

SPORT

WHY LYON IS A
BUNNY NO MORE

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'CALLOUS & INEPT'

LAWYER FOR CABLE'S VICTIMS SLAMS AFL AND KANGAROOS FOR THEIR SILENCE

**Mark Robinson
Michael Warner**

The lawyer for four women sexually assaulted by footy legend Barry Cable has savaged the AFL and the North Melbourne and Perth football clubs for their "callous and inept" silence over the historical sex offences.

Michael Magazanik, a partner at Rightside Legal, said not one of the three organisations had reached out to the women despite knowing since February of the depravity of Cable's behaviour.

Three of the women were raped or sexually assaulted when they were aged nine to 12 while Cable was coaching North Melbourne, from 1981-84.

The fourth woman, who last week was awarded \$818,700 in damages in a West Australian civil case, was assaulted hundreds of times by Cable, and raped in the changerooms at Perth Football Club in August 1971.

A fifth woman not associated with football also gave evidence in the case about Cable's predatory behaviour towards her.

Magazanik said the AFL liked to preen publicly about all matters, but "when push comes to shove it's failed its biggest test it's ever had on women".

"There's been no contact from the AFL, no contact from North Melbourne, and I've watched the AFL's public response and they've not expressed any compassion or concern for the women who have been raped or sexually assaulted," Magazanik said.

"The AFL said it took note of the decision (last week) and had no further comment. That was it. Not even our hearts go out to the women,

we want to offer them counselling, we feel terribly for them, this is a blight on our game ... nothing, not one word.

"And North – and it was their coach who raped them – have been totally invisible, not one single word about the women.

"I am amazed at how callous and inept the AFL and North Melbourne and the Perth Football Club have been about this.

"One of these women was raped repeatedly at age 10, and there is not a single skerrick of public com-

passion for these women, not offers of assistance or help.

It's as though they don't exist.

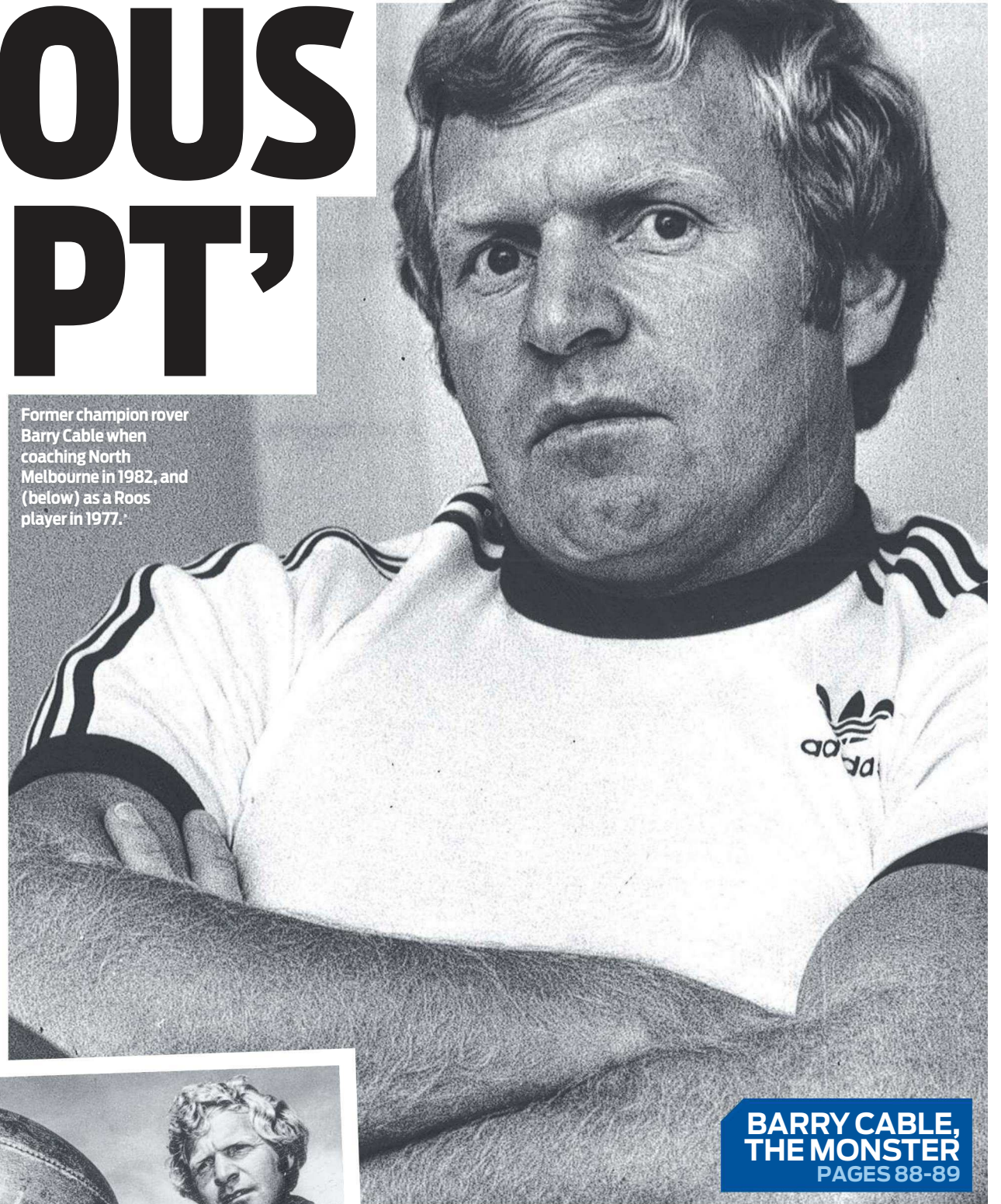
"The AFL's concern about men in the game is appropriate, the concern for Marlion Pickett and the concern for Alastair Clarkson, and the concern for the Hawthorn families,

all this is appropriate, but what happened to these women is orders of magnitudes worse."

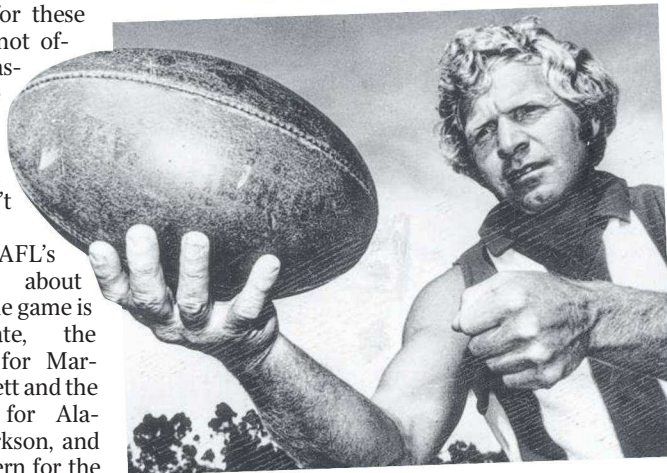
The AFL Commission appears certain to strip Cable of his "Legend" status and he will be booted from the Australian Football Hall of Fame, a move that will be set in motion at a commission meeting ahead of Tuesday's Hall of Fame dinner in Melbourne.

It comes after the AFL Commission approved a rule change on the day of last week's court ruling that would allow the Australian Football Hall of Fame to sus-

Former champion rover Barry Cable when coaching North Melbourne in 1982, and (below) as a Roos player in 1977.



**BARRY CABLE,
THE MONSTER**
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pend or revoke membership of the game's greats.

Magazanik said Cable should have been stood down from the Hall of Fame before the court case in February, such was the hideous nature of the allegations.

"If someone's a shoplifter, OK. If someone's a speeder, OK, there's probably a grey area in the middle somewhere. But I think every single Australian can get around the idea that if you rape kids that's not OK," he said.

"And if five women tell the same story, really, come on, and now the judge has lis-

tened to all of that and believed them ... Cable's just a complete and utter grub.

"The AFL is a bazillion-dollar empire with access to

all sorts of advisers and experts and PR people, and counsellors, and I'm sure they've offered counselling to the Hawthorn families as they should have.

"But for these women who have been victims of sex crimes? It's unreal.

"The AFL knows this is an issue, it's not like this issue has come out of the dark and bitten them on the arse for the first time in history and they don't know what to do.

"They've been dealing with sexual abuse for years, the sexual abuse of boys; their silence, it's ridiculous. It's actually inexplicable.

“**And North – and it was their coach who raped them – have been totally invisible, not one single word about the women**”

**Michael Magazanik,
a partner at
Rightside Legal**

"Even the Catholic Church at the start of litigation says we want to offer your client paid-for counselling."

Cable, 79, is one of the sport's most decorated players, having played 379 senior

games for Perth, North Melbourne and East Perth.

He represented North Melbourne in 115 games in 1970 and 1974-77, won two premierships and was rover in the club's team of the century.

He coached the Kangaroos for 76 games from 1981-84.

"Clearly, North should be offering apologies, support, access to counselling and get into the broader discussion about what else they can do for the three women," Magazanik said.

It's not known if the women plan action against the club.

Cable has denied abusing the women and has not been charged with any criminal offences. Before the civil case started, he fought the lifting of an order suppressing his identity and in the days before the case started he declared bankruptcy.

The WA Football Hall of Fame has dumped Cable.

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