

Massachusetts man convicted of assaulting girlfriend; sentenced to prison

A 31-year-old Mansfield man who violently assaulted his girlfriend in July of 2019, was sentenced to serve up to three-and-a-half years in state prison, Bristol County District Attorney Thomas M. Quinn III announced.

Richard Duest pleaded guilty late last month in Fall River Superior Court to indictments charging him with Assault and Battery with a Dangerous Weapon and two counts of Assault and Battery on a Family or Household Member.

The defendant and the female victim were in a relationship and had been living in Mansfield with another couple of their two small children. The female victim in this case was the live-in nanny for the children.

On July 21, 2019, police observed a video surveillance at the Qualters Middle School while school was not in session. On the video, police could see the defendant strike the victim with a closed fist and throw a cell phone at her face.

The victim, who is legally blind in one eye, was struck by the phone in her good eye, and her vision was reduced for a period of time due to the assault. During the grand jury investigation into the incident, it was also learned that the defendant was witnessed strike the victim inside the home they shared in June of 2019.

The defendant has a lengthy criminal record, which includes serving prison time for a 2013 aggravated assault in Worcester and a 2008 bank robbery.

The case was prosecuted by Assistant District Attorney Matthew

Friedel and the two-and-a-half to three-and-a-half year state prison sentence was imposed by Judge Sharon Donatelle.

“The defendant has a history of committing serious crimes of violence. . This was a violent assault against the victim in a public place. The defendant is a danger to the victim and the community and the sentence will protect society from him,” District Attorney Quinn said.

New Bedford police seize fentanyl, cash, and gun at 209 Court Street apartment

On March 11, New Bedford narcotics and gang detectives executed a search warrant at 209 Court St. Apt. 3, resulting in the seizure of approximately 71 grams of fentanyl, 14 grams of cocaine, a 45 caliber handgun, bullets, and \$1,575.

As a result, Andre Daniels, 25, 209 Court St., Apt. 3, was arrested and charged with trafficking in fentanyl and firearm offenses. Detective Jordan DaSilva investigated the case.

If you have any information on criminal activity in your neighborhood, the New Bedford Police Dept. wants to hear from you. You can leave an anonymous tip on our voicemail at (508) 991-6300 Ext. 1.

New Bedford Man Who Used His Girlfriend to Set Up Men for Robberies Sentenced to Prison

A 22-year-old New Bedford man who, with his girlfriend's assistance, set up unsuspecting men via dating websites and then robbed them once they came to meet with the woman, was sentenced to serve up to four years in state prison, Bristol County District Attorney Thomas M. Quinn III announced.

Luis Santos pleaded guilty in Fall River Superior Court to indictments charging him with three counts of armed robbery.

This defendant, and his girlfriend, 23-year-old Kerstyn Gross, posted her photo and created a dating profile for her on various websites. On at least three separate occasions, this defendant would like in wait while his girlfriend would meet with men from the dating websites and then rob them at knifepoint.

The first reported incident occurred on January 31, 2019 in Dartmouth. The victim met Kerstyn Gross on a website called "Meet me." He conversed with her on Facebook and Instagram, and they decided to meet for a date. Defendant Gross picked the victim up at his residence in her vehicle. While driving, she pretended to have a flat tire and stopped the vehicle. A male party, later identified as Defendant Santos, jumped out of the woods with a knife and robbed the victim. The defendant then entered into the vehicle with the co-defendant and fled the scene, leaving the victim stranded with no cash or cell phone. None of the stolen items were ever recovered from this incident.

The second reported incident occurred on December 28, 2019 in New Bedford. The male victim met Defendant Gross on "Meet me" and was directed to meet her at Tallman Street residential

address in the North End of New Bedford. The victim did not feel comfortable to go to that location so he asked her to meet him at a Dunkin' Donuts. When he went to that location, Defendant Santos approached him with a machete and robbed him. Some of the property stolen during this incident was eventually recovered by police.

The third reported incident occurred on December 30, 2019 in New Bedford. The male victim met Defendant Gross on Plentyoffish.com. She arranged to meet him at the same Tallman Street residential address. When the victim arrived, he immediately recognized Defendant Gross from her profile photo. After exchanging greetings, she invited the victim inside the home, at which point Defendant Santos emerged, armed with a large knife. The victim was robbed of cash, a cellphone, and a watch.

Defendant Gross pleaded guilty in New Bedford District Court last September to charges of larceny from a person. She was sentenced to two-and-a-half years in the Bristol County House of Corrections, with one year to serve and the balance of the sentence suspended for three years. She was also ordered to undergo mental health counseling and to stay away from the co-defendant and the victims.□

Defendant Santos, who has an extensive criminal record despite his young age, was sentenced by Fall River Superior Court Judge Sharon Donatelle to a two-and-a-half to four-year state prison term. The case was prosecuted by Assistant District Attorney Matthew Friedel.

At the time of Defendant Santos's arrest, he was already awaiting final disposition on a separate open case from 2017, where he was charged in New Bedford District Court with Possess with Intent to Distribute a Class B drug.

"It is no surprise that the defendant set up a scam to violently rob the victims. He has a history of violent conduct

and was on release for dealing drugs when he committed this crime. He needs to be locked up to protect the public.," District Attorney Quinn said.

OPINION: New Bedford man humiliated, disrespected, and “dragged through hell” by local RMVs

“Please take up the issue of poor logistics at motor and vehicle registration service centers in Massachusetts, especially nearby centers Fall River, New Bedford, and Taunton!

Thousands of people threatened with license suspension! The only ones responsible are the authorities and representatives of those centers, the main door guarded by security officers and police who are oppressing and disrespecting CITIZENS.

That main door should have expert representation from that agency and they should not leave that responsibility to police officers with little patience and who act unprofessionally. These individuals complicate the process and what we need to get done there. Then the RMVs proceed to manufacture offenses that suspend licenses and attach unfair fees and penalties which is unfair to low-income people.

On top of it, the service telephone line is appalling, it's impossible to communicate by phone and even via the internet.

Please press everyone to take action! We should demand that

the service centers change the way that they do things as soon as possible. That agency of power is very abusive towards the citizens of Massachusetts.

I have been through hell with that agency. I have days of bitterness because of being humiliated by members of those centers. I tell you, NBG, because if you investigate or launch an opinion poll about this agency, I guarantee you will see the reality of the abuse of power by this agency, and also the police and security agency involved in the whole mess.

There is already news coverage in the news about the suspension of licenses in Massachusetts and demand for something to be done.

If you [NBG] work for the good of the citizens you should give support to the victims.”-Nelson Nieves.

New Bedford's 25th annual “Day Of Portugal” canceled due to COVID-19

The popular “Day Of Portugal” celebration has been delighting locals for well over two decades. Last year at this time organizers canceled the celebration and most of us at that time thought that COVID would pass in a few weeks or months.

Unfortunately, the Day Of Portugal, or as some colloquially call “The Mini-Feast,” has been canceled for a second year in the best interest of “..safety and well-being of the population as well as the restrictions imposed by the authorities,” according to Dulce Matos, president of the New

Bedford Day of Portugal Committee.

“Given the continuing situation we are all experiencing due to the COVID-19 outbreak, I regret to have to inform you that the Day of Portugal celebrations in New Bedford, scheduled for June 11, 12, and 13, 2021, are canceled.”

Certainly not news anyone wanted to hear, especially considering that the larger Feast of the Blessed Sacrament has not made an official statement on whether there will be a “Feast” this year. A year after COVID first reared its head, most of us were looking for some normalcy after months of lockdowns, stay-at-home advisories, social distancing, and having healthy interactions with others rescheduled or canceled altogether.

Every June tens of thousands of people from the South Coast and beyond eagerly look forward to the “Day Of Portugal” celebration, a chance to soak in Portuguese history, music, culture, and of course, cuisine. Alas, we’ll all have to wait until next in when Matos hopes the event “...will return stronger than ever in 2022.”

Assuming we are not in a lockdown because of COVID-20.

Dartmouth High Football tops New Bedford 20-14

By Brendan Kurie
Contributor

The red zone wasn’t kind to the New Bedford High football team on Friday night.

Three times the Whalers drove inside the 20 only to be turned away without points by Dartmouth's defense in a 20-14 loss at Memorial Stadium that kicked off the 2020-21 high school football season.

"They did a great job," New Bedford coach Mark DeBrito said. "They played great upfront and we were misaligned a lot. They took advantage of it. We just have to stay true and teach these guys. We'll keep working on it."

Despite twin brothers Bill and Billois Sousa teaming up for a touchdown and 160 rushing yards from electric junior tailback Jayden Frazier, a shifty, compact runner in the style of Maurice Jones-Drew, the Whalers stepped on their own feet too often, committing six second-half turnovers and failing to score on four-straight plays from the 4-yard line in the third quarter.

"I can't make excuses," DeBrito said. "You have to go out there and perform. But when you have guys who haven't been in that situation before, it's tough. We had some guys forget what they were doing and weren't sure of themselves so they're going slower than they normally would. Those are things we have to clean up."

PLAYER OF THE GAME

For the Whalers, it was Frazier, who averaged 8 yards on his 20 carries, including a 43-yard scamper in the fourth quarter that nearly got New Bedford back in the game.

"He's a workhorse," DeBrito said. "I was hoping we could get him in the end zone, but we didn't. He's a tough back. He has a low center of gravity and some wiggle in him. We just have to find ways to get him the ball as much as we can and I think we'll be alright."

THE BIGGEST PLAY

For the Whalers, it came while trailing 6-0 with five minutes left in the second quarter. Billois Sousa broke through

Dartmouth's line to block a punt deep in Dartmouth territory. His twin brother, Bill, came up with the scoop and score and Ian DaCosta tacked on an extra point to give New Bedford its only lead of the game, 7-6.

"That was nice for them," DeBrito said. "They're awesome. They've taken a leadership role. They've always been leaders, but this year, especially, with it being their last time playing for us, they're helping out a lot with the younger guys."

THE GAME PLAY

Dartmouth junior JJ Esterlin opened the game with a 41-yard kickoff return. Two plays later, Dartmouth converted a 3rd-and-18, and two plays after that Marques broke off a 16-yard touchdown run up the middle.

After a Whalers punt, the Indians were poised to add to their 6-0 lead, but a 64-yard drive was undone by a fumble on New Bedford's 17-yard line.

The Whalers drove down to Dartmouth's 16, but turned the ball over on downs after a 10-yard pass on 4th-and-12 failed to reach the marker.

After a three-and-out, Dartmouth was punting the ball away when the Sousa brothers teamed up for New Bedford's first lead, 7-6, with 5:05 left in the second quarter.

That lead lasted exactly 17 seconds. On Dartmouth's next play, junior quarterback Will Kelly hit a wide open Baron Dutra in stride on a seam route up the middle for a 67-yard touchdown. A blocked extra point made it a 12-7 game with 4:48 left before halftime.

New Bedford's first possession of the second half started strong with three Frazier runs for 43 yards and a 12-yard connection from junior quarterback Ryan Dosenberg to senior wide receiver Michael Fernandes. But even with a powerful

offensive line, New Bedford couldn't find pay dirt on four plays from the 4-yard line. Junior Dan Martin made the stop on fourth down and Dartmouth took over on its own 2.

The Indians proceeded to march 98 yards on 12 plays, highlighted by a 53-yard run by Kelly and capped by a 2-yard off-tackle touchdown run by Marques.

Frazier broke off a 43-yard run down to the 11 with just under seven minutes left, but the Whalers were unable to score once again, throwing incomplete on third and fourth downs.

The Whalers nearly got stifled a fourth time inside the red zone, but Dosenberg slipped through a small hole on a 4th-and-goal play from the 4. With the Whalers out of timeouts, they had to attempt an onside kick, which Dartmouth recovered.

THE RECORDS

Dartmouth is now 1-0, while New Bedford is 0-1.

SERIES HISTORY

This was Dartmouth's first win over New Bedford since 2016. It was the lowest scoring game between the two teams since Dartmouth won 10-6 in 2014.

THE NOTES

Dosenberg had a nifty no-look, behind-the-back handoff to Frazier in the fourth quarter. ... New Bedford committed eight penalties for 45 yards, with six of those whistles and 35 yards coming in the second half. ... The Whalers regularly used a huddle, while the Indians used cards held up on the sidelines to signal their plays.

UP NEXT

New Bedford has a bye in Week 2 before Bridgewater-Raynham comes to town on Saturday, March 27.

"We'll keep working," DeBrito said. "We have some talent. It's just a matter of getting some experience. If we can keep these guys learning and watching film, we'll get there."

THE STATISTICS

Total offense: Dartmouth 307, New Bedford 251

Rushing yards: Dartmouth 212, New Bedford 178

New Bedford

Passing: Ryan Dosenberg 8-18-73

Rushing: Jayden Frazier 20-160, Ryan Dosenberg 6-18

Receiving: Darius Harrison 1-4, Michael Fernandes 4-55,
Flordan Bazile 2-18, Ranen Goodine 1-(-2)

Dartmouth

Passing: Will Kelly 3-6-95-1

Rushing: Will Kelly 17-128, Ethan Marques 11-39-2, JJ Esterlin
4-36, Patrick Crane 2-9

Receiving: Baron Dutra 2-94-1, Ethan Marques 1-1

THE BOX SCORE

New Bedford;07;0;7-14

Dartmouth;6;6;8;0-20

Scoring Plays

First Quarter

Dartmouth: Ethan Marques 16-yard run (run failed) 9:24

Second Quarter

New Bedford: Bill Sousa recovers blocked punt (Ian DaCosta
good) 5:05

Dartmouth: Baron Dutra 67-yard pass from Will Kelly (kick
blocked) 4:48

Third Quarter

Dartmouth: Ethan Marques 2-yard run (Kelly run) 1:00

Fourth Quarter

New Bedford: Ryan Dosenberg 4-yard run (Ian DaCosta good) 1:49

Boston Police Department warns public of increased activity of off-road vehicles as spring approaches

“As spring approaches and the warmer weather arrives, the Boston Police Department has historically seen an increase in community complaints and quality of life concerns relative to off-road vehicles such as dirt bikes and ATVs as well as mopeds and motor scooters being driven around the city in a reckless and irresponsible manner.

These vehicles usually travel in large groups with little regard for motor vehicle laws or public safety, causing havoc in the neighborhoods we serve despite the continued efforts of BPD officers across the city.

Many of the offending vehicles are not properly registered, oftentimes have been previously reported stolen and usually stored in an improper and unsafe manner.

Community members with information relative to the illegal operation or storage of these recreational vehicles who wish to assist in these ongoing investigations anonymously can do so by calling the CrimeStoppers Tip Line at 1 (800) 494-TIPS or by texting the word ‘TIP’ to CRIME (27463).

The Boston Police Department will stringently guard and protect the identities of all those who wish to assist any such investigations in an anonymous manner.”

Boston Police Department places suspect in custody after nearly running over several officers during traffic stop

“At about 9:47 PM on Friday March 12, 2021, officers assigned to District B-3 (Mattapan) made an onsite arrest following a traffic stop which was initiated in the area of 329 Washington Street in Dorchester.

The officers had stopped a motor vehicle as part of an investigation when they confirmed that the operator, Eugene Parrish, 24, of Dorchester, did not possess a valid driver’s license. Furthermore, as they were speaking with the operator, they observed what appeared to be the outline of a firearm protruding from underneath the sweatshirt of the front seat passenger, later identified as a 16-year-old male from Dorchester.

When additional units arrived on scene officers attempted to remove the operator, at which time he put the vehicle in reverse and accelerated towards the officers who were standing behind the suspect vehicle and a cruiser which was stationary with the emergency lights engaged. The suspect struck the cruiser, causing front-end damage, then put his vehicle in drive, accelerating onto the sidewalk at a high rate of speed in an attempt to flee the traffic stop. The suspect vehicle then struck a motor vehicle before coming to a stop after striking a street sign pole in the area of 1 Waterlow Street.

As officers approached, they observed that the passenger was no longer inside the vehicle. When the officers opened the driver's side door to remove the operator, a violent struggle ensued, with the suspect striking the officers several times as they attempted to place him in custody. The officers were eventually able to place the suspect under arrest while turning their attention to locating the passenger who had apparently fled on foot.

Officers later located the juvenile suspect in the area of 17 School Street and detained him while retracing his path of flight in an attempt to locate any discarded weapons with negative results. The juvenile suspect was released to a guardian after questioning. This portion of the investigation remains ongoing at this time.

The suspect will appear in Dorchester District Court on multiple charges including Assault and Battery by Means of a Dangerous Weapon, Assault and Battery on a Police Officer (4 Counts), Resisting Arrest, Operating a Motor Vehicle After Revocation or Suspension, Driving to Endanger, Negligent Operation and Malicious Destruction of Property.

Bristol County Sheriff's Office warns public of BCSO scam going around

"SCAM ALERT:

We just heard from a gentleman who was the victim of a scam involving scammers who say they're from the Bristol County Sheriff's Office.

In this case, the scammer said he was Officer Mark Williams from the BCSO, and he demanded the victim to buy gift cards from area merchants and transfer them over the phone. The scammer even had fellow scammers in the background supposedly speaking to Sheriff Hodgson.

So please share and please be careful.

The BCSO will NEVER NEVER NEVER call and demand payment. Be careful everyone.”

Boston Police Department seeks public's help in identifying suspect in vandalism of churches

“BPD Community Alert: The Boston Police Department is Seeking the Public's Help to Identify Suspect Wanted in Connection to Recent Vandalisms at Churches in Dorchester and South Boston.

BPD Community Alert: The Boston Police Department is currently seeking the public's help to identify a male suspect wanted in connection to two incidents of vandalism at local area churches located in Dorchester and South Boston.

INCIDENT #1: At about 6:30 AM on Friday March 12, 2021, officers assigned to District C-6 (South Boston) responded to a vandalism call at Saint Teresa of Calcutta Church and Saint John Paul II Catholic Academy in the area of 800 Columbia Road in Dorchester. On arrival, officers were informed that an unknown substance had been discovered on several door locking

mechanisms, preventing the use of keys to gain entry to the school building. Additionally, the same substance was found on the door locks of the church in addition to a circular bicycle lock which was placed around the door handles of the main front entrance doors.

INCIDENT #2: A short time later, at about 8:00 AM, officers responded to another vandalism call at Saint Monica-Saint Augustine Catholic Church located at 331 Old Colony Road in South Boston. On arrival, officers learned that the same unknown substance had been discovered on all four door locks of the church and that a statue of The Blessed Mother had been knocked over. The party on scene stated that the same statue had also been knocked over on Friday March 5, 2021, but that the incident had not been reported.

The Boston Police Department continues to review the facts and circumstances surrounding these incidents. Anyone with information is strongly urged to contact District C-6 Detectives at (617) 343-4742.

Community members wishing to assist this search anonymously can do so by calling the CrimeStoppers Tip Line at 1 (800) 494-TIPS or by texting the word 'TIP' to CRIME (27463). The Boston Police Department will stringently guard and protect the identities of all those who wish to assist this investigation in an anonymous manner."