

# Matthew Lodge Assault Victims Speak Out About His Return To National Rugby League

March 2, 2018 • News & Press

*Photo courtesy of 9 News*

Nearly one year after a New York judge ordered Australian professional rugby player [Matthew Lodge](#) to pay [over \\$1.2 million in damages](#) as a result of the violent attack carried out against Wigdor LLP clients Joseph Cartright, Ruth Fowler and Carolyn Dekeyser, the National Rugby League ("NRL") has announced that Mr. Lodge will return to play for the Brisbane Broncos.

Meanwhile, Mr. Lodge has continued to ignore the victims of his brutal assault, demonstrating a stark lack of remorse and a refusal to accept responsibility for his conduct.

In the early hours of October 16, 2015, Mr. Lodge followed Ms. Dekeyser and her friend back to the New York City apartment building in which they were staying while on vacation, and began to threaten their lives in an alcohol-induced rage, telling them "tonight is the night you're going to die." He then forcibly entered the building in which Mr. Cartright and his partner, Ms. Fowler lived with their then nine-year-old son. Once inside, Mr. Lodge proceeded to violently attack Mr. Cartright and locked himself in their apartment, breaking furniture and even punching a hole in the door of the bathroom where Ms. Fowler had retreated to protect the couple's child. Years later, the child is still traumatized by the event, according to the couple.

"It's pretty heartbreaking to think that this man might become a role model for Australian children given what he did to us," Ms. Fowler said [in an interview](#) with the Sydney Morning Herald.

[In an interview](#) with 9 News, Mr. Cartright said he was disappointed that Mr. Lodge was allowed to return to the NRL without having shown any remorse for his actions. "We don't want Matthew Lodge not to play [...] You're allowed to have a second chance, you're allowed redemption. But you can't receive redemption unless you feel a sense of remorse, a sense of responsibility," Mr. Cartright said.

[Todd Greenberg](#), Chief Executive Officer of the NRL, has stood by the NRL's decision to allow Mr. Lodge to continue playing for the league.

Statement of [Renan F. Varghese](#), Senior Associate at Wigdor LLP:

"Throughout this case we have simply sought justice for Mr. Cartright, Ms. Fowler and Ms. Dekeyser but rather than face the consequences of his actions, Mr. Lodge has instead fled to Australia where he has done everything in his power to ignore what he did. Unfortunately, it appears as if he is being assisted in his efforts by both the NRL and the Broncos, who

have incredibly portrayed Mr. Lodge to the Australian people as the victim. The only victims in this situation are our clients, the individuals that Mr. Lodge brutally and viciously attacked. We are committed to holding Mr. Lodge accountable for what he did to them, regardless of where he runs.”

**Fox Sports**

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