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**DISTRICT II**

February 25, 2026

To:

Hon. Sandra J. Giernoth  
Circuit Court Judge  
Electronic Notice

Thomas F. Raasch  
Electronic Notice

Sherry Coykendall  
Clerk of Circuit Court  
Washington County Courthouse  
Electronic Notice

Steven Moden  
922 Pine Ridge Street  
Brownsville, WI 53006

You are hereby notified that the Court has entered the following opinion and order:

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2025AP578

Travis J. Mehler v. Steven Moden (L.C. #2024CV339)

Before Gundrum, Grogan, and Lazar, JJ.

**Summary disposition orders may not be cited in any court of this state as precedent or authority, except for the limited purposes specified in WIS. STAT. RULE 809.23(3).**

Steven Moden, pro se, appeals from a judgment entered after he failed to file an Answer to the Complaint filed against him by Travis J. Mehler. Based upon our review of the briefs and Record, we conclude at conference that this case is appropriate for summary disposition. *See* WIS. STAT. RULE 809.21 (2023-24).<sup>1</sup> We summarily affirm.

This dispute arose when in March 2024, Mehler loaned money to Moden, who signed a note promising to repay it by April 2024. According to Moden, when he could not repay the

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<sup>1</sup> All references to the Wisconsin Statutes are to the 2023-24 version.

loan as he had promised, he offered Mehler his Utility Task Vehicle (UTV) instead. Mehler declined to take possession in lieu of repayment.<sup>2</sup> After Mehler’s attempts to obtain repayment from Moden failed, Mehler filed a Summons and Complaint against Moden in June 2024. After Moden failed to file an Answer, Mehler filed a motion for default judgment, which the circuit court granted. Moden appeals from that judgment.

In his brief, Moden contends he was unable to repay the money and offered to return the check to Mehler or to have Mehler take his UTV instead of repayment. Moden’s brief, however, fails to cite to the Record and also fails to support his argument with citation to legal authority, both of which our appellate rules require. *See* WIS. STAT. RULE 809.19(1)(e). While we recognize Moden is pro se, he must still abide by the same rules as attorneys. *See Waushara County v. Graf*, 166 Wis. 2d 442, 452, 480 N.W.2d 16 (1992).

In addition to failing to comply with the rules of appellate procedure, Moden’s brief fails to develop any arguments explaining how or why the circuit court erred in granting Mehler’s motion for default judgment, and he also fails to provide a single legal citation. “We will not address undeveloped arguments.” *See Clean Wis., Inc. v. PSC*, 2005 WI 93, ¶180 n.40, 282 Wis. 2d 250, 700 N.W.2d 768. An appellate court cannot properly “serve as both advocate and

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<sup>2</sup> In his brief, Moden contends that on March 13, 2024, Mehler “signed the Bill of Sale” for the UTV but that Mehler “said he did not want to take possession of [the UTV] at that time.” He also asserts that Mehler “explained to three people ... that the loan was no longer effective and that he purchased my UTV.” Mehler did not address these assertions in his appellate brief; however, he attached to the Summons and Complaint what appears to be a check to Moden dated March 14, 2024—the day *after* Moden says Mehler agreed to the UTV proposal—along with a note dated March 22, 2024, that purportedly bears Moden’s signature confirming he would repay the “borrowed” amount. It is unnecessary to further address the validity of Moden’s contentions regarding the UTV, however, in light of his failure to establish that the circuit court erred in granting the default judgment as a result of his having failed to timely file an Answer responding to the Complaint.

judge[,]” *see State v. Pettit*, 171 Wis. 2d 627, 647, 492 N.W.2d 633 (Ct. App. 1992), and thus, it is inappropriate for us to “abandon our neutrality to develop arguments” for Moden, *see Industrial Risk Insurers v. American Engineering Testing, Inc.*, 2009 WI App 62, ¶25, 318 Wis. 2d 148, 769 N.W.2d 82. On this basis alone, his appeal fails.

As the appellant, it is Moden’s burden to demonstrate the circuit court erred in granting default judgment. *See Gaethke v. Pozder*, 2017 WI App 38, ¶36, 376 Wis. 2d 448, 899 N.W.2d 381. He has failed to do so. Accordingly, we must summarily affirm the judgment.

Therefore,

IT IS ORDERED that the judgment of the circuit court is summarily affirmed. *See* WIS. STAT. RULE 809.21.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that this summary disposition order will not be published.

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*Samuel A. Christensen*  
*Clerk of Court of Appeals*