

## Man gets up to 22 years in shootout

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Author: Steve Pardo / The Detroit News

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By Steve PardoThe Detroit News

DETROIT — The final person involved **in** a summer **shootout** with cops at a Westland shopping plaza was sentenced Thursday, ending the saga of a cocaine sting and robbery **in** which one **man** died and another was wounded.

Demond Sanders, 29, of Detroit was sentenced **to** 14 **years** and three months **to** 22 **years in** prison Thursday by Circuit Judge Michael Hathaway. Authorities said Sanders drove two other **men to** Merri-Warren Plaza, where a cocaine deal was set **to** transpire Aug. 12.

They were set **to** meet others at the shopping center parking lot, authorities said. But the people they were meeting included a police informant. Sanders and the others had no intention of buying the 3 kilos of cocaine on hand — they planned **to** take the drugs at gunpoint, police said.

Police said while Sanders remained **in** the green Chevrolet Lumina, Brian Thomas, 28, of Detroit and Joseph Boldizar of Garden City got into the back seat of the informant's silver Mercedes. One of the **men** had a bag police initially believed contained the \$60,000 **to** \$75,000 needed **to** pay for the drugs.

But there was no money **in** the bag, Westland Police Lt. Dan Karrick told The Detroit News **in** August. "This was set **up to** be a robbery from the **get -go**," he said.

After Thomas and Boldizar got into the Mercedes, a black Buick Rendezvous driven by Roberto Reed of Detroit pulled into the parking lot. A fifth **man**, Benjamin Pringle, 32, got out of the passenger side and approached the police informant, according **to** authorities. Pringle held a semiautomatic handgun, authorities said, pointing it at the informant's head.

"You know what time it is," Pringle said, according **to** police.

Authorities said the informant grabbed for the gun barrel. Nine officers jumped from two undercover vans parked behind the Mercedes, police said, as Thomas and Pringle ran toward the Bob's of Canton-Westland grocery store while shooting at police. Thomas died **in** front of the now-shuttered market. He was shot four times. Pringle and Boldizar were later arrested. Pringle had been shot **in** the abdomen.

Witnesses said around 100 shots were fired **in** the gunfight. No police or bystanders were wounded.

The other three surviving members of the group have been sentenced **to** terms ranging from 10 **to 15 years in** connection with the crimes.

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