



Australian Survivor contestant Ross Clarke-Jones is carried from the set after being hurt in a challenge.

Injured surfer sues over Survivor fall

EXCLUSIVE
FIONA BYRNE

BIG-WAVE surfer Ross Clarke-Jones is taking legal action against the producers of *Australian Survivor*, claiming he suffered a debilitating injury during filming of the hit reality show.

Clarke-Jones, who is named as Howard Ross Clarke-Jones in court documents, is suing Endemol Shine Australia, the production company that produces *Australian Survivor* for Channel 10.

He is claiming damages, loss of past and future earnings, and medical expenses after injuring his ankle during a rope challenge.

Clarke-Jones was paid \$25,000 to take part in the series, called *Australian Survivor: Champions v Contenders*, which was shot in Fiji between April 29 and June 23 last year. At stake was a \$500,000 first prize.

Clarke-Jones and the other contestants in late May last year took part in a challenge where they had to

swing on a rope from one raised wooden platform to another.

Clarke-Jones was the third contestant to swing on the rope, which broke while he was in mid-air. He crashed to the ground, injuring his ankle, and had to leave the show.

In a statement of claim filed in the Supreme Court of Victoria, it is claimed Clarke-Jones, who lives on Phillip Island, suffered loss of earnings, as well as depression and anxiety, as a result of the injury to ligaments in his ankle.

"At the date of the injury, the plaintiff was a professional big-wave surfer with sponsorship arrangements, including with Red Bull and Quiksilver," the document says.

"The plaintiff is and has been since his injury totally incapacitated for his previous employment and claims past loss of earnings and future loss of earnings.



"The plaintiff also claims loss of opportunity in relation to competing for the prize money available on *Survivor*, and other professional big-wave surfing related events, awards and business opportunities."

It is claimed the incident was caused by the negligence and/or breach of duty of Endemol Shine Australia Pty Ltd.

Clarke-Jones is being represented by law firm Arnold Thomas & Becker. "Ross very reluctantly has decided to take the litigation pathway but felt he had no other option," Lee Flanagan, partner at Arnold Thomas & Becker said.

Endemol Shine Australia was contacted for comment.
GOSSIP QUEEN, P22-23

Puzzle of 18 hours

Camp pair 'vanished'

MARK BUTTLER
CHIEF POLICE REPORTER

POLICE have cut to about 18 hours the time frame in which Russell Hill and Carol Clay vanished from their High Country campsite.

Investigators believe something happened to the friends overnight or the morning after they last made contact from the Dry River Creek Track in the Wonnangatta Valley.

It is 73 days since they left on their camping trip. Their disappearance has gripped Victorians and is the subject of a major missing persons squad inquiry.

Investigators know Mr Hill talked via his radio with a friend at about 6.30pm on March 20, a day after setting off to East Gippsland.

He spoke only briefly because night was falling and he wanted to set up camp.

Other High Country visitors came across their camp about 2pm the next day.

They saw fire had destroyed a tent and camp furniture and had also scorched the side of Mr Hill's Toyota LandCruiser.

The fire remains one of the most intriguing elements of the case because, despite an arson chemist's investigation, its exact cause is not known.

Detective Inspector Andrew Stamper, the head of the missing persons squad, said it was as though Mr Hill, 74, and Ms Clay, 73, had disappeared into thin air.

He said search and rescue squad officers, who have run major operations in the surrounding area, were convinced they would have found some trace of the friends if they were still there.

Insp. Stamper said talk of wild dogs removing remains of people who died in the High



Carol Clay and Russell Hill.

Country had foundation, but traces, such as footwear or clothing, would be expected to have been left behind.

Insp. Stamper said it was possible something had gone wrong while the pair were out exploring the bush.

But both getting into the kind of trouble that led to death was less likely, he said.

Investigators are trying to track every person who was in the area where Mr Hill, of Drouin, and Ms Clay, who is from Pakenham, travelled.

Insp. Stamper said a lot of people were in the High Country that weekend as coronavirus restrictions loomed.

Investigators have been working via public appeals and intensive investigation to find everyone who was in a wide expanse of the High Country to see if they noticed anything that could help the inquiry.

Mr Hill had been in the King Billy and Bluff Track area from March 13 to 16 on a separate solo visit with his new drone. He also took the drone on the trip with Ms Clay the next week.

It has not been recovered and remains another puzzling element of the inquiry.

Anyone with any other information on the disappearance, or who has any CCTV or dashcam footage, can call Crime Stoppers on 1800 333 000 or visit the website www.crimestoppersvic.com.au.
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Holocaust descendant calls out Nazi rider

THE grandson of Holocaust survivors has bravely confronted a man wearing a Nazi swastika in a Melbourne park.

David, 53, was walking in Heatherton's Karkarook Park about 5pm on Friday when he was "gobsmacked" to see a man casually riding past, wearing a swastika armband.

"Having grown up as the grandson of Holocaust survivors, it's an emotive issue," he said.

MANDY SQUIRES

"When you see these sorts of things you get angry.

"It's not the sort of thing you expect to see in Melbourne ... it's just horrible."

The incident has prompted renewed calls from Australia's Anti-Defamation Commission for the State Government to urgently ban public displays of the swastika and prosecute offenders.

"It's sickening to think that, in Melbourne, neo-Nazi thugs feel free to openly wear this symbol of genocide and evil, knowing there is nothing Victoria police can do to stop them," commission chairman Dvir Abramovich said.

David said he ran to catch up to the man wearing the swastika and confronted him.

"He said, 'it's a flag of the German people', and I explained it wasn't," he said.

The man then started spouting anti-Semitic rhetoric and conspiracy theories, so David walked away.

The man wasn't aggressive, "just trying to push his agenda", he said.

A bystander had already called police, who arrived as David was leaving the park.

"The police said to me ... he was known to them and they would deal with him," David said.



Lion trainer Jennifer Brown.

Prayers for hurt keeper

SHOALHAVEN Zoo has been inundated with support for mauled big-cat keeper Jennifer Brown, who is still fighting for her life.

The experienced zookeeper, 35, suffered deep cuts to her head and neck when she was attacked by two young male lions on Friday.

The NSW zoo yesterday asked the community to continue to "pray" for her.