

Gold Coast **The Bulletin**

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A time capsule of locals and what they do...

64-page souvenir liftout inside

Camera lies



A grandpa wins one for all the motorists who think they've been duded by a speed camera

A GRANDFATHER accused of driving too fast has taken on a speed camera and won.

The camera clocked Craig Webb at 76km/h in a 60 zone on Ashmore Road, Bundall, last year.

But instead of paying up, Mr Webb de-

cidated to fight the \$135 ticket and the loss of three demerit points.

Armed with a scrapbook of photos of the scene, Mr Webb represented himself in court and beat the might of the Queensland Police Service.

● How he did it - Page 4



Candidate's banned war rifle seized ● Page 7

Fight 'Big Brother', says speed camera victor

Granddad took on the law and won

by Amelia Bentley

A PENSIONER who successfully took on the Queensland Police Service to contest a speed camera ticket has urged others to fight 'Big Brother'.

Mermaid Waters grandfather Craig Hannon Webb, 65, denied doing 76km/h in a 60km/h zone in Ashmore Road, Bundall, on June 2 last year.

So he represented himself and appealed against the \$135 ticket and three-demerit point loss in Southport Magistrates Court yesterday and, much to his surprise, he won.

After the three-hour summary trial, Magistrate Dermot Kehoe found him not guilty of exceeding the speed limit.

Outside court Mr Webb, a retired farmer, said he had thought the odds were stacked against him and believed the magistrate would have sided with police.

"I didn't expect that (the not guilty verdict) after he (Mr Kehoe) did say I had a case to answer," he said.

"But that is a relief and it was worth the fight. I thought I would be made to pay thousands of dollars in costs if I lost."

In court, Mr Kehoe said he had reasonable doubt the speed camera had been set up correctly.

Mr Webb had denied speeding and argued the speed camera unit was not set up according to correct standards because it was near a steel fence, reflective road signs and tall buildings that could have affected the radar.

He said the camera was also set up about six lanes away from his car and it was possible the

radar picked up the speed of a car moving in the opposite direction but only photographed his car.

"It was a car going the other way. I happened to be across the road in the range of the camera. I was not speeding," he said.

Mr Webb brought to court a scrapbook with photos he had taken of the scene of the alleged offence showing where his car was and where the camera was set up, and showing objects which he said could disturb the camera's radar.

He also told the court he had been driving for more than 50 years and had only once been caught speeding in 2004.

But police argued Mr Webb's claims were 'completely fanciful'.

They questioned how Mr Webb was sure he was doing the speed limit when he had admitted the accuracy of the speedometer in his 15-year-old Mitsubishi Magna had never been checked by a professional.

Queensland Police Service electronics technician Rod James told the court there was no evidence that indicated the radar beam and speed reading was not correct.

He said there was nothing in the vicinity of the radar beam that could affect the accuracy of the radar or the integrity of the photo.

"They (objects in the area) had no influence at all," he said.

Outside court Mr Webb said he was pleased by the decision.

"You can't always fight Big Brother but you can always try," he said.

"It was worth it."

Yesterday, a police spokeswoman said police would consider appealing against the decision.

WHEN THE CAMERA LIES

November 2003

MELBOURNE speed cameras were found to be faulty and had wrongly booked motorists at up to 94km/h over the speed limit. A 30-year-old Datsun 120Y was wrongly recorded travelling at 158km/h, and a truck was snapped at 174km/h on an uphill stretch in a tunnel.

May 2004

THE Victorian Government decided to refund \$13.7 million to 90,000 motorists booked by faulty cameras. Another \$10.4m in unpaid or unissued fines were waived and the government provided up to \$6m compensation to drivers who lost their licences. More than 25,825 unpaid speed camera fines were withdrawn.

March 2005

New South Wales authorities agreed to scrap 36 fines against buses and other heavy vehicles from a camera in Mosman after discovering a fault triggered by heavy vehicles.

August 2005

MORE than 100 motorists were wrongly booked on the Hume Highway because a camera was set at the wrong speed. A driver was booked for doing 88km/h in what the infringement notice said was an 80km/h zone. But when the driver went back to the scene he found it was a 90km/h zone.

August 2005

POLICE temporarily withdrew 180 mobile speed cameras from use in Queensland after they were found to be 'too sensitive' to vehicle movement. The digital traffic radars, which had been operational since late 2004 and fitted to police cars, were found to give readings from oncoming vehicles the operator could not see.



SPEED
CAMERAS
IN USE
24 Hrs

March 2006

A speeding fine was dismissed after the RTA told a New South Wales court it could not prove an image from a camera had not been doctored. Due to the absence of any encryption on the speed camera photo, accused speedster Timothy Mitchell - who was snapped allegedly doing 21km/h over the limit in Auburn - was let off by Supreme Court Justice Michael Adams.

What they use

Queensland police use Gatso speed cameras, Victoria has Poltech, NSW use Traffipax, Poltech and Redflex camera technology.



Legends in charity bash

SOME of Australia's best-known sporting names are on the Tweed today for a two-day major charity golf event.

It might be hard to be in two places at once, but for some star-spotting, head to the Coolangatta Hotel about 2pm (Qld time) or Tweed City Shopping Centre at 2.30pm.

Otherwise, there are still tickets left for the Meet Celebrities celebration from 6pm at Twin Towns Services Club tonight.

There, Aussie legends Dawn Fraser, Wally Lewis and golfer Norman Von Nida will be inducted into the Australian Walk of Fame.

The two-day event will raise money for the Make a Wish Foundation, Tatiana Grigorieva's Gift for Dreams, Camp Quality and the Leukaemia Foundation.

Man nabbed losing Uluru

IT'S one of Australia's most recognisable features, stands 340m tall and even at night is pretty hard to miss.

But despite being just 100m from Uluru, a NSW tourist still could not find the red monolith and waved down a vehicle to ask for directions on Tuesday night.

Unfortunately for him, it was a police car - and he was over the limit.

"The tourist told police he and his female companion wanted directions to the rock," said police.

"The police officer breathalysed the driver after pointing out his headlights were shining right at it - 100 metres away."

The 44-year-old man allegedly returned a blood alcohol reading of 0.116, and was found to be driving unlicensed, said police.

Rape charge

A MAN, 22, will face Beenleigh Magistrates Court today after allegedly breaking into a home at Beaudesert and raping a 17-year-old woman.

The woman was woken by an intruder about 1.50am yesterday and assaulted. She suffered minor injuries.

The man has been charged with aggravated burglary, rape, indecent assault with aggravation and assault occasioning bodily harm.

Government concedes IR law will change if there are 'unintended consequences'

THE Federal Government says it will make changes to its contentious industrial relations overhaul if there are 'unintended consequences'.

After three days of bad publicity over the changes and a series of sackings attributed to the new laws, Workplace Relations Minister Kevin Andrews said yesterday

the Government would make changes if necessary.

"Sensible and responsible government involves monitoring the legislation that you've put in place and, if there are some unintended consequences, or some technical amendments that we need to make, well we would make them because it would

be totally irresponsible not to make proper amendments," he said.

Workers in Melbourne, the Sunshine Coast, Canberra, Tasmania and Sydney have complained of being sacked in the four days since the laws, which remove protection from unfair dismissal, came into effect.

In the latest case, eight long-term employees at Melbourne company Triangle Cables were given four weeks' pay in lieu of notice and told their services were no longer required.

Opposition Leader Kim Beazley said the eight men were the first among millions of Australian workers whose

job security had been torn up by the Prime Minister.

Labor's industrial relations spokesman Stephen Smith yesterday asked Prime Minister John Howard if his office had contacted employer groups and demanded they provide 'good news' stories about the changes.

Mr Howard refused to

deny the speculation. But he said there was nothing wrong with his office being in contact with business groups.

He accused the Opposition and the ACTU of running a scare campaign against the changes and said they had also complained bitterly about his original Workplace Relations Act in 1996.

Win a trip for two to Germany for the FIFA World Cup



Coupon in Saturday