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Two former Northwestern football players claim hazing included watermelon-eating contests for Black players

CBS Chicago | August 3, 2023

CHICAGO (CBS) -- Two more Northwestern University football players filed lawsuits against the school over the growing hazing scandal, including new allegations that Black players were forced to compete in racist watermelon-eating contests.

"This is a clear promotion of the indisputably racist watermelon stereotype and anti-black racist trope," the lawsuits both state.

The two lawsuits, filed in Cook County Circuit Court by two anonymous players who were on the team during the 2004 and 2005 seasons, note that former head coach Pat Fitzgerald was the team's recruiting coordinator and linebackers coach at the time, and "knew and encouraged this behavior to happen to these very young and impressionable men."

Read more about the lawsuits involving R&B and Hart McLaughlin & Eldridge clients from CBS Chicago.