

## Dogfight suspects have day in court

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Preliminary hearings are expected today for five alleged ringleaders.

By Doug GuthrieThe Detroit News

DETROIT — Wayne County Sheriff Warren Evans said Monday that more than half of the 55 people arrested in connection with an alleged dogfighting ring have been arraigned, despite being released earlier this month because of legal technicalities.

Suspects cannot be held for more than 48 hours before facing formal arraignment. The Sheriff's Office failed to meet the deadline to charge 52 men and three women arrested early July 14 in a garage behind an east side home, where two dogs were fighting in a makeshift ring.

"All of the main actors were taken back into custody again," Evans said Monday. "It was a tremendous amount of work to get done in 48 hours. I just know that we were smart enough to not violate anyone's rights and jeopardize the cases."

Evans said all but about 20 of the spectators have reported to court to be formally charged. He said the rest are expected to appear in court within a week.

All of the suspects face felony charges with potential sentences of up to four years in prison. Police seized more than \$27,000 in cash, three handguns and a small amount of drugs in the raid.

Busting the alleged dogfighting and gambling operation was difficult because its location moved frequently, with spectators and participants getting notification of the site only hours in advance by text message. More than 20 deputies moving on the raid got only minutes' warning of the large crowd in the garage.

The suspected ringleaders were charged last week in 36th District Court and ordered to return for preliminary examinations today.

Those suspects, all from Detroit, were identified as dog owners Nathan Coker, 32, and **Stvonio Tyson**, 37; homeowner Antonio Barley, 37; alleged event referee Claude Smith, 44; and Joseph Turner, 51, an associate of one of the dog owners. All were released on bond.

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