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# DAILY NEWS

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## Rikers riot may whack city

### Inmates sue over beating, tab could go to taxpayers

BY ROBERT F. MOORE  
DAILY NEWS POLICE BUREAU

A BLOODY clash on Rikers Island could cost city taxpayers millions of dollars if attorneys prove jailers randomly beat as many as 16 inmates after a correction officer was slashed.

Part of last October's melee was captured by a surveillance camera, leading to the arrest of a correction officer and a captain. Authorities are investigating if dozens of other jailers were involved, including several supervisors who allegedly watched.

"We're not saying Rikers Island should be a country club," said Andrew Stoll, one of the attorneys who has filed a notice of claim against the city. "What we're saying is that it should be professionally run."

City Correction Commissioner Martin Horn said he's taking the allegations seriously, and officials noted incidents requiring jailers to use force dropped 30% last year compared with 2004. "It is important to understand that force is sometimes necessary to maintain order in the jail," Horn said. "But it must be



AARON SHOWALTER

Carolyn Williams shows son Kareem Williams' jeans, allegedly torn by jailer in October riot at Rikers.

appropriate and in accordance with procedures."

Michael LoMonaco, 23, of Staten Island, was being held in the mental health observation unit at the Correction Department's Anna M. Kross Center, where the Oct. 5 brawl erupted.

LoMonaco, who was being held on an assault charge, and authorities agree the incident began about 9 p.m. when an in-

mate, Kenneth Robinson, 27, used the sharpened face of a watch to slash Officer Alan Gold's face. Gold chased Robinson into the dorm and the inmate hid under a bed, LoMonaco said.

Soon, dozens of officers, some carrying riot shields and batons, and inmates got into the mix. The officers took out plastic handcuffs and ordered more than a dozen inmates to lie facedown on their beds.

The prisoners were led out of the dorm and separated into two groups. LoMonaco said his hands were cuffed when officers ordered him to his knees and then repeatedly punched him.

"Who is in charge of this house?" an officer demanded, LoMonaco said. "I kept screaming, 'You are, you are!'" he said.

More beatings allegedly occurred in an intake room, which is not monitored by cameras.

More than a dozen inmates and five officers were hurt. Robinson, a manic-depressive being held on a robbery charge, suffered a broken jaw.

Three days after the melee, Carolyn Williams, 44, went to visit her son Kareem Williams, an inmate who alleges a jailer gave him a black eye. Williams, who was awaiting trial on attempted robbery and assault charges, slipped his mom a piece of paper naming 16 inmates who were allegedly hurt.

Prosecutors said Officer Joseph Collins was captured on video punching Sequan Prude, 20, a murder suspect, in the face. Collins has been charged with assault, official misconduct, harassment and filing a false business record, a felony.

Capt. Anastasia Henderson, 36, who allegedly witnessed the brawl but failed to mention it in a report,

was suspended for 30 days and charged with filing a false record and official misconduct. Henderson and Collins each face up to four years in prison.

Lottie Prude visited her grandson Sequan a few days after the alleged at-

tack and said his eyes were nearly beaten shut.

"They kicked him in his back and ribs," said Prude, 69, of Brooklyn. "But his face. Oh, God. I didn't want him to see me crying. I couldn't help it."

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