

News Release

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3 New Sex Abuse Lawsuits Expose Wholesale Failure of Equestrian Sports Industry to Protect Children

Former United States Olympic Coach Sued for Sex Abuse

(Los Angeles, California) – Today, on behalf of three brave survivors, attorneys from the law firms of Jeff Anderson & Associates and Greenberg Gross LLP filed three new child sexual abuse complaints under the New York Child Victims Act and the California Child Victims Act against the United States Equestrian Federation (USEF) and others, alleging abuse by celebrated coaches and notorious perpetrators **George Morris** (Topping Riding Club, U.S. & Brazil Olympic Teams), and **Jimmy Williams** (Flintridge Riding Club).

“Morris and Williams were kingmakers within the equestrian world. The future children of the equestrian community are safer because these men are now gone,” said attorney Mike Reck of Jeff Anderson & Associates. “Their prestige as coaches, access to resources and influence gave them enormous power over the careers of young equestrians. They took full advantage of this power while the greater equestrian community turned a blind eye to the abuse of minors for decades. The Child Victims Acts of New York and California have empowered these courageous survivors to expose the damage perpetrated by these men.”

Morris and Williams, each widely regarded as elite within an elite field, have been accused of child sexual abuse previously. Today’s filings paint a broader picture of abuse and cover-up from the summit of the industry, reaching across the entire country.

- **George Morris** – Two of the cases filed today in New York are against Morris for sexual assault, emotional distress and negligence. In one case, Morris assaulted the plaintiff in Sagaponack, New York when the survivor was a minor. In the other case, Morris repeatedly assaulted plaintiff Jonathan Soresi in New York and other states. Soresi was the [first person to report Morris](#) to the US Center for SafeSport, leading to an investigation and lifetime ban when the second brave survivor spoke out.
- **Jimmy Williams** – The third case filed today is on behalf of Gigi Gaston, stepdaughter to famed industry titan J. Paul Getty. Gaston was sexually abused as a child by Jimmy Williams. Williams repeatedly assaulted Gaston from the ages of 12 to 18 at the training

facility where Williams worked in Southern California, Flintridge Riding Club. Williams died in 1993. Other survivors have also shared [their stories](#) of being sexually abused at that same facility where Williams worked.

“As the details of the investigations, interviews and arbitrations that led to and upheld the lifetime ban become publicly known through this lawsuit, I hope the leaders of the equestrian community wholeheartedly support survivors,” said survivor John Doe.

In all three cases, the survivors remained silent for years because they feared Morris and Williams and their influence on their riding careers. While Gaston told adults about Williams’s sexual misconduct in 1976, Williams faced no repercussions or restrictions within the realm of equestrian sports. Decades later, the New York and California Child Victims Acts have given the three survivors the opportunity to take legal action.

“What happened to me was wrong,” said Soresi. “I will never know what it is like to live a life unmolested. This lawsuit is an attempt, for myself and for other victims of sexual abuse, to seek justice for that violation.”

These cases have exposed the widespread abuse within the USEF and the broader equestrian sports world. As more survivors have come forward through civil cases, the USEF has been forced to confront a history of child sexual abuse that took place under its watch.

“Accountability matters,” said Gaston. “No child should have to endure what I did and I am doing this to make kids of today safer. No institution should care more about its own reputation than child safety.”

In 2019, George Morris was banned for life from the USEF by SafeSport. The ban was the result of an [investigation](#) into sexual misconduct with a minor where [more than one survivor](#) spoke with SafeSport. Those who spoke with reporters noted that they had been aware of Morris’s relationships with minors.

“The Child Victims Acts have provided an opportunity for these courageous survivors to speak out about the horrors they suffered then and now,” said attorney Matthew Ingles of Greenberg Gross. “No child should be forced to endure sexual abuse in order to achieve his or her athletic dreams. The patterns of predation by each of these perpetrators was allowed to continue for decades behind the prestigious façade of an elite sport. The problem is systemic, and children need to be protected now.”

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