



Veteran... Ron Jeremy

## Sex pest probe for porn star Ron, 67

By JAMES BEAL US Editor

VETERAN porn actor Ron Jeremy is facing new sex assault claims.

The US star, 67, who has been in more than 2,000 adult films since 1979, is under investigation but no charges have yet been brought.

The District Attorney's office in Los Angeles yesterday confirmed: "Sexual assault allegations against Ron Jeremy are under review."

The nature of the claims are not known but he was previously accused of groping women and he is banned from many adult industry events.

He was accused in 2017 of molesting model Kristin Brodie, who asked him to sign her breast.

A top female porn star also accused Jeremy of sex assault when he was an extra on her film set.

## PC clear of lad hit

A COP took two years to clear his name after a teen lied that he punched him in the face.

PC Paul Evans, 52, had arrested the lad, 14, for affray after a family row.

The boy said the officer punched him three times in the face in Bridgend, South Wales.

PC Evans was cleared of assault in 2018. Cardiff JPs heard the boy had a history of lying.

And on Friday he was cleared of misconduct by a disciplinary panel.

The Police Federation's Steve Treharne said: "The length of time in bringing this misconduct case is not acceptable."

## Fussy eat by age 4

KIDS who are picky eaters often don't grow out of it, a study found.

The best age to introduce new foods is before they are four. After that the more parents' try to control diets the fussier children may become.

Fussy kids tend to have a lower body mass index.

And most are also less likely to be obese, US researchers said.

Picky eaters tended to have mums who restricted unhealthy foods.

Dr Megan Pesch said: "We still want parents to encourage varied diets at young ages, but our study suggests they can take a less controlling approach."

## OFF THE SCALES

A 4ft pike weighed 53lbs 2oz, Britain's heaviest yet, after being found dead at Bellflask Fishery near Ripon, North Yorks.

# LOCKDOWN HOPE ON SEXUALITY STIGMA

NO one wants football matches to be played behind closed doors - but could it prove a turning point for gay players?

The Professional Football Association last week called in anti-homophobia campaigner Amal Fashanu to support seven players, including two in the Premier League, who do not feel ready to come out publicly.

But lockdown could be the perfect time to give them breathing space to do so.

Amal, 31, is the daughter of ex-Wimbledon striker John, whose brother Justin killed himself in 1998 after becoming the first British professional player to reveal he was gay.

Today, you have to go down to the eighth tier of English football to find another openly gay man - Ashford Town manager Luke Tuffs. Here, he talks to broadcaster and footie fan Adrian Chiles about whether the game is ready to challenge the stigma around sexuality.

OUT AND PROUD... Ashford Town manager Luke



"I'd want to get straight into the bear pit and deal with what I had to deal with" - LUKE TUFFS

# Why do you have to go down to the 8th tier of footie to find someone who is out as gay?

FOOTBALL behind closed doors is possibly better than no football at all - but other than that it's a pretty dismal business.

Yet I have been intrigued at the suggestion it might present an opportunity for a player in the men's game to come out as gay.

There's the old political saying about never letting a crisis go to waste, so could this be a big positive out of having to play matches in front of empty stands?

If the horror of dealing with a baying mob is what's holding you back, this may be your chance.

Needless to say, it's a lot more complicated than that. I spoke to Luke Tuffs, now manager of Ashford Town in the South Central Division of the Isthmian League.

It turns out you have to go down as far as the eighth tier of English football to find anyone out as gay.

Luke, 33, came out as a teenage player at Camberley Town in Surrey. He says: "One night I got drunk with the players, who had taken me on a club night out with



By ADRIAN CHILES

them. There were some women in the corner who seemed keen on me. One of the lads said, 'Go for it'.

"To my sober self's horror, drunk me decided to say I had a boyfriend, and show pictures of him to everyone to prove it. And everyone was absolutely cool about it."

Luke now believes the only way we will have an openly gay elite-level footballer is if he is already out and proud as a youth player.

He adds: "That will happen because that generation are getting cooler with it all the time."

He laughs as I suggest playing in empty stadiums might encourage a player considering coming out. "It might help," he concedes, "but for me, it

would make it harder. I'd want to get straight into the bear pit and deal with what I had to deal with. I'd probably be worried about what it would be like when eventually there were crowds."

At Luke's level of football, big crowds are not an issue, but his footballing life has not been without challenges. "I can take the stick, as long as it's not malicious,"

he says. "My dressing rooms are probably as un-PC as any. It can be savage and I can take that because I don't think it comes from malice - it comes from love."

"I know gay footballers who haven't come out and they've said to me they just couldn't deal with the banter like I do. And I get that."

"I'm lucky, I suppose. But I wonder how many decent gay players couldn't take it and gave up the game."

I have had a similar point made to me by some of the most resilient, groundbreaking black footballers of the 1970s.

I'm talking about the likes of Brendon Batson and the late, great Cyrille Regis - two-thirds of West Brom's famous Three Degrees.

They have spoken about the walls of racist hatred spewing from screaming fans. And though things have improved, Brendon thinks there is some way to go.

He says: "The majority would be fine now with a

player coming out. But the minority can still cause havoc, on social media for a start."

This is Luke's point, too. "That's where the hatred is - that's what you'd be up against. Look at the racist abuse Ian Wright is getting, even now. Who'd put themselves through that?"

"And imagine the pressure from the media. It's all you'd ever be asked about."

Luke is concerned for the mental health of all those in the game having to live a lie.

He says: "The dressing room is such an intimate place, it must be so hard not to talk honestly. I couldn't stand it, but I totally understand why you'd take the decision to play it that way."

Now, I almost feel ashamed for having suggested behind-closed-doors football may be a gay footballer's big chance.

But the idea at least gives us the chance to say to any footballer prepared to come out that the vast majority of the football family - players, coaches, staff, media and millions of fans - would stand shoulder-to-shoulder with them.

And that has to be worth something.



CAMPAIGN... Amal and, left, uncle Justin