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The West Australian

HOW DID PILOTS SURVIVE THIS?



REPORT PAGE 11

REVEALED

The 35-year mortgages

KIM MACDONALD

Property owners facing rising interest rates can now repay their mortgage over 35 years.

Finance experts yesterday warned "desperation" would drive more and more borrowers down this path.

But they also warned that any short-term relief from financial pain would actually leave families hundreds of thousands of dollars more out of pocket.

FULL REPORTS PAGES 8-9



SAVE THE CABANA!

OPINION PAGE 13

SPECIAL REPORTS
PAGES 4-5 & 7



Bombshell
child sex abuse
allegations
against footy
legend Cable

ICON OR DEMON

TIM CLARKE

WA football great Barry Cable will go on trial today accused of child sex crimes. Mr Cable, 79, has been accused by a woman in her 60s of abusing her from the age of 12 into adulthood. The ex-Perth Demons star vehemently denies the claims.





Barry Cable shows the scar on his rebuilt leg after a 1979 tractor accident. Opposite page: Cable in action for Perth.



Footy icon in shock child sex abuse claims

Barry Cable finally revealed as WA legend who woman says forced himself on her as a teen and tried to rape her at Perth Football Club

West Australian sporting legend Barry Cable will go on trial today accused of being a violent child sex abuser while at the peak of his footballing powers.

Mr Cable, now 79, has never been charged by WA Police with any crime, despite being subject to an aborted investigation in the late 90s.

Instead, the allegations that he repeatedly sexually abused a young girl from the age of 12 come from the girl herself — now a woman in her 60s — who claims the abuse has blighted her life for more than half a century.

For the first time, that woman will tell her story in public on Wednesday, in Perth's District Court before a judge who will hear her damages claim.

That claim has been active for more than four years.

But only now can Mr Cable's identity be publicly linked to it, after suppression orders protecting his identity were lifted following arguments from lawyers from The West Australian.

TIM CLARKE



Judge Mark Herron also lifted restrictions on reporting the contents of the woman's lawsuit — which contain the shocking allegations she first made to WA Police in 1998.

In it, she catalogues a string of alleged sexual attacks, starting when she was just 12 or 13.

It also alleges continued unwanted contact stretching into the woman's adulthood — including a bizarre afternoon when Mr Cable is alleged to have walked naked and uninvited into the family home.

The pair first came into contact as neighbours, and would then spend time at each other's houses.

In late 1968, Mr Cable is said to have told the girl that he would be a "good coach for her" — not in football, but in the facts of life, the birds and the bees and "so she would be a big hit with men".

After walking around in front of the girl in his underwear, and then exposing himself, Mr Cable is alleged to have started abusing her — while referring to his genitals as his "totem pole".

The abuse is said to have occurred in Mr Cable's car, at his home, at bush locations where he used to drive, and at the swimming pool in Thornlie where he used to work.

It is also alleged it occurred

where he played some of the best football of his storied sporting career.

"On 2 August 1971 the defendant took the plaintiff to the Perth Football Club in Lathlain," the claim says.

There, Mr Cable is alleged to have kissed the girl, pushed her against the wall, attempted to rape her on a bench, and then "struck the plaintiff across the mouth as he was driving her home afterwards".

She would have been aged 16.

Diaries kept by the woman at the time were said to record the regular assaults, using her abuser's initials and various codes and illustrations, including tear-drops. And the statement given to child abuse detectives in the late 90s echoes the shocking claims she makes now.

"He used to say it was our secret, that he was my coach and that I was a very lucky girl. I didn't ever feel good," she said at the time.

"If I refused to do something, he said my sister would be his special girl."

"This terrified me and made me protect her from him. I felt worthless, hated myself and wished I was dead."

Following the police investigation, detectives and the director of public prosecutions decided not to charge the Australian Hall of Fame legend.

But in a major twist, detec-

SPORTING BRAIN SET HIM APART

GLEN QUARTERMAIN

Barry Cable the footballer was small in stature but as big as they come on delivery.

Considered an outright number two behind the late Graham "Polly" Farmer as the best player to have come out of Western Australia, Mr Cable was elevated to Legend status by the Australian Football Hall of Fame in 2012.

Now 11 years on from that

honour, he is mired in controversy.

He will front a civil trial today accused of the historical sexual abuse of a child. His accuser alleges Mr Cable sexually abused her between 1968-73, from the age of 12 to her late teens. He denies the allegations.

On the field, his former coaches and teammates spoke of the 168cm rover's heightened game sense and marvelled at his ability to run non-stop.

Mr Cable drew on superior fitness as a keen long-distance runner and quick reflexes that enabled him to fire out laser handballs off either hand and hit moving targets 30m away.

He was equally adept with his feet.

Mr Cable's North Melbourne coach Ron Barassi described him as the most professional thinking footballer he had met.

Keith Greig, his captain at the Kangaroos from 1976-77,

explained Mr Cable's ability to read the play.

"Some guys are ball watchers and ran to where the ball is, but others ran to where the ball is going to go — 'Cables' had that instinct all his career," Greig told the North Melbourne website in 2012. "Sometimes you wondered why he was running to a certain spot, but then you'd see the ball go there and he's got it and you're going forward again."

Born and raised in Narrogin,

I felt worthless, hated myself and wished I was dead. Alleged victim



If I refused to do something, he said my sister would be his special girl. Alleged victim

UNBEATABLE ON THE FIELD

- 1962:** Joined Perth Demons in the WAFL
- 1964:** Awarded the Sandover Medal for the league's best player as a 21-year-old
- 1966:** Named in the VFL's All-Australian team for the first time
- 1966-68:** Became a triple WAFL premiership player, while earning the Simpson Medal in Perth's three-peat of flags
- 1968:** A Sandover Medallist for the second time
- 1965-1969:** Won five consecutive club best and fairest awards for Perth
- 1969:** Named an All-Australian for the second time
- 1970:** Joined North Melbourne in the VFL for a year, winning the club's best-and-fairest-award
- 1971:** Returned to the WAFL with Perth, winning his sixth club best-and-fairest-award
- 1973:** Became a triple Sandover Medallist. Won seventh and final best and fairest award for Perth
- 1974:** Rejoined North Melbourne
- 1975:** Became a VFL premiership player with North Melbourne
- 1977:** Won his second flag with North Melbourne in his final game for the Roos
- 1978:** Became a captain-coach for East Perth, leading the club to premiership victory over his former club
- 1979:** Retired after 379 games for Perth (225), North Melbourne (115) and East Perth (39)
- 1981:** Stepped in mid-season as North Melbourne coach. He remained at the helm until 1984
- 1987-1990:** Served as an assistant coach with the West Coast Eagles
- 1996:** An inaugural inductee in the Football Hall of Fame
- 2001:** Named in North Melbourne Team of the Century
- 2005:** Named in the Indigenous Team of the Century

tives involved then alleged there had been interference by senior police, including a high-ranking officer who was a friend of Mr Cable.

Those allegations were eventually probed by the Kennedy royal commission into police corruption, during which Mr Cable was referred to as Q2.

That commission found that while senior police contact with Mr Cable at the time was "unwise, if not foolish", officers had not engaged in any improper conduct.

And Mr Cable has never been criminally charged over any alleged abuse.

The relaxing of WA's laws in 2018, which removed limitation periods for civil action by alleged victims of child sex assaults, prompted the woman to revive her allegations.

Her lawyer Michael Magazani, from Rightside Legal, said his client had remained "resolute and determined" throughout to have her day in court.

"My client has asked me to say that she is relieved that she is finally able to give her evidence and have a WA court pass

judgment," he said. "She has lived with this matter for more than 50 years.

"In 2018 when the laws changed in WA, abolishing time limits for abuse survivors, she contacted me and we began work on her behalf.

"Since then she has been resolute and determined, through years of legal wrangling."

Along with psychological treatments, past and present, and lost earnings, she is claiming just over \$1 million in damages from Mr Cable.

But Perth's District Court has already been told any damages award is unlikely to be paid, because Mr Cable filed for personal bankruptcy in January this year.

The revelation of that bankruptcy led to a last-ditch attempt to have the case



thrown out last week. But that failed, as have several other attempts over the last four years.

Lawyers for Mr Cable have claimed variously that the case has taken away his right to silence and his health, and the delay between alleged abuse and accusation is unfairly long. Ultimately, he says the abuse never occurred.

But he does say he had a consensual sexual relationship with the woman when she was in her 20s.

In his defence case, first filed in April 2019, Mr Cable issued strenuous denials to virtually every allegation.

Mr Cable cited his appearance in the drawn VFL grand final of 1977, and the replay the following week, as evidence of how he

could not have committed one of the alleged claims.

He also cited his detailed movements around another game — against East Fremantle on April 29, 1972 — as defence against another alleged attack said to have taken place as he drove the girl home.

"The defendant (Mr Cable) denies any allegedly illegal or improper contact," the defence case states. "The defendant was never alone with the plaintiff as the defendant's wife was always present when the plaintiff was present."

And he also denied ever being alone with the girl at Lathlain, the home of the Perth Demons, or ever hitting her.

"After 400 games of league football in which he was the target of calculated violence from opposition players, he has never been reported for striking, retaliation or rough conduct," the defence states.

Mr Cable has told the court he will not take part, or turn up, to the civil trial beginning today.

1800 Respect National Helpline 1800 737 732

Mr Cable was invited to display his craft in a pre-season match for East Fremantle in 1961 but arrived late and so he didn't play.

He joined Perth the following season and as a 21-year-old won the first of three Sandover medals. He was a linchpin in the Demons' midfield in a hat-trick of flags from 1966-68.

Mr Cable resisted several approaches from VFL clubs, the most robust launched by Carl-

ton, before agreeing to join North Melbourne in 1970. In his first season with the Roos he won their best and fairest and finished fourth in the Brownlow Medal.

As agreed in a complex transfer deal, Mr Cable returned to Perth for the 1971 season, and was captain-coach in 1972 before resuming with North Melbourne in 1973 as they chased a maiden flag under Barassi.

That success came in 1975 and

was repeated in 1977, with Mr Cable rivalling Hawthorn great Leigh Matthews as the best rover in the competition, before he again returned to Perth.

In a shock twist that spun the WAFL on its axis, Mr Cable took up captain-coaching duties with East Perth, the Demons' arch-rivals, ironically leading the Royals to a two-point victory over Perth in driving rain in the 1978 grand final at Subiaco Oval.

Mr Cable played his last game in 1979 and a month later was seriously injured in a tractor accident at his Orange Grove property.

His severed leg was saved after a 17-hour operation, the surgeons believing his fitness levels played a big part in his survival.

He had another stint as coach of East Perth before replacing Malcolm Blight at the helm of North Melbourne for the last six

games of the 1981 season. He coached the Roos until the end of 1984.

Along with his three Sandovers, Mr Cable won Perth's best and fairest seven times, was twice an All-Australian and a Tassie medallist in 1966. He was inducted into the Sport Australia Hall of Fame in 1986.

Now he has found himself thrust back into the spotlight with a court case that threatens to tarnish his legendary image.

OPEN JUSTICE FOR ALL

Why a judge lifted a suppression order on footy great after four years

TIM CLARKE

"The principle of open justice is a fundamental tenet of our justice system. The media has a vitally important role in disseminating information about the justice system, and in doing so, improving the public's understanding of and access to that system."

So say the guidelines of WA's Supreme Court, espousing the principle, which also guides all the State's other courts.

It was with that principle in mind, that in April 2019, The West Australian applied to Perth's District Court — under the court's own rules — to view a writ which listed Barry Thomas Cable as a defendant. We knew it existed. The case had already been publicly listed. We had an idea of what was being alleged.

But what we didn't know was just how long it would take for a judge to agree that the public should be allowed to hear of the gravest of allegations against one of this State's highest-profile sportsmen.

They remain allegations, untested in a court until a trial which begins on Wednesday. They remain denied by Mr Cable, who up until several



Barry Cable gets a standing ovation as he runs out for East Perth in 1979 for his 400th game.

weeks ago had employed lawyers to defend him.

Twice the 79-year-old's representatives applied to the court to have the case permanently stayed — courtroom speak for it being canned forever.

Those attempts failed, including an argument before WA's

Court of Appeal. And at the same time, the same lawyers fought tooth and nail to keep Mr Cable's name under wraps.

The arguments were many and varied.

They included that a civil allegation removed Mr Cable's right to silence. The length of time

from alleged act to legal allegation was so long it would irretrievably prejudice any defence.

That Mr Cable's reputation and health would suffer if he was to be named.

And, that if he was identified, then that might pressure him into settling a case he

might otherwise have defended against an accuser who would not be named.

It was that last argument which eventually persuaded former chief Judge Kevin Sleight to grant the suppression, despite opposition from The West.

"This protection provided to the plaintiff creates an imbalance which in my opinion undermines the administration of justice by giving the plaintiff an unfair advantage if the defendant's name is not also anonymised," Judge Sleight said.

But our lawyers, and others, did not give up. Just before Christmas, they tried again, asking the court for the media to be allowed to name Mr Cable.

And after four years — and one day before the allegations are tested at trial — Judge Mark Herron ruled because Mr Cable was no longer planning to be part of the trial, then any pressure he might have felt to settle, was long gone.

"Although I accept that the lifting of the suppression orders ... is likely to cause damage to his reputation, that is an unavoidable by-product of litigation and the principle of open justice," Judge Herron ruled.



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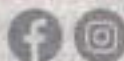
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