

Matthew Norman's Media Diary; Independent Monday 27th Feb

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Will Jonathan King be redeemed?

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IN ONE of the more sublime media ironies, the newspaper that strives so mightily to bring paedophiles to justice seems poised to bring justice to a convicted paedophile.

The case is that of Jonathan King, whom Sun editor Rebekah Wade has pursued with vigour since his parole in 2004, liberally unleashing the "vile pervert" stuff and trying to locate other boys with stories to tell. King has always volubly maintained his innocence, however, and the Criminal Case Review Commission recently announced it was urgently reviewing his conviction on the receipt of new information.

We have now learnt the nature of this fresh evidence. King has discovered that, on the date of the alleged main assault in England, 8 September 1985, he was in New York. He was there to watch his friend Ivan Lendl beat John McEnroe in the US Open final, and at Flushing Meadow he ran into his American lawyer, who has provided an affidavit to this effect.

What will delight Wade and the gang even more than the fact itself is how King came by it.

Nostalgically leafing through a cuttings file recently, he chanced upon a reference to the New York trip in the weekly column he wrote for a British paper. I wouldn't insult your intelligence by naming the newspaper, whose then editor was a certain Kelvin MacKenzie.

If and when the CCRC reopens the case, and should Mr King be acquitted on appeal, we have no doubt that Wade will do the honourable thing, and clear the front page space for the headline "It's The Sun wot cleared him!".