

# Scottish rugby player Rufus McLean given community service

## Family of victim talks of pain endured.

The former Glasgow Warriors rugby player Rufus McLean was given a community payback order at Edinburgh Sheriff Court, having pled guilty to almost two years of abusive behaviour towards his former girlfriend, Cara Haston.

Sheriff Matthew Auchincloss ordered 120 hours of unpaid work as an alternative to custody, and made a non-harassment order to prevent McLean from contacting Ms Haston for ten years.

The 23-year-old rugby union player, who also had three international caps, was sacked by Glasgow Warriors after pleading guilty to an extended period of aggressive and controlling behaviour towards Ms Haston between April 2019 and May 2021.

Ms Haston's family issued a statement following the sentence, in which they spoke of the suffering they had endured and the verbal abuse Ms Haston had received from some members of the rugby community.

In the statement the family said:- "As a family, we are relieved that this four year ordeal has come to a conclusion and would like to thank Police Scotland and the Procurator Fiscal's Office for their support and professionalism.

"Throughout this process we have maintained a dignified silence but have had to endure more pain and suffering than

any family should. To be confronted by the knowledge that our daughter, Cara, has suffered serious abuse – under Section 1 of the Domestic Abuse Act – over such a prolonged period of time at the hands of the defendant is heart-breaking.

“Cara’s life has stood still, and so has that of our family. Unbelievably, Cara has had to endure continued verbal abuse from members of the rugby community. She is the victim, yet it seems that there still remain some young players who do not understand that when a defendant pleads guilty, it is an admission of wrong doing. In the case of Rufus McLean, it means serious abuse of a woman, verbally or otherwise, is totally unacceptable and deserves an appropriate response.

“One of the many questions we have for Scottish Rugby. Why was it that after Rufus McLean pleaded guilty to Domestic Abuse (18 months after he was charged), eight days later remaining on Glasgow Warriors publicity material for the second leg of the 1872 Cup match against Edinburgh. It was only after prolonged media attention that they were forced to respond to the seriousness of the situation. We hope that a more stringent procedure is now in place so no other family or young woman has to suffer in this way.”



Scotland rugby star Rufus McLean at Edinburgh Sheriff Court after admitting campaign of abuse against girlfriend Cara Haston. He was ordered to serve 120 hrs unpaid 10yr non

harassment order. Alan T Simpson Photography



Scotland rugby star Rufus McLean at Edinburgh Sheriff Court after admitting campaign of abuse against girlfriend Cara Haston. He was ordered to undertake 120 hrs unpaid 10yr non harassment order. Photographed with his Dad PHOTO Alan Simpson Photography