

CCTV shows NRL star's wild rampage



Anna Caldwell in New York, News Corp Australia Network

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THE first images of disgraced NRL player Matthew Lodge assaulting an innocent father outside his New York apartment last year have been released as the sacked West Tigers player's victims seek up to \$US2 million in damages.

It comes after Lodge called a Manhattan law firm to declare he couldn't afford to pay the damages over the violent home invasion.



CCTV footage shows former NRL player Matthew Lodge assaulting Joseph Cartright.

Lodge made the pleading phone call from Australia just ahead of today's Manhattan court hearing in which New York couple Joseph Cartright and Ruth Fowler detailed the horror of a violent Lodge barging into their apartment in October 2015, and the ongoing trauma suffered by their nine-year-old son.



Lodge attacked Joseph Cartright and trashed his New York apartment.

The startling CCTV stills show Lodge attacking Mr Cartright outside his apartment that night.

They will be used by Manhattan law firm Wigdor LLP in a bid to prosecute the victims' case.

Testifying in court, Mr Cartright — who was held in a headlock and repeatedly punched by Lodge — told how the crazed prop stormed through the couple's apartment declaring "I come in peace, I'm Matthew Lodge and my lawyer will take care of this" as he proceeded to trash the place.

The victims are making a bid for up to \$USD2 million in damages.



Matthew Lodge of the Tigers is tackled. Picture: Getty

Lodge was absent for the hearing and had no legal representation.

Mr Cartright told how Lodge repeatedly told the victims they were going to die before punching a fist through the bathroom door where his wife Ruth was hiding with the couple's nine year old son.



Former Wests Tigers NRL player Matthew Lodge. Picture: Instagram

The events began when Lodge followed two young women home from a New York nightclub at about 4am last October, telling them they were going to die.

Mr Cartright attempted to let the women into the apartment complex so they could escape Lodge, but footballer barged his way in.

“I tried to push back, but he was massive. At one point he had me in a headlock and threw me across the foyer like I was a ball.”

Lodge then locked Mr Cartright out of his own apartment, ransacking the upper west side brownstone while Ms Fowler and the couple's nine year old son locked themselves in the bathroom, the court heard.

Lodge emptied the couple's kitchen, hurling dishes and kitchenware throughout the home and throwing furniture at walls, the couple testified.



Google Street view image of 341 West End Avenue, New York, the scene of the alleged assault by Wests Tigers Matthew Lodge. Picture: Google

Police drew their guns on entering the apartment after Lodge hurled a wine bottle at them through the front door.

The court heard that the family was so traumatised by the events, they had to move from their Manhattan apartment where they had lived for at least 20 years to Brooklyn.

The family has undergone therapy for trauma from the events.

When asked if they would move forward with therapy for the nine year old, Mr Cartright replied "absolutely".

The court heard how the young boy still suffers night terrors

Defence attorney Renan Varghese said Lodge had called his law firm in the past two weeks.



Matthew Lodge was the captain of the Junior Kangaroos. Picture: Adam Head

Judge Ronald Ellis remarked Lodge had made no such contact with the court.

"He told us that he didn't have any representation," Mr Varghese said outside court.

"That he wasn't playing rugby anymore and he told us he wasn't going to be able to satisfy any kind of judgement. But this is the kind of thing we hear from defendants all the time.

"There have been articles about him in Australia about his (management) reaching out to the NRL about getting reinstated and resuming his career - considering his age we think there's a good chance he'll get reinstated."

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Credit: Facebook/Jack Lodge