

Court hears of taunts and tirade

A TIRADE of abuse in the early hours of October 5 last year preceded a vicious attack, Batemans Bay Local Court heard on Monday.

That was according to police facts tendered to court in the case of accused 23-year-old Dean Carruthers.

The accused and his victim were co-workers at the time of the alleged attack, and had known each other for a number of years.

Each Monday the victim would drive Mr Carruthers from his Church Street home in Mogo to Canberra, where they worked, and home again at the end of the week.

On the morning of the incident Mr Carruthers allegedly got into the victim's vehicle spouting a "tirade" of verbal abuse.

The victim had trouble understanding Mr Carruthers and told him "if he kept going he could get out".

They were driving north when Mr Carruthers allegedly threw the first of a number of closed-fisted punches. That one hit the victim's left eye and knocked his glasses off.

In his statement the victim says he told the accused to "get out", and attempted to roll down his window. That was when Mr Carruthers allegedly threw the next punch, this time at his right eye.

According to the victim, there was a large amount of blood and his teeth felt rough.

The accused allegedly asked: "Do you want another one?" to which his victim replied "no".

The victim told police he was fearful for himself, and his family, which is why he didn't immediately come forward.

However he changed his mind following an alleged barrage of text messages from the accused, rang-

ing from abusive to apologetic.

Days later, after an alleged missed call from his victim, Mr Carruthers is said to have apologised.

"If you're still awake can you call me I really am sorry I don't know what's wrong with me I just snap. I know I have issues that need to be sorted but if I end up in jail it's not going to help them mate, I know my actions are wrong, I'm really sorry."

But again, days later he had changed his mind, allegedly taunting his victim with messages, one that read: "My lawyers are strong and my money is long".

The victim allegedly received another message on October 14 in which Mr Carruthers told him to "call the office" if he wanted his money.

It was at this point the victim chose to involve police.

Hours later, he was at the Batemans Bay Police Station armed with photos of his injuries, allegedly taken by his wife at the time of the incident.

While offering a statement to police, he received another alleged text from Mr Carruthers.

It read: "I'm sorry about everything I'm just so stressed at the moment ... my reaction was not right and I really am sorry but if you decide to take the money I will arrange to have it dropped to Nadeanes. A court case will be trouble for both of us cause you will have to get a lawyer too ... there will be no CCTV".

Mr Carruthers was arrested in the early hours of October 16 and charged with assault occasioning actual bodily harm, to which he pled not guilty.

The case is part-heard and will be finalised by Magistrate Chris Bone on April 29.

Stem-cell surgery gives Tana his bounce back

By **KERRIE O'CONNOR**

HE was named for the All Black hero Tana Umaga, but Tana the all black Labrador would be on the bench without a new stem-cell treatment.

His appetite was world class, but Potato Point's Kristy Madill and Peter Gordon knew something was wrong with their enormous two-year-old pedigree friend.

A hound born to bound, Tana just didn't seem up to it.

"We would walk on the beach and we would have to stop and wait for him," Kristy said.

He needed a box to climb on to get in the car and struggled to get up from the floor.

Kristy knew that fast-growing puppies could have hip problems and Peter, familiar with hip dysplasia, had his suspicions too.

"I was watching him walk in the sand, thinking, there is something wrong," he said.

Moruya veterinarian Gary Eggins confirmed dysplasia.

"He was obviously in pain," Kristy said and, without stem-cell surgery, would need painkillers for the rest of his life.

"We decided to go stem-cell therapy, because it was roughly the same cost over three years," she said.



OFF THE BENCH: Tana, the "Labrador crossed with a Clydesdale", can now run and jump, owners Peter Gordon and Kristy Madill say, thanks to stem-cell therapy performed by Moruya vet Mary Atkinson, left.

A new generation of treatments have turned a lengthy process into day-surgery and made it economic for those not named Rockefeller.

Operating vet Mary Atkinson said the process has been available overseas and in Sydney for several years.

"But it was very expensive," she said.

"The new technology that has come through Medivet has made it more affordable and brought in equipment for harvesting and activating the stem-cells."

First she had to "harvest" fat from behind Tana's shoulder. At more than 60 kilos, he had some to spare.

Then came what Gary called "the dark arts": Mary took a peach-sized lump of fat, heated it, exposed it to UV light and soaked it in a sample of Tana's own blood. The platelets and plasma activated Tana's dormant stem cells and the resulting potion was injected directly, under a second anaesthetic, into his four recalcitrant joints.

He was home that night and three days later was "up and about".

"He is a different dog," Kristy said. "He runs for joy."

Peter said the newly mobile Tana had lost more than 10 kilos.

"We are just constantly looking at each other and smiling and saying, 'look, he's running!'"

Mary too was "ecstatic".

"He was a wonderful candidate because he was a young dog and would need a very long time on drugs," she said.

The surgery, however, has its limits.

"You are not going to grow a new joint, but we are improving the joint quality, we are improving the cartilage," Mary said.

"We don't know yet how long this improvement is going to last, but they have case reports going back now for about five years and the results have been really promising."

She said the procedure was harder on smaller dogs, but not impossible.

"I think it is an amazing thing. If I had the opportunity to do it in one of our dogs I wouldn't hesitate, if it was a case of being on an anti-inflammatory for the next two or three years of their life or doing this."

Zumbathon to raise tsunami funds

FUNDRAISERS are being asked to shake more than a leg during Australian Red Cross's earthquake and tsunami appeal in Batemans Bay this month.

The Zumbathon and Masala Bhangra

Workout will last from 10am to midnight on Saturday, April 30, at the Batemans Bay Soldiers Club.

Instructors Gemma Bartlett, Tracy Spence and Kumiko Takakura will be there to help but

participants should bring a bottle of water.

It costs \$20 to enter. For more information, phone 0412 638 071.

Meanwhile, the Red Cross will also be collecting donations at the Tilba Easter Festival.

UNITING CARE PIVOT POINT COMMUNITY CENTRE

Volunteers Wanted

Uniting Care is a not-for-profit organisation of the Uniting Church of Australia and is governed by a Board and staffed by volunteers.

Head Office and the Dove Inn are located within the Uniting Church complex on the corner of Cobb's Avenue and Beach Road and are open Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday mornings from 9:30 am to 12:00 noon, offering a range of services to the local community including:

- Emergency relief for members of the community who face a crisis or genuine hardship, offering material aid and referrals
- Books on wheels - a library book delivery service to readers unable to access the library by themselves
- Caring Club - a fortnightly social get-together, lunch and activities for the elderly
- Dove Inn - a drop-in centre where you can have a coffee and a chat with our friendly volunteers

WE ARE CURRENTLY SEEKING VOLUNTEERS FROM OUR LOCAL COMMUNITY TO WORK IN THE FOLLOWING AREAS

- Emergency relief assessors and administration support
- Dove Inn volunteers willing to offer a friendly ear to those wanting to have a chat over a coffee
- Caring Club volunteers to assist with activities and meals
- Books on Wheels volunteers (current drivers licence and comprehensive insured vehicle required)

As a volunteer you will be part of a team where your time and commitment are appreciated. You will be given support, orientation and training as required in your position. You will gain satisfaction by engaging in meaningful work, helping others, meeting new people and using your skills while working alongside others who are passionate about what they do. People seeking to join the team may be required to undergo a criminal record check and working with children check.

If you are interested in volunteering for any of these positions, please call us on 4472 6099 weekday mornings other than Wednesday and leave your name and contact phone number or email us at pivotpoint@unitingcare.com.au and we will contact you with further information.