

# Rhodes rape charges dropped

by Jan Hennop on 24-02-2009

Rape charges against a 21-year-old Rhodes student will be formally withdrawn in court today after the 18-year-old complainant on Monday informed the Grahamstown Directorate of Public Prosecutions she was dropping her complaint.

Eastern Cape Deputy Director of Public Prosecutions advocate Malherbe Marais last night confirmed that the young woman had decided to withdraw the charges of rape against the young blond man who appeared in court last week in connection with the alleged offence.

At the time, the police reported that a first-year student had alleged that she had been raped by the 21-year-old in a toilet cubicle in the male toilets of a popular local pub, the Rat and Parrot, during Rhodes University orientation week.

Rhodes University announced last week that, after looking into the matter, it would not take disciplinary steps against him.

Marais told the Daily Dispatch last night that the young man's attorney, Marius Wolmarans, had provided him with a "full" explanatory affidavit by the young man of what had happened in the cubicle.

He had also received the affidavit of a "witness" who had peeped over the top of the toilet cubicle door during the alleged offence.

Marais said: "There were aspects and contradictions which she acknowledged she could not explain or elaborate on due to a poor recollection of events. She said she wished to reconsider her position and asked to withdraw the case."

Marais said his office had "no intention" of prosecuting the "emotional" young woman for perjury or anything else.

He emphasised that Wolmarans had also made an undertaking on behalf of his client that they would not take any further criminal or civil steps against the young woman or Rhodes University.

"However, he would make no such undertaking about not taking steps against the media."

Some newspapers named the young man and displayed prominent photographs of him although he was not formally charged with the rape in court, nor was he asked to plead.

<http://blogs.dispatch.co.za/dispatchnow/2009/02/24/rhodes-rape-charges-dropped/>