

SEXUAL MISCONDUCT CHARGES AGAINST NAVARRO DISMISSED

| By Joan Moss

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On Friday, August 2nd, Senior Assistant Attorney General Dave Druliner moved to dismiss all sixteen counts of sexual misconduct charges against Derik Dion Navarro, an ex-Sheriff deputy of Lake County, in Judge James Chou's court in Marin County. Navarro's wife and daughter were present.

"A majority of the jurors (10 of them) believed the victim," Druliner said in a telephone interview. "Unfortunately, they didn't all believe the victim beyond a reasonable doubt."

"The length of time (six years) it took this case to come to trial compromised our ability to gather corroborating evidence," stated Druliner. "The victim and the victim's family are willing to go through a retrial. The victim is not happy about the dismissal."

Druliner went on to mention the jury instructions, Sheriff's investigation (Sheriff Rodney Mitchell in 2005 and 2006), the plea agreement (reached by Druliner and Public Defender Mitchell Hauptman in Lake County that was overturned by Judge Blum) and lack of corroborating evidence.

From Duliner's explanation, it appeared he believed that a retrial would produce the same lack of evidence needed to arrive at a conviction.

Judge Chou thanked Druliner for the change of venue and a well ordered trial.

When the judge excused those present, Navarro and Navarro's attorney Mitchell Hauptman left quickly, not as victors, but as people who wanted to leave as soon as possible. Their heads were not up and they were not smiling.

Druliner shook Hauptman's hand, as Navarro and Hauptman walked by him to leave the courtroom. He did not shake the hand of Derik Navarro.

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