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Makeup artist at Scores, Penthouse Executive Club claims strip joints stiffed him on fees

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A makeup artist who tarted up dancers at Scores and the Penthouse Executive Club is suing the flesh palaces, claiming he was stiffed on fees.

Russell Whelchel said he did each dancer's hair and makeup about 30 minutes before their strip act - paying \$180 a night to the clubs for the privilege of working there.

The dancers paid him - and the club took another 10% cut, he said.

"What they are doing is wrong, even though it is standard practice in the industry," said Whelchel, 32, who filed an unfair labor practices suit in Manhattan Federal Court Monday.

Whelchel said he was abruptly fired on Valentine's Day when he charged at least one Scores dancer \$25 for the beauty session, instead of \$20.

"The fee was \$20 when I was at Penthouse. When I moved to Scores, another stylist said the fee was \$25, so that's what I charged," he said.

"A girl complained, and on Valentine's Day I was told that was my last night."

The owner of the clubs, Robert Gans, could not be reached for comment.