



ILLAWARRA MERCURY

OFFICIAL PARTNER

SINCE 1855

Wednesday, January 5, 2000

80 CENTS

Victim 'hates how sharks cop it'



By CYDONEE MARDON

Barrack Heights mechanical fitter John Puljak lived to tell the tale of being savaged by a shark.

The terrifying encounter at Bass Point left many legacies, including a tattered and bloodied wetsuit and a fear of the sea. But Mr Puljak said yesterday he was against the use of shark nets on Illawarra beaches, and urged people to remember the sea was the sharks' home.

"Those shark nets are terrible. I'm totally against them. They kill turtles, dolphins, they're terrible," he said.

"There's just no need to butcher our marine life."

For months after the attack Mr Puljak, who suffered severe lacerations to his leg and a severed tendon in his arm, was spooked by the sea. But now the 27-year-old is one of the shark's most avid defenders.

He tackled his demons head on - at the bottom of the ocean, in the middle of a shark feeding frenzy.

"I went on a feeding excursion while on my honeymoon in Tahiti two years ago," Mr Puljak said.

"It was awesome. They dropped fish into the water and I sat amongst the sharks as they scurried for the food."

CONTINUED PAGE 4

TOP: Enjoying the water in Noosa yesterday, 1991 shark attack survivor John Puljak, of Barrack Heights. Picture: NICK FALCONER

ABOVE: Mr Puljak's father Eddie with the remains of the torn wetsuit. Picture: KIRK GILMOUR



ROBERTS ON BHP WARPATH

NEWS - PAGE 2



TOBI STEPS INTO SPOTLIGHT

NEWS - PAGE 3



PLUNDER DOWN UNDER

BACK PAGE

Labor heavies tell Lord Mayor:

Pay up, George

By LISA CARTY

Illawarra Labor strategists plan to step up their campaign to persuade Wollongong Lord Mayor George Harrison to settle his tortuous and politically costly legal battle with a former business partner.

They claim Councillor Harrison - whose dispute with Wollongong woman Delcie Schipp will have its next public airing in the NSW Court of Appeal in May - has refused their pleas to pay out Mrs Schipp and put the case to rest.

Yesterday, Cr Harrison declared that nothing

would dissuade him, saying the case was a private matter and no business of the Labor Party.

The long and complicated stoush stemmed from two failed property deals. Mrs Schipp claimed Cr Harrison and former Wollongong real estate agent Don Cameron had failed to

give her a fair share of the proceeds, and that Cr Harrison - a solicitor - also had failed in his fiduciary duty to her.

Last year in the NSW Supreme Court's equity division, Justice Cliff Einstein found in

CONTINUED PAGE 2

Phones
SWITCHBOARD . 02 4221 2333
SPORT 02 4221 2297
CLASSIFIEDS . . . 02 4221 2222
Faxes
EDITORIAL 02 4226 3616
SPORT 02 4221 2339
ADVERTISING . . . 02 4229 7899
CLASSIFIEDS . . . 02 4228 0823
Website www.illnews.com.au

TALES FROM OUR STREETS

How we got mail

Inside today: **THE WORLD THIS WEEK**



REGULARS

WorldP20, 21
LettersP22
Turf GuideP23
LotteryP28, 31
BusinessP31, 32, 33
Classifieds (with EAC) . . .P36
TV/WeatherP51

AWU leader tips all-out BHP stoush

By PAUL McINERNEY

Twice in the past few weeks Australian Workers Union national president Graham Roberts has offered to broker a peace deal in an industrial dispute that threatens to wreck BHP's financial resurrection.

His first offer in early December was rejected by the company.

Yesterday, he was still waiting by the telephone for a BHP response to the second made just after Christmas.

Now he is resigned to an all-out industrial stoush, which started in Western Australia and threatens to spread to all company operations and wreck years of union-management co-operation.

"It's now gone too far," Mr Roberts said. "I believe company management has lost the opportunity to rectify the situation."

Battle lines were drawn last year when BHP announced plans to introduce individual contracts to iron ore workers at Newman and Port Hedland and refused to collective bargaining on a new agreement. About 35 per cent of unionised iron ore workers have signed the contracts, but in union parlance, the majority vote still counts.

Steel industry unions consider the move as a threat to all BHP workers and 24-hour stoppages have already taken place in steel centres around Australia.

Port Kembla's turn, involving 5000 steelworks employees, could come as early as next week after rank and file meetings endorsed a 24-hour stoppage.

Delegate meetings in Wollongong on Friday will set the exact timing.

Mr Roberts has made it clear unions with workers in BHP's coal, petroleum and transport divisions are more than likely to follow suit.

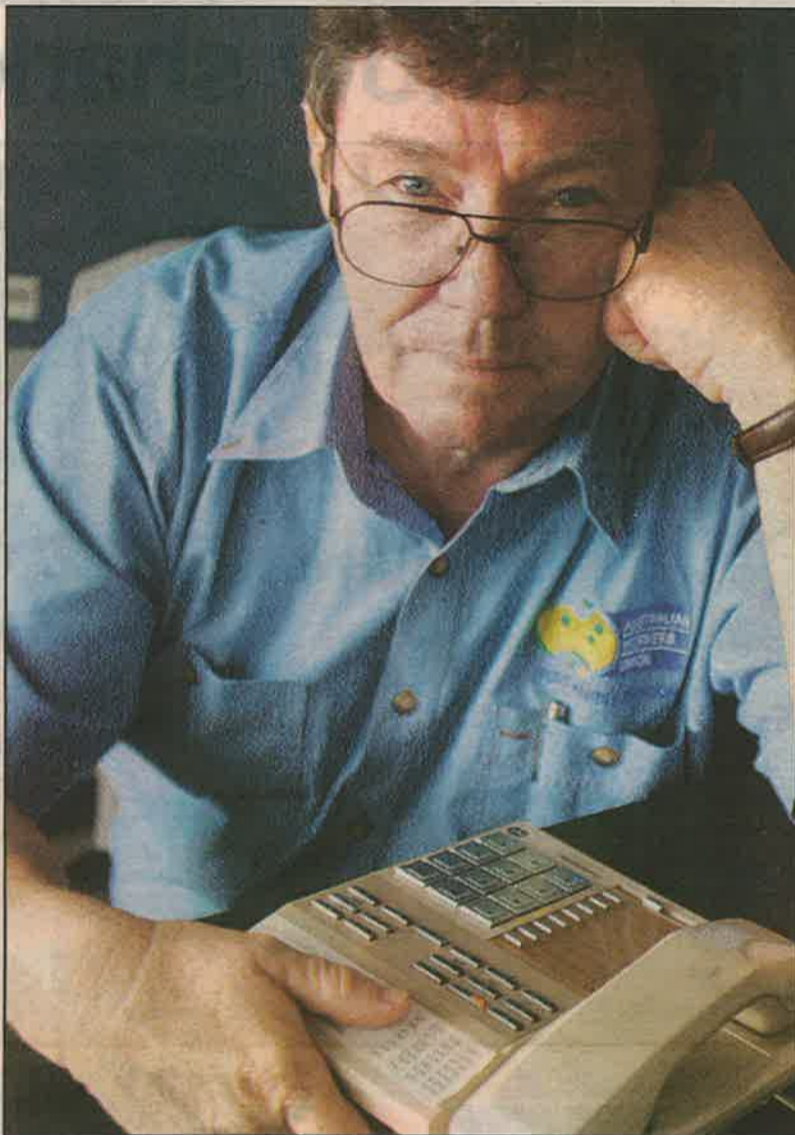
Although a company-wide stoppage, involving BHP's entire unionised work force, is not planned by unions, Mr Roberts has not ruled out its possibility.

The escalating dispute threatens to derail the company's remarkable turnaround of fortunes in the past year under the leadership of chief executive Paul Anderson.

BHP shares have gone from \$10.86 a year ago to breaching the \$20 barrier for the first time in 2½ years.

Six months ago, BHP posted a net loss of \$2.3 billion for 1998-99.

Analysts now have expectations that BHP's full yearly result (to be announced in June) could be up to \$1.7 billion profit.



Australian Workers Union national president Graham Roberts waits by the telephone for a call from BHP.
Picture: SYLVIA VINCENT

National holiday road toll hits 57

The national road toll for the official Christmas/New Year holiday period stood at 57 last night.

It was a quiet day on the nation's roads yesterday with Queensland police reporting the only death - a man killed in a collision in the Gold Coast hinterland.

The man died in a collision between a car and a truck at Bethania.

The death followed that of a 34-year-old man in the south-east Queensland town of Mundubbera on Sunday.

NSW still had the highest road toll for the holiday period, having recorded 18 fatalities up until last night.

Victoria was next with 12 and Queensland had a total of 10 recorded deaths.

South Australia had recorded five road deaths; Western Australia and the ACT four each; the Northern Territory recorded three deaths; and there had been one reported fatality in Tasmania.

Pay up, Labor urges Mayor

FROM PAGE ONE

Mrs Schipp's favour and made a damning judgment against Cr Harrison, saying that among other things he had been content to lie under oath.

The decision shocked Cr Harrison and Mr Cameron, who now lives in Sydney, and they lodged an appeal. That appeal is set down for three days from May 15.

In the most recent courtroom developments in December, Appeal Court president Justice Keith Mason urged Cr Harrison to think again about his plans to keep fighting Mrs Schipp.

Justice Einstein's decision had been substantially based on adverse credibility findings, Justice Mason said, and that would present Cr Harrison and Mr Cameron with "a very significant hurdle".

It was that advice that prominent Illawarra Labor figures say spurred them into pleading with Cr Harrison to pay Mrs Schipp the outstanding \$630,000.

This was in spite of his barrister's claim that such a payment would send Cr Harrison into bankruptcy, a position which would force him out of the lord mayoralty.

One Labor identity said: "George is George. He nods at us but then he does what he wants anyway."

"It is quite clear that there is only one way out of this



CR HARRISON

and it's going to cost him \$630,000. The political cost of repeatedly going to court is just too high.

"We've told him to settle it, to get rid of it, pay the dough. He can say all he likes about it being an unfair judgment but a learned jurist said he's a liar."

"I don't think this has done him much damage so far but it's time to stop it."

"George has a lot of heart but every now and then his political judgment goes haywire."

Another Labor identity disagreed, saying the case had inflicted substantial political damage already.

"He has to find a way to settle it," he said.

"Because of this case he's had no honeymoon (in the Lord Mayor's job) and the public had given him no latitude at all."

"It would be a very positive move for him to get on to doing other things without his attention being diverted by this."

"Obviously it must be distracting to have this hanging over him."

Cr Harrison believed Justice Einstein had made a "dreadful" decision that would be overturned on appeal.

Comparing his situation to that of Lindy Chamberlain - who was falsely convicted of killing her baby daughter - Cr Harrison vowed he would "not surrender".

"I am innocent and the system of justice went wrong. I have to follow the process to correct this miscarriage of justice and this is the only way I can do it," he said.

"I am going to vindicate myself. No-one can say to me: 'George, pack it in and make it go away'."

"No-one wants this to go away more than me but there is only one way to do that and it's through the legal processes."

HOLIDAY SAFETY SERVICE

\$49
SAVE \$96

- ✓ Standard front wheel alignment
- ✓ 4 x wheel balance
- ✓ Tyre rotation
- ✓ Engine oil change up to 5 litres
- ✓ Brake adjustment
- ✓ Comprehensive safety check & report.

Just Ask JAX!

FAIRY MEADOW
Cnr Florence St & Princes Hwy
Ph: 4285 3011

WARILLA
260 Shellharbour Rd
Ph: 4296 4666

WARRAWONG
79 King Street
Ph: 4274 4558

Phone for booking

*Some imported, high performance recreational, commercial or front wheel drive vehicles may cost a little more.



JAX1302/123/FaiWarWar

The Management & Staff at Nonabel would like to extend best wishes for 2000 to all their valued customers.



COFFEE LOUNGE & TAKEAWAY
Endeavour Drive, Belmore Basin Wollongong Harbour 4228 1105

LOTTO RESULTS Week No. 01				Supps.
24	9	12	33	
21	6	22	7	

Confirm these numbers by telephoning the LOTTO HOTLINE on 0055 290424