

You are in: **Wales**

Wednesday, 31 July, 2002, 14:22 GMT 15:22 UK

## Rugby star's rape charge dropped

south west wales

NEWS



Hywel Jenkins had played for the Wales 'A' side

The case against a Welsh rugby player charged with rape has been dropped.

On Wednesday, it was confirmed that the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) had withdrawn all proceedings against Neath forward Hywel Jenkins, 26.

Mr Jenkins was arrested in June and charged with rape after an allegation was made by a 28-year-old woman following a house party in Bridgend. **“Hywel has protested his innocence right from the start and it has been a difficult time for him”**

The sportsman had always denied the allegation and his solicitor, Bernard de Maid, said he would be complaining to South Wales Police about their conduct during the proceedings. **Statement from Neath Rugby Club**

But a spokesman for the force said the investigation had been conducted "thoroughly and professionally".

Superintendent Brian Greaves said: "The complainant has been offered support throughout the case.

"The matter has been referred to the CPS which has made a decision not to refer to the case."

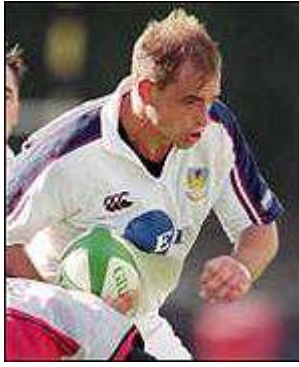
The player joined Neath from Swansea in a £70,000 deal on 1 June.

In a statement Neath rugby club said: "Hywel has protested his innocence right from the start and it

has been a difficult time for him.

"It is a great weight off his and the club's shoulders.

"It is now up to Hywel to put this behind him and realise his potential as one of the best back row forwards in Wales."



Ex-Swansea player Hywel Jenkins will play for Neath this coming season

Mr Jenkins, who is 6ft 4ins and weighs 17st 8lbs, is separated from his wife with whom he has a young daughter.

### **Potential**

He won seven caps for Wales' youth sides and starred for Wales A against the USA in 1999 while playing at Llanelli, before signing for Swansea.

Former Wales coach Graham Henry had tipped Jenkins as a future successor to international No 8.

He narrowly missed out on the Wales squad that lost the recent two-match series to South Africa.