

# ASADA witness clouds claims

EXCLUSIVE

CHIP LE GRAND

ASADA'S star witness in its case against 34 current and former Essendon footballers has contradicted claims by a Chinese biochemical supplier about the substances at the centre of the doping scandal.

Shane Charter, a self-styled anti-ageing consultant who arranged in December 2011 for the importation of peptides supplied to Essendon sports scientist Stephen

Dank, has produced documents showing he discussed two forms of Thymosin with Shanghai-based company GL Biochem.

Mr Charter has provided Australian Sports Anti-Doping Authority investigators with email correspondence between himself and GL Biochem global sales manager Vincent Xu from the time he was arranging for a batch of peptides to be imported from Shanghai to Melbourne.

In a December 16 email detailing the company's quoted prices for the order, Mr Xu includes a table that lists Thymosin and Thy-

mosin Beta-4 among the peptides it can supply. The two substances are listed with distinct prices — 11,350 renminbi per gram of Thymosin and 9450 RMB per gram of Thymosin Beta-4.

Thymosin Beta-4 is banned by the World Anti-Doping Agency and athletes who use it face a two-year ban from sport. Thymosin Alpha-1 is permitted in sport.

The ASADA case is that Mr Dank injected Thymosin Beta-4 sourced by Mr Charter from GL Biochem into 34 players during the 2012 AFL season.

ASADA alleges two batches of

the peptide were compounded by Toorak pharmacist Nima Alavi and administered by Mr Dank.

The players' defence is that they were administered with a permitted form of Thymosin.

In its summary of evidence provided to lawyers for the players, ASADA quotes Mr Charter as saying he only imported Thymosin Beta-4 from China. This was supported by Mr Xu when he told *The Australian*: "The Thymosin we synthesis (sic) and supply always refers to Thymosin Beta-4."

It is understood Mr Charter, if he agrees to testify at a hearing of

the case, will provide evidence that he discussed the availability of both Thymosin Beta-4 and Thymosin Alpha-1 with Mr Xu.

He will also support the evidence of Mr Alavi, who told ASADA that peptides imported from China are unreliable and must always be tested to determine their chemical make-up.

Mr Alavi told anti-doping investigators he compounded a substance labelled only Thymosin and gave it to Mr Dank for testing.

It is understood that the peptides were never tested.

Mr Dank has denied adminis-

tering the peptides to any Essendon players.

Mr Charter arranged for the peptides to be imported through Austgrow, a fabric manufacturer with an office in Melbourne and Shanghai. A spokesman for the company, Cedric Anthony, declined to comment. Mr Charter declined to respond to questions. He is facing unrelated criminal charges of trafficking and possessing steroids and other performance-enhancing substances.

The discrepancy between Mr Charter and Mr Xu's account emerged as ASADA provided a

summary of its case and transcripts of interviews with Mr Charter, Mr Alavi and former Essendon high-performance coach Dean Robinson to AFL general counsel Andrew Dillon.

Mr Dillon had sought the evidence to enable the AFL to expedite its hearing of the case once the players, as expected, are formally charged with a doping offence and issued infraction notices by the Anti-Doping Rule Violation Panel.

The provision of the material has increased the chances of the saga being resolved this year.

## Inquiry fears bias in Bowraville appeal

DAN BOX

A DECISION about whether the alleged killer of three Aboriginal children will face court should be taken away from the NSW state prosecutor and Attorney-General after concerns of bias, a parliamentary inquiry has found.

An independent expert should be given the task of reviewing the killings in Bowraville, in northern NSW, over five months between 1990 and 1991, the report found.

The victims' relatives say any decision must be made soon, as potential witnesses have died in the years since the murders. Detectives, who told the inquiry they believed an alleged serial killer was responsible, will now begin preparing for a likely appeal by lawyers representing the victims' families to have the man retried.

"A killer whose crimes constitute evil at its very darkest and most depraved is still free," said David Clarke, the chairman of the NSW parliamentary standing committee on law and justice, which held the inquiry.

"Justice demands the killer of these three children whose lives were brutally cut short ... should be brought to account."

The children, Colleen Walker-Craig, 16, four-year-old Evelyn

nearby Nambucca River. Her body has not been found.

A Bowraville man faced separate trials over the murders of Evelyn and Clinton, but was found not guilty. Appeals by the families that he face court again have previously been rejected by the state prosecutor's office and two former attorneys-general.

The inquiry's report, which marks a watershed in a case long marked by accusations of racism and institutional failures, called yesterday for a review of the laws governing retrials, potentially making it easier for the case to return to court.

Any new appeal submitted to the NSW Director of Public Prosecutions or Attorney-General should "be considered by an independent assessor", it found.

"The committee acknowledges the concerns raised ... regarding the bias or conflict of interest, whether real or perceived, of certain individuals that have been involved in the retrial process," its report said.

With the state government seen as likely to accept the findings, one of Clinton's relatives, Leonie Duroux, said: "I know that the police and the lawyers will go back and get started straight away. It's November now, we don't want to waste another

## House haunted by tale of Hanging Rock

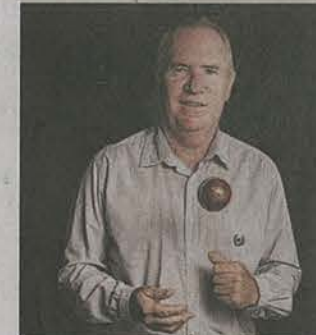


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WEEKEND A PLUS

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street. Evelyn and Clinton's bodies were found in bushland outside the town while Colleen's clothes were recovered from the

commander Mick Willing said the families' "pursuit for justice continues and it is wholly supported by the NSW Police Force".

## Murdoch head cancels Higgott 'crisis' talks

ANDREW BURRELL

MURDOCH University has plunged further into crisis after Chancellor David Flanagan suddenly cancelled a meeting with disgruntled academics, citing "legal advice" not to discuss the mysterious departure of vice-chancellor Richard Higgott.

Staff at the Perth institution were told on Tuesday that Mr Flanagan would address them at 9am yesterday to take questions on "recent events", which would have included the leadership turmoil that has gripped the university in recent weeks.

In a move that infuriated senior academics, Murdoch's acting vice-chancellor, Andrew Taggart, sent an email to staff late on Wednesday revealing the meeting would not go ahead.

The university had been advised to postpone the meeting "due to legal issues involving the ongoing investigation into matters referred to the Corruption and Crime Commission".

"As you would appreciate these are sensitive matters and, unfortunately, there is very little more than what is already on the

public record that can be shared with you at this time," Professor Taggart said in the email.

"The Chancellor is aware of my concerns in relation to this and understands the position of the university, and has indicated his willingness to talk with staff when it is appropriate to do so.

"I will certainly reschedule meetings for staff to meet with the Chancellor and I at the earliest opportunity and look forward to discussing how we can all work together in making the university's vision a reality."

The meeting with Mr Flanagan was scheduled after more than 40 academics, most full professors, requested an explanation about events surrounding Professor Higgott's departure.

He resigned last month amid an investigation by the CCC into alleged misconduct.

The *Australian* revealed that an anonymous group of academics had written to Mr Flanagan in June to allege a range of misconduct by Professor Higgott, including credit card misuse, bullying and a lack of transparency in appointments.

There is no evidence the allegations in the letter are accurate.

Kerstin Thompson and her House at Hanging Rock. 'I can't hear the name or think about that place without remembering Peter Weir's film'



Mark Hassell, left, and Richard Kirk at UQ



Inside UQ's Advanced Engineering Building



The view from House at Hanging Rock

AMOS AIKMAN  
MILANDA ROUT

WHO could forget those haunting cries of "Miranda! Miranda!" echoing through the bush?

The schoolgirls' adventure, wrenched by a classmate's disappearance, was depicted in Peter Weir's 1975 classic *Picnic at Hanging Rock*. The story helped inspire the design of this year's Robin Boyd Award for Residential Architecture winner, a house that sits in Hanging Rock's shadow at Hesketh in central Victoria's Macedon Ranges.

Kerstin Thompson — who at a ceremony in Darwin last night became one of only a handful of women to take home the prestigious prize from the Australian

Institute of Architects — was a girl herself when the movie came out.

"I can't hear the name Hanging Rock or think about that place without remembering Peter Weir's film," Thompson said.

"The building has a certain enigma to it as well; it doesn't give away everything immediately."

Stepping down gently over three levels, House at Hanging Rock is made of precast concrete arranged in a rhomboidal shape, with an overhanging roof that seems to mimic the rock's outline.

The black ceilings and dimly lit interior make the surrounding scrub "more striking, more alive".

Weir's film was a play on the mix of wonderment and trepidation the early Victorian settlers felt towards their surroundings.

Thompson's client, a European artist, wanted a place "to be within the landscape but also protected from it". "The Australian bush is a little bit scary and intimidating on the one hand, and it's romantic and spectacular on the other," Thompson said.

Resonant with modernist chic, House at Hanging Rock seems to call out to Boyd, who in his book *The Australian Ugliness* railed against careless decoration and mass-produced styles.

Thompson thinks Australians have a bad habit of valuing design in retrospect.

This year's most-recognised project, the University of Queensland's Advanced Engineering Building, strives to change that.

A collaboration between Brisbane-based architect Richard

Kirk and the international firm Hassell Studio, it combines traditional materials with techniques borrowed from the days before air conditioning to create a novel education environment.

"We are trying to remove the hierarchy or learning so that all learning is equivalent; research is just as important as a lecture being given to a bunch of first-year undergraduates," Kirk said. "We are searching for that cross-fertilisation, that inquisitiveness, that engagement."

The building won three AIA prizes: the coveted Sir Zelman Cowen Award for Public Architecture, the Emil Sodersten Award for Interior Architecture and a sustainability prize.

It places laboratories next to a busy thoroughfare, inviting pass-

ers-by to look in. "The biggest issue I have with a lot of academic buildings is that there's a lot of fascinating things going on inside and we tend to hide them," Kirk said.

Also singled out was a redevelopment of Sydney's inner-city Prince Alfred Park and Pool by Neeson Murcutt Architects, receiving two awards, including the Walter Burley Griffin Award for Urban Design. It "breathed life back into the precinct" near Central Station, the jury said.

## SEARCH

...for an online gallery of the winners of the Australian Institute of Architects awards at [www.theaustralian.com.au/wish](http://www.theaustralian.com.au/wish)

losers



## Hors d'oeuvre for dinosaurs

DURING the dinosaur age, most mammals were puny, generally weighing less than 450g. Now a bizarre fossil skull from Madagascar has revealed a comparative giant, one that clocked in at maybe 9kg.

"It was a monster," said David Krause of Stony Brook University in New York. "It looks like a big groundhog."

It's the second heaviest mammal known from the era, and the most massive of that time from the southern hemisphere.

Professor Krause said his best guess was it measured between 50cm and 60cm from nose to rump. It lived between 66 million and 72 million years ago.

In a paper released by *Nature*, Professor Krause and colleagues have named it *Vintana sertichi*, probably an agile plant-eater with good eyesight in low light and a good sense of smell, handy to avoid predatory dinosaurs and other beasts that shared its environment, Professor Krause said.

"It would have been a fine hors d'oeuvre for a dinosaur."

AP

## AC/DC star 'attempted to have two men murdered'

IAIN SHEDDEN  
MUSIC WRITER

AS AC/DC's long-serving drummer, Phil Rudd has been the beating heart of songs such as *Dirty Deeds Done Dirt Cheap*, *Highway to Hell*, *Shoot to Thrill* and *If You Want Blood*.

Yesterday, those titles and more became headline fodder when the 60-year-old was charged in New Zealand with attempting to have two men murdered.

Rudd was also charged with possession of methamphetamine, possession of cannabis and threatening to kill, following a police raid on his home at Matua in New Zealand's Bay of Plenty yesterday



SUNLIVE.CO.NZ

Phil Rudd arrives at court in New Zealand yesterday

morning. He appeared later in Tauranga District Court, where it was revealed the musician had attempted to procure murder on

September 25 or September 26 this year. Dressed in a grey shirt and jeans and no shoes, he said nothing during his brief appear-

ance. He was granted bail and left the court in a Mercedes convertible. Details of the complaints and the people Rudd is accused of wanting dead were suppressed by judge Louis Bidois.

There has been speculation in recent weeks Rudd is no longer a member of AC/DC, Australia's most successful and enduring music export, after he was missing from a video shoot for a new album in London a few weeks ago. AC/DC has also issued pictures that do not feature the drummer.

Rudd was the band's drummer from 1972 to 1983 and returned in 1994. He was part of the group when it recorded its new album in Vancouver in June. Speaking to *The Australian* in August, Rudd suggested he would be part of the

band's world tour to promote the album *Rock or Bust*, which will be released in Australia on November 28. "I'm not sure when we'll go out," Rudd said, "but it will happen."

Rudd has lived in New Zealand for more than 30 years, owning a helicopter company, a sheep farm and a restaurant. In 2010, he was convicted for marijuana possession, but it was overturned on the grounds that it would stop him touring with AC/DC. The veteran drummer issued his first solo album, *Head Job*, in August, with NZ musicians Allan Badger and Geoffrey Martin.

Rudd is scheduled to appear in court again in three weeks.

ARTS P16

## New weapon in superbug war

THE first effective alternative to antibiotics in the fight against drug-resistant infections has been developed.

In a small patient trial, the drug was shown to eradicate the superbug MRSA. Scientists said it was unlikely the infection could develop resistance against the new treatment, already available as a cream for skin infections.

Researchers hope to develop a pill or an injectable version.

British Prime Minister David Cameron warned this year that the rise of drug-resistant superbugs could take medicine "back to the dark ages". His Chief Medical Officer, Sally Davies, predicted an "apocalyptic" scenario in which basic procedures, from hip replacements to chemotherapy,

become fatal. About 5000 deaths in England each year are caused by antibiotic-resistant strains of disease. The last new class of antibiotics was produced in the 1980s.

The latest treatment exclusively targets the *Staphylococcus* bacteria responsible for MRSA while leaving other microbes unaffected. "Millions stand to benefit," said Mark Offerhaus of biotechnology company Microcos, which is behind the advance.

The treatment is inspired by naturally occurring viruses that attack bacteria using enzymes called endolysins. Scientists engineered a "designer" endolysin, Staphfect, to latch on to the surface of bacteria cells and tear them apart. Bjorn Herpers, a microbiologist who tested the drug at a

Dutch public health laboratory, said: "Endolysins exist in nature, but we've made a modified version that combines the bit that's best at binding to the bacteria with another bit that is best at killing it."

Conventional antibiotics need to reach the inside of the cell to work, but certain strains of bacteria such as MRSA have evolved impenetrable membranes.

About 80 per cent of gonorrhoea infections are resistant to frontline drugs and multi-drug-resistant salmonella, tuberculosis and *E. coli* are seen as significant threats. Naturally occurring endolysins can attack all of these diseases, and the challenge is to create stable versions that can be packaged as drugs.

THE TIMES