

STATE OF TASMANIA v HAYDEN RICKY HALL
COMMENTS ON PASSING SENTENCE

JAGO J
11 MAY 2026

Mr Hall you have pleaded guilty to one count of assault. Shortly before midnight on 4 February 2023, you were walking, with another person, along Club Drive in Shearwater. At the same time the complainant, Matthew Richardson and his friend Jadyen Stears, were also walking along Club Drive at Shearwater.

Near the roundabout at the intersection of Club Drive and Shearwater Boulevard, you and your friend met up with the complainant and his friend. Words were exchanged between the two groups. Someone took umbrage at some of the comments that were being made, and the verbal exchange became heated. You punched the complainant once to the face. The complainant fell backwards on to ground and knocked his head. He was then kicked and punched repeatedly by another person. The State does not assert that you are criminally responsible for the punches and kicks that were inflicted upon the complainant once he was on the ground, but of course it was your initial blow that caused him to fall backwards and hit the ground, rendering him vulnerable to further attack.

The complainant was able to get himself up and he and his friend ran from the area. The complainant suffered several injuries as a consequence of the incident and had to be treated in hospital. He had a broken nose, a broken jawbone and a bruise to the back of his head. It cannot be determined whether the punch you delivered caused any of these injuries. I suspect the reality is, that the injuries were caused by the combination of the blows that were inflicted.

I have not received an impact statement from the complainant, but I have no doubt he found the incident a traumatising experience and the injuries he sustained would have been painful.

You are 24 years of age. You have relevant prior convictions. On 24 January 2023, so only some 11 days before this crime was committed, you were sentenced in the Magistrates Court for two counts of common assault. You were fined in respect to those matters. I am told that when those prior matters occurred, and at the time of this crime, you were using alcohol heavily and also had a difficulty with illicit drugs. When affected by such substances, you were prone to angry outbursts and emotional dysregulation.

In September 2024, you were again involved in another alleged incident of violence. I am told that following the September 2024 incident you realised that you needed assistance. In December 2024, you were referred to a clinical psychologist. You were assessed as having ADHD. A common feature of ADHD is poor anger management and emotional dysregulation. Following this diagnosis, you were placed on medication. I am told that you have found that of great benefit in terms of managing angry outbursts. You have also ceased the use of illicit drugs, moderated your alcohol intake and have been focused on living a more stable lifestyle.

Since 2024, you have been completing an apprenticeship as a roof plumber. In March 2026, you and your long-term partner also had your first child. The birth of your baby provides additional impetus to remain on your prescribed medication, remain abstinent from the use of illicit drugs and continue to moderate your alcohol consumption. The changes you have made count in your favour.

I take into account your plea of guilty. I accept that there has been some delay associated with the resolution of this matter. Initially, you were charged with a second account of assault which

alleged criminal liability for the violence that was perpetrated upon the complainant whilst he was on the ground. Eventually, the State determined that it was not appropriate to prosecute you in that regard. Once that matter was resolved the plea of guilty was indicated.

Those factors must be balanced against the fact that in my assessment, this is serious, antisocial, alcohol fuelled violence. Violence of that nature is all too common and of great concern to the community. Striking another person to the head and face area is an inherently dangerous thing to do. You and others must understand that even a single blow may, and often does, cause serious injury and in some circumstances, loss of life. Here, your blow was delivered with sufficient force that it caused the complainant to fall backwards striking his head on the road and leaving him vulnerable to further attack. General deterrence and denunciation are prominent factors in the sentencing exercise.

I am satisfied that the objective seriousness of your crime requires the imposition of a sentence of imprisonment. However, given the factors I have identified and the significant steps that you have achieved to date in bettering yourself, I am persuaded that it is not necessary that you be required to immediately serve the period of imprisonment. I will give you the opportunity to demonstrate that the changes you have made are here to stay.

I make the following orders. You are convicted of the crime of assault. You are sentenced to a term of imprisonment of four months. The whole of that sentence will be suspended for a period of eighteen months on condition that you are not to commit any offence punishable by imprisonment during that time. Mr Hall, I explain to you that if you do commit any offence punishable by imprisonment, and I emphasise the word any, during that period, you can be brought back to this Court and an application made that you serve the period of imprisonment. The law is that a judge must activate it unless it is unjust to do so.