



Alleged rape victim to give evidence

A woman allegedly raped by former Victorian cabinet minister Theo Theophanous is due to give evidence at a committal hearing this week.

The alleged victim, who now lives in Greece and is in her early 40s, is expected to give evidence in a closed-court session via video link.

Theophanous is charged with sexually assaulting the woman at Parliament House in September 1998, after they had a drink together in the city.

His lawyers last week applied to challenge the woman's claims that her personal life and mental state had deteriorated as a result of the alleged rape and that she has since been unable to engage in relationships with men.

Friends of the woman say she told them her problems began when a man with whom she was having an affair ended their relationship, the defence team said.

The woman has also said she discussed the relationship with Theophanous.

Prosecutors have dismissed the defence application as a "smoke-screen".

The rape charge against Theophanous, who remains a member of the upper house, is due to be heard in the pre-trial committal hearing at Melbourne Magistrates' Court on Monday.

Scud fails to pay debt as house passed in

FORMER tennis ace Mark Philippoussis had a setback in his fight to pay more than \$1.3 million in debts when his Melbourne home failed to sell at auction.

The five-bedroom Williamstown townhouse attracted only three bids and was passed in at \$775,000 after being listed for sale at \$950,000-plus.

Selling agent Wayne Elly said he hoped the property would sell within the next few days. Philippoussis, the former No. 8 ranked player in the world, earned more than \$8 million on the tennis circuit. But he has not been able to play professionally since 2006 because of injury. He bought the house when he was 18, mainly for his mum, Rossana. He was forced to put it on the market after a finance

company launched legal action against him in May when he failed to meet the mortgage repayments of more than \$10,000 a month.

Pepper Home Loans filed a writ in the Supreme Court seeking \$1,313,351.96, plus interest of about \$14,000 a week, costs and possession of the house.

Philippoussis, who did not attend the auction, decided to sell to avoid having it seized after using it as security for an investment loan in February last year.

Pepper Home Loans' chief operating officer, David Holmes, told The Sun-Herald he would discuss the Scud's outstanding debts with him this week after the auction.

Philippoussis has vowed to fight his way out of debt.



Katsidis extends contract with Smith!

Australian WBO#1 ranked lightweight Michael Katsidis (25-2, 21 KOs) has this week extended his contract with trainer and manager Brendon Smith for a further three years. The 28 year old former WBO interim champion from Toowoomba, Queensland has been with Smith since he was a local amateur fighter when he was just 11 years old. They have been together through out his 81 amateur fights, where he won 75 bouts and reached the quarter finals of the 2000 Olympics in Sydney. Since turning professional in 2001, "Katsidis The Great" has won 21 of his 27 fights by KO and has been recognized as one of Australia's most exciting fighters in recent years. The



only losses on his exciting resume are to former world champions Joel Casamayor and Juan Diaz that occurred in 2008.

Since then, Katsidis has climbed the world rankings and is currently the mandatory WBO#1 ranked fighter at 135 pounds. He comes off an impressive stoppage win over Mexican Jesus

Chavez in April which sets him up for some meaningful fights in 2009.

His manager and trainer Brendon Smith confirmed to Fightnews the new contract extension. He stated, "I am delighted that our successful partnership is to be extended for a further three years. We have worked closely together inside and outside the ring for 17 years now and we are both proud of our achievements in boxing. But we still have more to achieve and I am convinced Michael will be involved in some meaningful fights in the second half of the year. The win against Chavez showed Michael still has a rightful place at the top of the lightweight ladder and with his WBO#1 mandatory ranking he is in pole position to capture a world championship belt for Australia."

In recent weeks, Katsidis has offered his services to former 140 pound champion Ricky Hatton as a future opponent but Smith

believes Hatton will prefer an easier route than take on his fighter. He added, "The strong rumours coming out of England are that Ricky will seek an easier opponent than Michael which is disappointing for us and the boxing fans of Manchester as Ricky has been a proud champion and won his title in a tough battle with Kostya Tszyu, an Australian and it would be good for his fans to have a homecoming in his beloved Manchester against another Australian warrior in Michael. It would be an all action fight for his fans and we will come to the UK later in 2009. We are still available but I am starting to work on new options for Michael now and we are looking for meaningful fights for the rest of this year. We are in a strong position with the WBO to challenge Juan Manuel Marquez should he win against Floyd Mayweather in September. He is the WBO champion at 135 pounds and Michael is the mandatory challenger so this fight could happen and would be a great boxing spectacle for all boxing fans. Neither fighter gives an inch and it could be a fantastic bout."

Katsidis is currently in Larissa, Greece where he is being honored by his father's village in a major event for the region to celebrate the homecoming of his son, who is half Greek.

New Yorkers shocked by our crying boy

A CRYING Australian toddler is being used by New York health officials to convince smokers in the Big Apple to quit their habit.

The Sydney three-year-old stars in a television advertisement featuring a sobbing child separated from his mother on a railway platform.

The tear-jerking clip is one of several TV ads adopted from an original campaign masterminded by Quit Victoria in Australia.

The Aussie videos, part of a series called "Every Cigarette is Doing You Damage", have become the talk of a usually tough city, with some critics claiming the clips are too emotionally hard-hitting.

But New York health officials say the Australian ads lead the world in conveying a tough anti-smoking message.

"We took our cue from Quit Victoria and the

way they were using media to prompt people to quit smoking," said Elizabeth Kilgore, acting assistant commissioner for New York's Bureau of Tobacco Control.

"New York City had never really seen anti-smoking media like that before. It had a tremendous impact."

New Yorkers may have felt queasy at some of the more graphic medical images in the campaign but most controversy has surrounded the crying boy, identified only as "Alexander", who stars in an advertisement filmed at a Sydney railway station last year.

Ms Kilgore believes the ads have got what it takes to turn New Yorkers around. "The images that are shown can be really upsetting and smoking-related illness is upsetting," she said. "It devastates families and ... lives. People have an emotional reaction to that."