

www.sfgate.com[Return to regular view](#)

Suit to stop 2nd AIDS ride rejected by L.A. judge Concept deemed public domain

[Carol Ness, Chronicle Staff Writer](#)

Tuesday, January 15, 2002

[©2002 San Francisco Chronicle](#)

URL: <http://sfgate.com/cgi-bin/article.cgi?file=/chronicle/archive/2002/01/15/MN80442.DTL>

A Los Angeles judge yesterday refused to stop San Francisco and Los Angeles AIDS charities from staging separate bike-ride fund-raisers from the California AIDS ride, just two weeks before the ninth annual California AIDS Ride.

Los Angeles Superior Court Judge David Yaffe's order terminates a lawsuit by the California AIDS Ride's longtime producer, Pallotta TeamWorks of Los Angeles, against the San Francisco AIDS Foundation and the Los Angeles Gay & Lesbian Center, which have reaped millions from the popular seven-day trek.

The order does nothing to ease the bitter split between Pallotta and the two groups, which arose after expenses for the 2001 California AIDS Ride approached 50 percent of the \$11 million raised.

The two groups' decision to sever their relationship with Pallotta and hold a competing ride, the AIDS/LifeCycle, prompted the company to file a lawsuit asking the court to block the new event. Pallotta TeamWorks also sought to keep the two groups from talking about their problems with last year's ride.

Yaffe denied both requests, saying that under California law, "you can't stop someone else from competing with you by saying you own a concept that is really a concept in the public domain," said AIDS Foundation attorney Kathleen Fisher. A written order is due today.

Disputes between the charities and Pallotta TeamWorks over expenses from last year's ride will go to arbitration in San Francisco.

"We are delighted to be able to move ahead with our event," said Pat Christen, executive director of the AIDS Foundation. The AIDS/LifeCycle is set for May 13-19.

Pallotta President Stephen Bennett said the order would not be appealed, and the California AIDS Ride would also go ahead as planned June 2-8, with the AIDS Project Los Angeles as its beneficiary. He said APLA planned to give some of the proceeds to Bay Area AIDS groups.

E-mail Carol Ness at cness@sfchronicle.com.

[©2002 San Francisco Chronicle](#) Page A - 15