

Crown casino to go to trial over banned addict gambler claims

Crown casino chiefs have been ordered to go to trial over claims they allowed a banned problem gambler to blow USD 30 million.

Supreme Court Justice David Harper today ruled that the Southbank casino had a case to answer in its explosive dispute with millionaire Gold Coast property developer Harry Kakavas.

Mr Kakavas, 40, alleges he lost USD 30 million playing baccarat in a 14-month gambling spree starting in June 2005.

The self-confessed gambling addict claims he had excluded himself from the casino but was lured back in a plan hatched by chief operating officer John Williams, the stepson of Crown's developer and former owner Lloyd Williams.

He is suing Crown and Mr Williams for the USD 30 million he says he lost, plus damages.

In submissions to the court, Mr Kakavas claims he was flown about 30 times on Crown's VIP jet and was regularly handed bags and boxes of cash containing up to USD 50,000.

Mr Kakavas told the Herald Sun he was delighted that he would have his day in court.

Crown denies any wrongdoing. The casino has until March 12 to file its defence.