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Ex-Dodgers pitcher has to pay \$15 million in Indian River Shores civil sexual assault case

Circuit Judge Robert Hawley entered a default judgment in favor of Amy McQuillin after Carlos Perez failed to appear.

By Adam L. Neal
staff writer
August 12, 2005

VERO BEACH — A former Los Angeles Dodgers pitcher was ordered Thursday to pay \$15 million in damages after being found liable in a civil sexual assault trial.

However, Carlos Perez, 34, wasn't in court to hear the judgment against him.

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A six-member, all-female jury awarded Miami resident Amy McQuillin the payment, which included more than \$9 million in punitive damages, about 5:45 p.m. Thursday after deliberating for about an hour. The two-day trial was conducted despite Perez failing to show up either day.

McQuillin was awarded the full amount she and her Miami-based attorney, L.H. Steven Savola, sought for medical expenses, pain and suffering and other damages.

"At first I was a little bit shocked at (the amount). You are always surprised with that amount of money," said McQuillin, whose parents have supported her throughout the five-year legal battle and attended the trial. "There is some relief and some satisfaction that this whole process is over and that Perez has been punished."

Circuit Judge Robert Hawley entered a default judgment Wednesday morning in favor of McQuillin after Perez didn't show up. Jurors just had to decide on the damages.

Court records show Perez was sent several letters and hand-delivered copies of them showing the court dates. It was at least the third time Perez failed to show up for a court-ordered proceeding.

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He is believed to be living in the Dominican Republic, according to court documents.

Jurors heard from several expert witnesses and other alleged victims throughout the trial. It ended with McQuillin giving a teary-eyed account of Perez forcing her to have sex with him in March 1999 at his former Indian River Shores apartment. Perez was in Vero Beach for the Dodgers' spring training.

McQuillin decided to file charges after the other two women declined. Perez previously denied assaulting either woman when first confronted with the allegations.

The Press Journal does not print the names of alleged victims of sexual assault unless it receives consent to do so. McQuillin gave the newspaper her consent.

"Most rape victims can't and won't do this type of thing because it is so emotional. I had to stay strong for five years," she said. "(Jurors) said, 'Good luck, Amy. This is the start in the right direction.'"

Hawley previously allowed Perez's attorneys for the past four years, Louis "Buck" Vocelle Jr. and Charles Sullivan of Vero Beach, to withdraw from the case after citing he stopped cooperating and communicating with them.

The next step for McQuillin is going after any of Perez's U.S. assets, such as land, said Savola.

"We try to collect now," he said, adding it was unknown Thursday what assets might be available. "With the punitive nature and the fact that a jury wanted to use it for a deterrent, I think they want to send signs to (Perez) that this is not proper conduct. I think this sends an example to other ballplayers, as well."

Perez pitched for the Montreal Expos in 1995 and was traded to the Dodgers in 1998. He was offered a contract in November from the Detroit Tigers after being released in May 2001 from the Dodgers. However, the Tigers withdrew the proposal when Perez refused it.

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