

# Sentence on false rape charge

By **JIMMY ELLINGHAM** 09:48, Aug 31 2009

A night of infidelity covered up by a snowballing lie came unstuck for a young Palmerston North mother.

Jaimee-Lee Fawcett, 19, received a six-month suspended sentence and ordered to pay police and ACC reparations of more than \$1200 in the Palmerston North District Court yesterday for making a false allegation of rape.

Police prosecutor Sergeant Chris Whitmore told the court Fawcett had made the false statement after she told her boyfriend she was raped by a man she had met during a night out drinking.

Her boyfriend had then persuaded her to complain to police, which she did on June 30 but she had made up a name for the man she alleged had raped her.

Fawcett had also lied to police about her nationality, saying she was American.

She withdrew the allegations on July 19 and admitted that, while she had cheated on her boyfriend, no rape had taken place.

Judge Grant Fraser told Fawcett she escaped more serious punishment only because nobody was arrested after her false statement.

"Had any persons been arrested ... then the offending would have taken on a totally different complexion for sentencing proposes.

"The offending was stupid in the extreme," Judge Fraser said.

Fawcett's lawyer, Jacinda Younger, said her client, who has a 14-month-old baby, did not want to admit to her boyfriend that she had been unfaithful, as he was her only means of financial support.

"She got caught up in a lie that snowballed on her ... It's been an awful wake-up call for her," Ms Younger said.

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