

DRUG GANSTERS SHOOT IT OUT 5 KILLINGS ARE TIED TO FACTIONAL CLASH

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Reputed drug gang enforcer **Andre Patrick** is charged with one murder in what authorities believe is a bloody struggle within Detroit's lucrative east side drug market that has claimed at least five lives, including **Patrick** 's brother.

The fighting erupted last month after a gathering involving members of an east side cocaine operation founded by the late Richard (Maserati Rick) Carter, according to Drug Enforcement Administration spokesman Johnnie Granados.

The Carter organization had fallen into disarray following Carter's murder two years ago in his bed at Mt. Carmel Mercy Hospital. At some point in the gathering, the future of the operation was discussed, Granados said.

The Carter group seems to have split between one faction aligned with Carter's older brother Clyde, said investigators, and another that allegedly includes members of Best Friends, the Carter organization's enforcement squad.

Originally, officials said the shootings were perceived to be part of a war to control Detroit's east side. But federal authorities said Thursday they believe the fighting may be more personally motivated than was first thought.

"It isn't a territorial dispute," said Granados. "It's probably just a manifestation of tension . . . between personalities."

Authorities stress that sorting out the feuds is difficult because relationships in the drug world are extremely fluid and volatile. Personal grudges may override business interests, investigators said.

"It's wide open out there," said one official familiar with the conflict. "There is no organization anymore and that's the problem. It's all up for grabs."

The casualties, most of whom attended the August gathering near 7 Mile and Runyon, include:

* Dexter Washington, 19, killed Aug. 24 in the 7000 block of Nagle on Detroit's east side.
Washington was a reputed associate of Clyde Carter.

* Mark **Patrick** , 25, killed Aug. 31 in Inkster. He was a reputed member of Best Friends, and the brother of **Andre Patrick** . Mark **Patrick** was parked at Glenwood and Magnolia in northwest Inkster with the top down on his red BMW convertible when a car pulled along side and opened fire.

Detroit police have contacted Inkster police about a possible link between Detroit homicides and the **Patrick** killing, Inkster Det. Gary Lorenzen said, but he would not comment further.

* Sterling Williamson, 25, gunned down outside his home by an assailant wearing a bulletproof vest in the 19400 block of Runyon on Detroit's east side. A friend, Roosevelt Atkins, 28, was wounded in the spray from what one witness said appeared to be an Uzi. Williamson is a reputed associate of Clyde Carter.

Witnesses told police Williamson may have quarreled with Mark **Patrick** at a neighborhood party. When Mark **Patrick** was killed, his brother **Andre** blamed Williamson, police were told.

In a warrant issued by the Wayne County Prosecutor's Office, **Andre Patrick** , 27, is charged with first-degree murder and assault with intent to murder in the attack on Williamson and Atkins. Police are searching for him.

* Clyde Carter, 34, and Patricia Scott, 26, gunned down Monday at Leroy and Lannette on Detroit's east side. A gunman killed the pair with a 9mm handgun but left the couple's infant uninjured.

Among other shootings under investigation is one at a nightclub near Van Dyke and I-94.

Tension spawning the violence arose as members of the Carter group tried to reassert themselves as a major force on the east side, according to one theory being pursued by authorities. The toppling of two competing organizations has left a vacancy that the Carter group hoped to fill, officials theorize.

Since 1988, Maserati Rick has been murdered and the upper echelon of the Chambers Brothers cocaine ring has been convicted of federal drug charges. Also, Edward (Big Ed) Hanserd has been jailed since 1989 for state weapons violations, and he and his alleged associates are under federal indictment.

Another law enforcement official tracking the factions and trying to sort out the tangled relationships said, "There's a vacuum on the east side since Maserati got killed and Big Ed got locked up and people are trying to fill it."

Although the outbreak of violence followed the late August gathering, it is not known if that gathering was the trigger.

Additionally, authorities are investigating whether the latest violence may be tied to the firebombings of several Detroit beauty shops linked to the drug ring allegedly run by Hanserd. Hanserd and Richard Carter were rivals before Carter's 1988 murder.

Caption: Map

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