

Cleared man tells of rape trial hell

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BY **GETREADING**

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Andrew Spring, 25, originally from Ravensthorpe in Northants, was accused of creeping into a female student’s room at the Wells Hall in Upper Redlands Road and raping her as she slept.

Reading Crown Court heard the woman, who cannot be named for legal reasons, had joined Mr Spring and a group of friends on a boozy pub crawl in October 2004.

Mr Spring said he and the girl had gone back to her room and engaged in foreplay, but that she had “jumped up and left” before any sex had taken place.

He denied one charge of rape.

Jonathan Coode, defending, suggested to the court the woman had accused his client of rape in order to cover her drunken infidelity to her “brutish” boyfriend.

“She was afraid of what would happen – she had a flash of realisation that a lot of people had seen her acting in a very flirtatious way,” Mr Coode said.

“She has maybe convinced herself she is a victim, but she has been telling lie after lie.”

It took a jury less than an hour to clear Mr Spring of the charge on Friday, after a week-long trial in which he was described as “the nicest guy you could hope to meet” by pals.

Speaking exclusively to the Evening Post at the end of the trial, Mr Spring said he had gone through a “horrific ordeal” that he would “never be able to forget”.

“It’s been horrible – I didn’t really know what I was accused of or whether it would go to court until I was arrested in May,” he said.

“I’m very relieved – I haven’t been able to make any plans until this was over.

“Now I’m looking forward to getting on with the rest of my life.”

Mr Spring, who now lives in Cyprus with his girlfriend, said his case should also serve as a warning to people who might have too much to drink and end up in bed with a stranger.

“It shows you have to be very, very careful – something like this can just take over your life,” he stressed.

“The experience has definitely changed me. I’m a lot quieter than I used to be.

“Now that it’s over I’m just looking forward to things getting back to normal.”

<https://www.getreading.co.uk/news/local-news/cleared-man-tells-rape-trial-4262479>