



Police News/Vancouver

Puffy Combs Acquitted in Nightclub Shooting

By SAMUEL MAULL
ASSOCIATED PRESS

NEW YORK — Rap impresario Sean "Puffy" Combs was acquitted Friday of toting an illegal handgun into a crowded Manhattan hip-hop club by a jury that believed the Grammy-winning multimillionaire's repeated claim of innocence. He was also cleared of a bribery charge.

When the verdict was read, Combs and his attorneys hugged tightly, with lawyers Benjamin Brafman and Johnnie Cochran burying their heads against Combs' shoulder. Combs' bodyguard, Anthony "Wolf" Jones, was acquit-

ted of the same charges as Combs. Rapper Jamaal "Shyne" Barrow, a Combs protégé who had been charged with attempted murder, was instead convicted of two counts of assault in connection with the shooting of two people in the club following a scuffle involving the Combs entourage in the early morning hours of Dec. 27, 1999.

It was a stunning victory for Combs, 31, who presides over a \$300 million empire — Bad Boy Entertainment — that encompasses music, movies, clothing and restaurants. He founded the company just seven years ago. The high-profile trial stretched nearly

seven weeks, with jurors hearing from 59 witnesses and examining more than 130 pieces of evidence. Combs dressed in a conservative dark suit each day of the trial and his mother was in the gallery behind him.

Combs was the key defense witness, spending a full day testifying that he never carried a weapon on the night of his arrest and instead thought he was the target.

"I thought I was being shot at," Combs told the jury. He also denied offering his driver a \$50,000 bribe if the man would take the gun possession rap for Combs. Prosecutors said the

collateral Combs offered was a diamond pinkie ring given to him by ex-girlfriend Jennifer Lopez, the top-selling singer-musician.

The driver, Wardel Fenderson, told the jury that Combs tucked a black handgun into his waistband before heading over with Lopez to the hip-hop hotspot Club New York.

The two arrived a little past midnight on Dec. 27 after the limousine trip from tony East Hampton. The couple had spent the day after Christmas at his \$2.5 million Long Island home.

Combs testified that he had expected to party for a while and do a little networking with other music industry types inside the nightclub just west of Times Square. But trouble began as Combs tried to exit the club shortly after 2:30 a.m. Someone bumped into Matthew "Scar" Allen, an oft-arrested New Yorker at the club that night. After an exchange of insults, another man

tossed a fistful of dollar bills at Combs.

Three to six shots then rang out inside the club, sending panicked clubgoers diving to the floor or charging toward the exits. Three people were wounded: Natania Rueben was shot in her face, while Robert Thompson and Julius Jones were hit in their shoulders. Reuben still has seven bullet fragments in her head and Jones has a bullet lodged near his spine.

Nine witnesses later said they saw Barrow with a gun. Two of the shooting victims testified they also saw Combs with a gun.

Barrow was accused of shooting the victims, but he was charged with a single attempted murder count because he was just shooting at one



Entertainer Sean "Puffy" Combs leaves a New York courthouse with his mother after being acquitted on weapons charges.

person. Prosecutors said Barrow missed his intended target.

Reuben, a Brooklyn hairdresser, was the first witness to say Combs fired a gun, an assertion contradicted by defense witnesses.

Overall odds are 1:27. Must be 18 to purchase. Be a smart player. Know your limit.

Lotto

Inside-A

Crossburnings
 Condemned.....A4
 Sheriff Won't Run;
 Criticizes Stein.....A4
 Latino Population
 Grows.....A6

Metro-

Report on School
 Bullying.....B1
 Forest Park Pesticide
 Spraying Draws
 Fire.....B1
 Tiger Wins Again...B3

Weather

Through the Weekend

Today	Partly Cloudy 61°F High 42°F Low	Saturday	Showers 62°F High 47°F Low
Thursday	Mostly Cloudy 63°F High 44°F Low	Sunday	Rain 59°F High 44°F Low
Friday	Scattered Showers 67°F High 47°F Low	Monday	Showers 48°F High 37°F Low

This Week in History

March 21, 1965 - More than 3,000 civil rights demonstrators led by the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. began their march from Selma to Montgomery, Ala.

March 22, 1972 - Congress sent the proposed Equal Rights Amendment to the Constitution to the states for ratification. It fell short of the three-fourths approval needed.

Thought for the Week

Being a healthy parent means being firm but nurturing, giving children a decent sense of the boundaries along with lots of unconditional love.
 —Karen Shaud

March 23, 1965 - America's first two-person space flight began as Gemini 3 blasted off from Cape Kennedy with astronauts Virgil I. Grissom and John W. Young aboard.

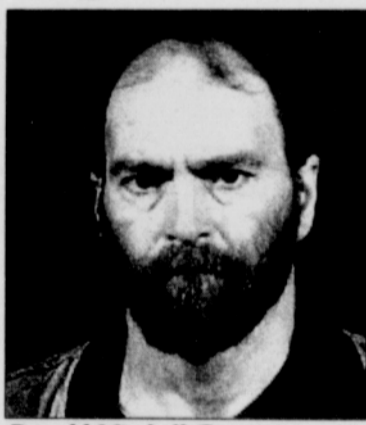
March 24, 1989 - The nation's worst oil spill occurred as the supertanker Exxon Valdez ran aground on a reef in Alaska's Prince William Sound and began leaking 11 million gallons of crude.

March 25, 1965 - The Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. led 25,000 marchers to the state capitol in Montgomery, Ala., to protest the denial of voting rights to blacks.

Man Arrested in Southeast Strangulation

A 42-year-old man faces a manslaughter charge in the death of his girlfriend.

Authorities said Donald Mitchell Green, 42 called 9-1-1 to his residence at 4220 S.E. 92nd on March 13 at 12:15 a.m. requesting police assistance. Upon arrival, officers located Green's 40-year-old girlfriend, also a resident of the address, deceased in a small house trailer parked in the driveway. The victim has been identified as Karen Lee Humphrey. The Multnomah County Medical Examiner's Office performed an autopsy and determined cause of death to be asphyxiation by manual strangulation.



Donald Mitchell Green

The investigation is continuing. Anyone with information is asked to call the homicide detectives Stu Winn or Barry Renna at 503-823-0400.

Evidence of cross burnings found in SE Portland

(AP) - Southeast Portland residents last week discovered Ku Klux Klan symbols in a city park and police have found traces of burning crosses.

Fire investigators say someone set an eight-foot cross on fire and displayed it in the middle of Brentwood Park. Detectives were cautious

about calling it a "hate crime" before they get the chance to analyze the evidence in detail. They say the incident cannot be considered a hate crime unless it targeted a specific person.

Police plan to watch the area closely to make sure no other signs of racism appear. They kept the crosses as evidence.

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