recently-fired Nick Fangio. Besides showing up late, he says, the Bronco officials looked "completely disheveled" as if they'd been drinking heavily the night before.

The Broncos called the claims "blatantly false."

"Our interview with Mr. Flores regarding our head coaching position began promptly at the scheduled time of 7:30 a.m. on Jan. 5, 2019 in a Providence, R.I., hotel," the team said in a statement. "There were five Broncos executives present for the interview, which lasted approximately three-and-a-half hours -- the fully allotted time -- and concluded shortly before 11 a.m.

"Pages of detailed notes, analysis and evaluations from our interview demonstrate the depth of our conversation and sincere interest in Mr. Flores as a head coaching candidate. Our process was thorough and fair to determine the most qualified candidate for our head coaching position.

"The Broncos will vigorously defend the integrity and values of our organization -- and its employees -- from such baseless and disparaging claims."