

Payout over police bashing

A HANDYMAN was yesterday awarded \$70,000 damages from the Government and a policeman more than seven years after he was bashed during a drugs raid.

Slave Todorovski, of West Sunshine, was on a ladder when he was bashed on the back of the head, punched and kicked, handcuffed and forced to the ground.

Mr Todorovski, who suffered injuries including loose teeth and bleeding from the left ear, sued the Government and the only policeman he could identify, Dan Trimble.

County Court Judge Bill White said Mr Todorovski had been humiliated, frightened and emotionally distressed, and endured pain and suffering and loss.

Outside court, lawyer Carolyn

Philip Cullen

County Court reporter

McNamara, of Arnold Thomas and Becker, said Mr Todorovski was extremely happy his case had been resolved just days before Christmas.

Though unable to identify who initially struck Mr Todorovski, Judge White said Senior Constable Trimble, Sergeant Andre Falk and Senior Detective Grant O'Dwyer acted in concert in the assault.

He said excessive force was used to subdue Mr Todorovski.

"I find that ... the conduct of Trimble, Falk and O'Dwyer in overpowering and controlling the plaintiff was not necessary or reasonably done in good faith and in the performance of their duty as to the execution of the search warrant," the judge said.

Mr Todorovski was accused of swinging a hammer towards Sen-Constable Trimble, launching himself in a rugby-like tackle from the ladder and "roaring like a bull".

The tradesman denied punching anybody, grabbing at a gun or provoking or threatening people.

Judge White found the evidence of Sen-Constable Trimble and Sgt Falk "quite unsatisfactory" and he had "grave doubts as to the veracity, accuracy and reliability of the documentation compiled in relation to this incident."

He ordered Sen-Constable Trimble to pay \$55,000 damages, and ordered him and the Government to pay Mr Todorovski, who was never charged with any offence, \$15,000 for false imprisonment.

Claims of assault against the Government and of trespass against both defendants were dismissed.



School's out: Angus, 9 (front), Callum, 10 and Courtney, 9, celebrate the holidays. Picture: NICOLE GARMSTON

Splash out on holiday fun

Sam Edmund

THE school holidays are shaping as a smorgasbord of fun-filled escapades and adventures for students.

More than 800,000 young Victorians woke this morning to their first day of summer holidays.

For some, it's the end of the road after completing Year 12 studies last month.

For others, like Callum, 10, Angus, 9, and Courtney, 9, it is simply time for some fun.

And while the beach might be the obvious option in hot weather, there are plenty of other things to see and do.

Melbourne Zoo is celebrating summer from January with a special Twilights season, which includes staged concerts.

Zoo spokeswoman Judith Henke said the zoo was ready for a big school holiday period.

"We're all set for a super summer of fun — by day and right into

PLACES TO GO

- **MCG tour. Non-event days. Adult \$10 Student/concession \$6**
- **Rialto observation deck. Adult \$11.80 Concession \$9 Child \$6.80**
- **Melbourne river cruise. Adult from \$16.50 Concession \$13.20 Child \$8.80**
- **Melbourne Sports and Aquatic Centre Splash-Out program. Starting January. Adult \$5.50 Concession/Child \$4.10**
- **Open Range Zoo Rhythm of Africa**
- **Melbourne Zoo Twilight music series. Starting January. Adult \$18 Concession \$13.50 Child \$9**
- **IMAX theatre session. Adult from \$16 Concession \$13 Child \$11**
- **Sovereign Hill tour. Adult \$29 Concession \$22 Child \$14**
- **Luna Park "Ride All Day" package. \$23.95**

evening," she said. "There are programs for everyone.

"The zoo will be a great place for people

to get in touch with nature and enjoy the magic of wildlife."

On the other side of town, fun-seekers will

find all they can handle at the Melbourne Sports and Aquatic Centre's Splash-Out program.

MSAC aquatic manager Adam Luscombe said inflatable objects, movies on a big screen, and a wave pool and waterslide would provide the perfect way to forget the stresses of school.

"We'll have the latest release movies and the inflatable slide will be fantastic," he said.

"It's going to be huge. Parking will be limited, however, so we encourage people to use public transport."

Luna Park managing director Jason Todd said the famous Melbourne landmark would quench any thrill-seeker's thirst.

"We are getting right down to the very heart of why children of all ages always have fun at Luna Park," Mr Todd said.

"This summer is the perfect chance to re-live those great memories and even create some new ones."



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Lowest road toll bid Importer sentenced

VICTORIA is on track for its lowest road toll.

Five fatalities were yesterday removed from the official state toll after the coroner announced the deaths were not due to road collisions.

The toll now stands at 320, 57 fewer than the lowest road toll recorded in 1997.

In 1970, the worst year, more than 1000 people died on the state's road.

Acting Superintendent Peter Dinan said speed cameras had been a huge factor in the overall drop in deaths and motorists should be commended for slowing down.

A GEELONG businessman who used false names to illegally import used cars from Japan has received a suspended jail sentence.

A County Court judge this week convicted Shane Minahan, a licensed Customs broker, and imposed a 14-month suspended jail sentence for defrauding the Commonwealth.

Minahan was found guilty of importing 14 cars under the personal vehicle import scheme using the names of false owners.

Minahan's Customs broker's licence was suspended.