



COUNTY OF YOLO
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**Arizona Softball Coach Sentenced to Life for Sexual Assault
on Multiple Minors**

(Woodland, CA) – December 17, 2020 – On December 16, 2020, the Honorable Judge Paul Richardson sentenced 43-year-old Buck Maldonado Thomas to 37 years and 4 months to life in state prison after a jury convicted him of multiple crimes including forcible sexual assault of a minor, first degree burglary, and sexual battery on a minor. Thomas, a resident of Arizona, will be required to register as a sex offender for life.

At trial, the jury heard evidence that the first minor victim came forward in November 2018 and disclosed that Thomas, whom her family had hired as a private hitting coach, sexually assaulted her at her home in Yolo County, CA in July 2018. She had met Thomas at a softball tournament in Orange County, CA. The West Sacramento Police Department immediately opened an investigation and learned of a second minor victim who also trained with Thomas in August 2018. These victims were interviewed at the Yolo County Multi-Disciplinary Interview Center where minor victims of sexual abuse are interviewed by forensically trained experts.

As the investigation moved forward, two more victims from Arizona and one from Nevada told police Thomas had provided hitting instruction to them and that he sexually assaulted them as well. These victims came forward after hearing about the case in the news and through friends and acquaintances.

During sentencing, Judge Richardson praised the bravery of the victims in this case. Parents of both of the victims made powerful statements to the court about how Thomas' crimes have impacted their lives.

"The victims in this case came to court and testified to sexual assaults that happened to them, and their family members spoke with passion on their behalf at the sentencing hearing. We are grateful Judge Richardson recognized their courage for coming forward and imposed a lengthy sentence, providing justice for the victims." stated District Attorney Jeff Reisig.

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