

# NRL Players Sentenced at Downing Centre Court

Two NRL players graced the Downing Centre Courts with their presence yesterday, charged with separate offences.

Bulldogs player Jacob Loko pleaded guilty to drug offences, while former Roosters player Willis Meehan narrowly avoided prison time for assault charges.

The men join a long list of NRL players to front Downing Centre Court in recent years.

## **Jacob Loko Sentenced for Drug Possession**

Bulldogs centre Jacob Loko was [sentenced for drug possession](#) after being found with 5 capsules of MDMA at The Star Casino in September 2015.

According to court documents, security guards observed Loko handing a man \$100 in exchange for a small package in a casino lounge at around 6am on September 3. Police were called and conducted a search on Loko, finding the capsules.

The man who apparently supplied Loko with the drugs was arrested and charged with drug supply.

After pleading guilty, NRL star was handed an 18-month good behaviour bond. But perhaps biggest sting is that he will not be re-signed by the Bulldogs this year's season, with the club extinguishing any hopes of his contract being renewed.

This not the first time Loko has been in trouble with the law: in January 2015, he was [charged with high range drink driving](#) after being caught driving with a blood alcohol concentration of 0.189 – nearly four times the legal limit. The offence saw him receive a criminal conviction, 18-month licence disqualification and \$800 fine.

Just two months later, Loko made headlines after being involved in a violent street brawl with fellow NRL player Jorge Taufua.

While he was not charged over the incident, the Bulldogs banned him from playing for four matches, fined him \$10,000 and ordered him to serve 150 hours of community service.

### **Willis Meehan Sentenced for Assault**

Former Roosters player Willis Meehan also fronted the Downing Centre yesterday to be sentenced for assault and larceny.

Meehan was ultimately sentenced to 150 hours of community service for [threatening a cab driver and stealing](#) in July 2015.

Meehan became enraged when he thought the cab driver had taken him the wrong way. He threatened the driver by asking, 'Do you want to die?' while holding two outstretched fingers to the cabbie's temple.

He then stole a pouch of tobacco as well as \$80 in loose change.

[Deputy Chief Magistrate Christopher O'Brien](#) told Meehan that he narrowly escaped a prison sentence for the offence, which put him in breach of a good behaviour bond imposed last year for a separate assault incident where he head-butted a patron at The Star Casino, before stealing the man's watch.

Meehan was fined \$1500 for the breach of the bond and ordered to enter into a further 18 month bond.

### **Other NRL Stars at Downing Centre Court**

The Downing Centre has welcomed many NRL player through its doors over the years – some of whom have been charged with serious crimes.

In 2009, Gold Coast Titans player Greg Bird appeared charged with glassing his girlfriend Katie Milligan and making a false accusation to police after he blamed a friend for the incident.

Magistrate Roger Clisdell sentenced him to a maximum of 16 months imprisonment, with a non-parole period of eight months – but the conviction was [overturned on appeal after his partner admitted instigating the argument and causing Bird to act in self-defence.](#)

Bird found himself back before the courts last year, this time charged with possession of cocaine along with a number of his teammates. The charges were thrown out of court in October after police determined there was insufficient evidence to proceed.

And, in 2010, Manly Sea Eagles fullback Brett Stewart [stood trial at the Downing Centre District Court](#) after it was alleged that he sexually and indecently assaulted a 17-year-old girl.

The girl claimed that she had been smoking outside Mr Stewart's home when he was dropped off in a cab after a late night, televised event. She claimed that he approached her and attempted to kiss her, before digitally penetrating her.

Stewart vehemently denied the allegations, contending that the girl had in fact made advances towards him after he arrived from the event.

After a two-week trial, the jury returned a verdict of not guilty, clearing Stewart's name and allowing him to continue playing football with the Sea Eagles.