

## **Raid missed sex ring boss - Accused prostitution mastermind avoided arrest in Detroit bust of after-hours club.**

Detroit News, The (MI) - Thursday, February 27, 2003

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DETROIT -- Henry Davis, the accused mastermind of a multistate **sex ring**, was at the Club Matador in September along with at least one of his underage prostitutes the night Detroit police raided the illegal establishment, a key investigator now says.

Still, the Detroit police who conducted the Sept. 14 **raid** on the after-hours club charged no one that night with trafficking in prostitution or with exploiting a juvenile, Detroit Police Officer Jose Ortiz said. He has been investigating the alleged **sex ring** since August but only received information about the Matador **raid** last week after The Detroit News first reported about the activities at the illegal club.

Detroit police busted the alleged **sex ring** Jan. 13 after a 17-year-old Cleveland girl told a private security guard she had been kidnapped and forced into the **sex** trade four days earlier.

But Ortiz, like Wayne County sheriff's deputies who tried to **raid** the Matador four times last year, fears that the **sex ring** remained in operation another four months because of police missteps. At least two of the young women who say they were raped and forced into prostitution by Davis' gang were abducted after police raided the now-defunct club on East Warren.

The News found that at least five people now charged in the case also received minor tickets for ordinance violations in the Sept. 14 **raid** by Detroit police. The Detroit vice officers raided the club just as Wayne County sheriff's deputies showed up to stage a **raid** to rescue girls they were told were being held captive for **sex** in the basement of the building.

A sixth suspect was ticketed and released by the Detroit officers under the name Gerald Rivers.

The man gave the same date of birth as Davis, 32, and the same motel address that Davis used at that time. Ortiz said Rivers is an alias used by Davis. The Michigan Secretary of State has no record for a Gerald Rivers of that age.

None of the six returned to court for their disorderly conduct tickets. They were among a group of more than 140 people ticketed on the premises Sept. 14. Seven people were charged with running an illegal bar, and another man was charged with carrying a concealed weapon.

"If I had known he was there in September, I would have had him arrested," Ortiz said.

One of the juvenile girls identified as a victim in the **sex ring** case was photographed by Detroit police in the Matador **raid**, though there is no record that police realized she was underage, he said.

## Communications breakdown

Detroit vice officers and undercover deputies showed up at the same time to **raid** the club, which some investigators have called a "paradise of hell" for its mix of drugs, guns and underage prostitution. The deputies were acting on a tip that a man named "Chicago" was holding girls captive for prostitution in the club. The deputies backed off, and Detroit officers, who said they saw no underage girls in the club, carried out the **raid** .

Ortiz said that he already suspected Davis was the man identified in other complaints as "Chicago," a pimp abducting juvenile girls and shuttling them to Chicago for prostitution. Davis is from Chicago, and witnesses have told investigators that he used the city as one of his nicknames.

Detroit Deputy Chief Harold Cureton said there was an apparent breakdown in communications between the Detroit officers and the sheriff's raiding party that night.

"Obviously, if the officers had known about the presence of Davis and these people, they would have arrested them," Cureton said. He could not explain why Ortiz was not given that file until recently.

Investigators from the sheriff's Special Response Team had tried three other times last year to **raid** the club.

The News reported last week the deputies intended to **raid** the Matador on April 21 and Aug. 8, but officials close to then-Sheriff Robert Ficano canceled the **raids** . The deputies again tried to **raid** the club June 8, but patrol officers from the Fifth (Jefferson) Precinct showed up ahead of them, issued minor tickets to three fugitives, seized liquor and dispersed the club's crowd.

Ortiz said a month before the September **raid** he had discussed with the FBI setting up surveillance of Davis at the East Jefferson Avenue motel where Davis usually stayed while in Detroit.

## Accusations of torture

The Matador was shuttered after the September **raid** , and Davis rented a house on Nottingham less than a mile from the club. That's where police found him, along with seven women and a pair of infants on Jan. 13, the day police finally cracked the **sex ring** .

Ortiz said Davis' ties to the Matador and information from earlier allegations against him would have been enough to hold Davis for questioning in connection with the prostitution-related rape of a 13-year-old girl.

Just before the scheduled Sept. 14 **raid** , county investigators learned for the first time that some of the underage prostitutes may have been kidnapped.

On both of the planned **raids** , county authorities obtained radio clearance from Detroit police dispatchers allowing them to proceed unhindered. On both occasions, Detroit police still went in ahead of them.

As investigators here have broadened their investigation of the **sex ring** to include the Matador, authorities in Illinois continue to review at least 50 videotapes seized in Davis' home there. They want to find whether the tapes help prove Davis headed the **sex ring** , but also want to see if there is any evidence of a reputed tape depicting sexual torture.

In 1995, a Detroit woman told Detroit police in a vague complaint that she had been forced into a **sex ring** that showed her a videotape of a woman being sodomized with a broom handle as punishment for disobedience.

The 17-year-old Cleveland girl who said she was enslaved by Davis' gang has told authorities the group traveled to Cascade Mountain, a ski resort in Portage, Wis., where she was raped by Davis' brother, Sterling Davis, Ortiz said. Sterling Davis is a prison guard in Illinois.

#### Alleged leaders of **sex ring**

Henry "Chicago" Davis , 32. He is the suspected leader of the **sex ring** , which operated here since at least 1995. He was at the home he rented on Nottingham on Detroit's east side when police raided the **ring** Jan. 13.

Jamal Derrick Rivers , 17. He also was found at the Nottingham residence and is charged with rape, kidnapping and conspiracy.

Demesio Lee , 24. He is charged with repeatedly raping a 15-year-old girl and prostituting her over a six-month span in late 2001. Authorities say he was a driver for the group.

Brittany Crawford , 17. She has admitted to personally working as a prostitute and serving as one of the women who maintained order over the girls through violence.

Makiya Means , 31. She is believed to be Davis' wife or girlfriend. She faces conspiracy charges.

Tangela Calloway , 17. She tried to claim a 17-year-old Cleveland girl was her sister rather than a **sex** slave.

Stoney Williams , 20. Authorities called him Davis' "right hand." He's charged with kidnapping and conspiracy. He is a fugitive.

Shyla Valentine , age unknown Kathy Kimbrough , 23 Terrell Norman , 44 and Marco Smith , 19. They face conspiracy charges and are fugitives believed to be out of state.

According to police, here are those involved in a **sex ring** that operated between Detroit, Chicago and Cleveland:

More online

Previous reports on the multistate **sex ring** can be read at [www.detnews.com/metro/](http://www.detnews.com/metro/)

Caption: Davis

Edition: One Dot

Section: Metro

Page: 01D

Index Terms: DETROIT ; POLICE ; ARRESTS ; PROSTITUTION ; SEX; CRIMES ;  
NEGATIVE

Dateline: DETROIT

Record Number: det15314373

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