

Former Philomath coach arraigned on hazing charges

By NATHAN BRUTELL
Corvallis Gazette-Times

A 22-year-old former assistant Philomath High School football coach was arraigned Tuesday in Clatsop County Circuit Court in connection with what prosecutors have termed "aggravated hazing" incidents in July at Camp Rilea.

Cooper Kikuta, who was a volunteer assistant coach and also a former Philomath High School football player, was arraigned on a charge of second-degree criminal mistreatment, a Class A misdemeanor, which carries a maximum sentence of up to one year in prison.

The charge stems from a hazing incident that allegedly took place between July 9 and 13 during an off-season conditioning camp attended by 35 Philomath players and several coaches at Camp Rilea.

Circuit Court Judge Cindee Matyas entered a not guilty plea on Kikuta's behalf and set an early resolution conference for December.

Following the hearing, Kikuta was booked into Clatsop County Jail and granted conditional release. As part of his release agreement, Kikuta is not to have contact with students at Philomath High School and is not to be on the premises of the school.

David Goldthorpe, senior

deputy district attorney for Clatsop County, stood in for Benton County District Attorney John Haroldson. Haroldson is serving as special prosecutor in the case.

On behalf of Haroldson, Goldthorpe said prosecutors had no objection to Kikuta being granted conditional release. Goldthorpe noted that Kikuta had no criminal history.

Defense attorney Josh Hunking represented Kikuta during the hearing.

"I am impressed with the wisdom and discretion that John Haroldson has shown in this case," Hunking said in an emailed statement following the hearing. "I am confident that he will work with us

toward a fair and swift resolution to this case so that this chapter of Philomath history can close and the community can begin to heal."

Six juveniles have been cited in connection with the case, and all have admitted to the allegations against them.

The Philomath School Board canceled the school's varsity football season in the wake of the criminal investigation into the hazing incidents. The school district has launched its own internal investigation into the incidents. While that investigation continues, the coaches of the team remain on administrative leave.



AP Photo/Ted S. Warren
Colton Harris-Moore, right, also known as the "Barefoot Bandit," stands with his attorney, John Henry Browne, in Island County Superior Court in 2011 in Coupeville, Wash.

'Barefoot Bandit' released from prison

Harris-Moore will work for lawyer

Associated Press

SEATTLE — The man who became known as the "Barefoot Bandit" during a teenage crime spree in stolen cars, boats and planes has been transferred from prison to a work-release facility.

KOMO-TV reported that the Washington Department of Corrections confirmed Colton Harris-Moore's transfer Wednesday from prison to Reynolds Work Release in Seattle.

He's expected to work for his lawyer, John Henry Browne, and will be required to check in and out of the work-release facility.

Harris-Moore, 25, was sentenced in 2012 to seven years in prison in a deal that consolidated most of the charges against

him. His spree began after he escaped from a Renton juvenile halfway house in 2008.

One of the charges, interstate transportation of a stolen vessel, alleges he stole a 34-foot boat from Ilwaco in 2010 and sailed it across the Columbia River.

He was ultimately captured after crash-landing a plane that he stole in Indiana and flew to the Bahamas.

Horrendous sex-abuse case ends with conviction

Former Ocean Park man faces possibility of life in prison

By NATALIE ST. JOHN
EO Media Group

SOUTH BEND, Wash. — A former Ocean Park man who sexually abused a child has been found guilty of 18 separate felony charges.

When John Keone Lopaka Aylward, 46, is sentenced on Oct. 7, he faces the possibility of life in prison, according to Pacific County Prosecutor Mark McClain.

The Pacific County Sheriff's Office arrested Aylward in January after discovering an extensive collection of pornographic images of children in his home. The investigation began when a child in Aylward's family told her school counselor that Aylward had punched her. She also told the counselor that she believed Aylward was sexually assaulting an elementary-school-age family member. The counselor contacted police

and child welfare authorities.

Through his investigation, Deputy Sean Eastham learned that Aylward had been showing sexually explicit images to the younger child. While executing a search warrant on the home, deputies discovered a memory card hidden in a hutch in the family's living room that contained numerous pornographic images of children, including recordings of Aylward having intercourse with the girl. Deputies also found firearms, which Aylward, a convicted felon, was not allowed to possess. Aylward denied abusing the child at first, but eventually confessed to Eastham, and blamed the abuse "on his meth use and being tempted by Satan," according to a probable cause statement.

Aylward, who allegedly ran an illegal, unlicensed tattoo business out of his home, was charged with first-degree incest, first-degree rape of a child, sexual exploitation of a

child and possession of child pornography.

Aylward decided to waive his right to a jury trial, electing instead to have Superior Court Judge Michael Sullivan decide the case.

Sullivan listened to two days of testimony in September from the victim, forensic experts, police and others, and reviewed the video evidence, before returning guilty verdicts on six counts of first-degree rape of a child, six counts of first-degree incest, three counts of sexual exploitation of a minor, dealing in depictions of minors engaged in sexually explicit conduct,

and one count each of dealing in child pornography, possessing child pornography, and second-degree unlawful possession of a firearm.

McClain said securing testimony and documentation from experts can be challenging in a rural community, but is extremely important for prosecuting child-abuse cases.

"These are awful,

gut-wrenching trials, not only because of the subject matter, but also because children do not often tell their story clearly. That is why the interviews and investigation make or break these cases," McClain said. Currently, there is no local facility to perform the required physical examinations and forensic interviews. In this case, McClain said, he was able to arrange for the victim to undergo both examinations in Lewis County on the same day. However, in the past, local kids have often had to travel to Grays Harbor for the interview, and then make a second trip to Olympia for the examination.

"This was very difficult for these kids, especially for those living on the peninsula," McClain said. However, he noted that the situation is improving, saying the prosecutor's office has been working with the local nonprofit crime and abuse victims advocacy group Crisis Support Network to establish a local Children's Advocacy Center. McClain said the Pacific County Department of Health recently became involved in the effort, and the Advocacy Center is close to becoming a reality.



Pacific County Prosecutor Mark McClain

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