

## \$1m payout for injury

THE sister of former football champion David Rhys-Jones was yesterday awarded more than \$1 million for a back injury she suffered while working for Coles Myer.

Susan Hodge, 35, was awarded \$1,000,080 by a County Court jury for a back injury she sustained on July 12, 1993, while working as a security officer.

Judge Roland Williams and the six-member jury were told Ms Hodge was taking part in a stocktake when she felt a twinge in her back as she lifted a

By JASON SILVERII

recycling bin. Ms Hodge told the court that later in the day she was hunched over to conceal herself from a suspected shoplifter when her back locked up and she felt excruciating pain.

She continued to work for Coles Myer doing light duties until the end of 1993 when her employment was terminated.

She sued the company for damages, claiming the injury stopped her from joining the police force.

Coles denied liability

and claimed contributory negligence on the part of Ms Hodge.

The jury awarded Ms Hodge \$500,000 for pain and suffering, and \$500,080 for past and future economic loss.

Ms Hodge's solicitor, Mr Lee Flanagan,

and Co., said his client was extremely pleased the trial was over.

Mr Flanagan described Ms Hodge as a battler who was still trying to find work, but her injury only allowed her to work for short periods.