

Former West Tigers' prop Matthew Lodge's New York victims 'disappointed' he avoids jail

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New York: A New York judge has declined to send former Wests Tigers prop Matthew Lodge back to Rikers Island jail, instead making him a free man and setting up a likely return to his NRL career.

The brief hearing on the fourth floor of the New York Criminal Court on Monday was not such good news for the Manhattan family terrorised in their home by the powerfully-built Lodge.

Joseph Cartright, on behalf of his wife Ruth and nine-year-old son, made a last-ditched, emotional plea to Judge Kate Paek to deal out some kind of punishment to Lodge for his "violent and horrifying conduct" that inflicted physical and psychological pain to his family.

The judge declined.

"Our clients are obviously disappointed," Renan Varghese, who is representing the family and another female victim in a \$US1.2 million civil lawsuit filed against Lodge in New York, told AAP.

"They had thought in light of the complete lack of remorse he has showed for his conduct perhaps the court would have deviated from the plea agreement."

Lodge, 21, was not required to be in court for the sentencing and remained in Australia.

The 193cm tall, 110kg Lodge went on a rampage about 4am on October 16 last year while on a New York holiday.

The terror began when Lodge confronted two women as they stepped out of a cab, told them it was the "night you will die" and then forced his way into their apartment building.

Mr Cartright, who had a unit in the building near the foyer, woke up, went to help the women but Lodge put him in a headlock and punched him in the face.

Lodge also went into Mr Cartright's apartment, locked the door, began breaking plates and furniture and then attempted to smash down a bathroom door Mr Cartright's wife and son were hiding behind.

Lodge was arrested at gunpoint by NYPD officers.

The family requires psychological treatment, with Mr Cartright telling the court his son has trouble sleeping and socialising.

Lodge, who spent several days locked up at the infamous Rikers jail complex after his arrest, was originally charged with a felony burglary causing injury count which carried a minimum of five years' jail and a maximum of 25-years.

But in a plea deal signed a year ago with prosecutors, he entered a guilty plea to a misdemeanor count of reckless assault.

The victims opposed the deal.

To avoid a one-year jail sentence Lodge was ordered to complete 200 hours of community service in

Australia, receive alcohol abuse and anger treatment, abstain from alcohol and illegal drugs, submit to testing and avoid another arrest.

Judge Paek was told on Monday Lodge had adhered to the deal.

She sentenced Lodge to a conditional discharge.

"He has worked very hard to address the issues which led to his arrest in this case and he will continue to work on his issues even when the case is over," Lodge's lawyer Thomas Rotko told AAP.

Lodge, who was sacked by Wests Tigers after his arrest, appears set to play for the Brisbane Broncos' Queensland Rugby League feeder club, the Redcliffe Dolphins.

AAP