



CITY OF VENICE POLICE DEPARTMENT



Case 22-1166

Printed on October 14, 2022

Status	Approved
Report Type	OIR
Primary Officer	Courtney Zak
Investigator	Courtney Zak
Records Technician	Monica Thompson
Reported At	08/29/22 14:56
Incident Date	08/30/22 14:56
Incident Code	048 : Battery
Location	1 INDIAN AVE, VENICE, FL 34285
Zone	2
Court	None
Ereferral County	None
Disposition	Closed
Disposition Date/Time	10/13/22 17:49
Review for Gang Activity	Not Applicable
CAD #/CAD Case #	n/a
In-Car Camera	No
Evidence.com	No
Body Cam Video	

Offense Information

Offense BATTERY TOUCH OR STRIKE
Statute 784.03-1a1
NIBRS Code 13B - Simple Assault
Counts 1
Include In NIBRS Yes
Completed Yes
Bias Motivation None (no bias)
Location School - Elementary/Secondary
Entry Forced No

Complainant



784.03-1a1 - BATTERY TOUCH OR STRIKE

Suspect

RYALS, BRIAN BERNARD
 Male, DOB 12/21/72
 2707 60 AV TER W
 BRADENTON, FL 34207
 (706) 410-7563 Cell

784.03-1a1 - BATTERY TOUCH OR STRIKE

Victim



784.03-1a1 - BATTERY TOUCH OR STRIKE



784.03-1a1 - BATTERY TOUCH OR STRIKE

Original Narrative By Courtney Zak, 09/09/22 14:33

Detective Narrative

SYNOPSIS

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This report is in reference to a late reported battery that occurred on the Venice High School campus between two female students and a First Step liaison/Venice High football coach that works out of Venice High School. The female students would meet the coach in his office where he would touch their buttocks while they were fully clothed after "play fighting" or hugging them. During the investigation, inappropriate text messages were found between one of the victims and the coach. Samples of these texts that came from the coach's personal cell phone, many of which occurred between 9pm-10pm on various dates from 2020-2021 were scanned as evidence into this report. It was also learned that after both students graduated from Venice High School in May 2022, the coach reached out to them via cell phone advising he was getting a wrestling certification and needed to record himself wrestling with them for the certification. He asked the female students to meet him at Venice High School, wear only a sports bra and tight shorts and bring a change of clothes. The female students never went to the school to meet the coach to wrestle. Venice Police were contacted by the School Board Police and an investigation began. Because both victims were 16-17years old when the coach molested their buttocks, the felony lewd and lascivious molestation charge does not apply. The charge of misdemeanor battery on both victims was investigated but at this time the available circumstantial evidence does not rise to the level of probable cause for an arrest. A meeting with the school principal was conducted on October 13, 2022 and the inappropriate conduct between the coach and the female students was brought to his attention along with the sample cell phone texts. The principal advised he would act immediately on the allegations.

CRIME SCENE DESCRIPTION

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The molestation of the victim's buttocks occurred in the coach's office which was located on the first floor of building 4, in an out of sight corner office, during the victim's sophomore and junior years 2020-2021.

COMPLAINANT STATEMENTS- [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED] is the mother to both [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]. [REDACTED] explained she had been out to lunch with [REDACTED] on Saturday, August 27, 2022 when [REDACTED] told her Coach Ryals had reached out to her a couple weeks ago. [REDACTED] had told [REDACTED] that Coach Ryals then asked her to wrestle with him for his wrestling certification and that he was going to film the wrestling they did together. [REDACTED] explained Coach Ryals had told [REDACTED] not to tell anyone and for her to wear tight clothing. [REDACTED] advised [REDACTED] then went on to tell her that when she would visit Coach Ryals at school in his office during her junior and senior year, Coach Ryals would hug her with the door closed and then pull her underwear up out of her pants in the back. [REDACTED] explained [REDACTED] told her Coach Ryals would go inside the back of her pants with his hand and pull at the underwear. [REDACTED] also told [REDACTED] that Coach Ryals would even pick her up in his office, place her over his shoulder and then rub [REDACTED] butt. When asked how many times this happened, [REDACTED] advised she didn't know but Coach Ryals use to always call [REDACTED] out of class, so much so that [REDACTED] had to ask him to stop during her core classes because [REDACTED] was missing too much class time.

[REDACTED] explained Coach Ryals seemed to be a positive influence in the past, but the more she thought about things,

the more it seemed off. [REDACTED] advised Coach Ryals would only have pictures of girls on his bulletin board in his office at the high school and he would get really mad at [REDACTED] over things like when she wore only a sports bra and spandex when weightlifting. [REDACTED] advised it almost appeared as if Coach Ryals was jealous in a way. [REDACTED] explained Coach Ryals would then ignore [REDACTED] and shut her out. [REDACTED] advised Coach Ryals really inserted himself in the family after he started talking to both [REDACTED] and [REDACTED], even taking them all to breakfast. [REDACTED] advised she would talk to Coach Ryals multiple times a week sometimes for hours on the phone when he would call to check in on her and the girls. [REDACTED] explained all the calls stopped once Coach Ryals got married.

[REDACTED] advised [REDACTED] told her Coach Ryals had called [REDACTED] as well to wrestle with him over the weekend of August 5-7, 2022, but [REDACTED] didn't know all the details because her and [REDACTED] haven't talked after an unrelated falling out. [REDACTED] explained once [REDACTED] told her what happened, [REDACTED] called The Landings, who then put her in touch with the Sarasota School Board Police Department. [REDACTED] advised she wants charges filed and wants to make sure this doesn't happen to any other girls at the high school. [REDACTED] then filled out a written affidavit.

VICTIM STATEMENTS-[REDACTED]

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[REDACTED] advised at the end of her senior year, Coach Ryals kept telling her that he would be asking her to do something, but wasn't sure if she would say yes to it and didn't know if he could trust her. Once school ended, Coach Ryals began texting [REDACTED] asking her to meet him at Venice High School so he could talk to her about what he wanted to ask her and that she had to make sure she didn't tell anyone about it. [REDACTED] explained the messages dragged out all summer until she was dog sitting for a neighbor the weekend of August 6. [REDACTED] advised she believed it was the Saturday when Coach Ryals called her around or after 8:00 or 9:00pm and asked her "remember the things I told you not to wear around the football players" and [REDACTED] responded with "yeah", Coach Ryals then stated "I need you to wear that and wrestle me". [REDACTED] explained Coach Ryals would get upset if she wore just spandex and sports bra around the football players while at school and he would always tell her to wear something else so she knew what he meant when he asked her about the clothes. [REDACTED] advised Coach Ryals told her he needed to wrestle a girl and a boy for wrestling certification and that it had to be recorded for the certification. [REDACTED] explained Coach Ryals already said he had the boy, now he just needed the girl. Coach Ryals went on to explain to [REDACTED] that this situation was "a trust thing" and that "my wife doesn't even know".

[REDACTED] explained she then started to tell Coach Ryals that she was getting bad headaches everyday so she wouldn't be able to wrestle with him. [REDACTED] advised Coach Ryals then said "yeah health comes first-see I told you you'd say no-you can't tell anyone". [REDACTED] advised she told her boyfriend about it the next morning. When asked how her relationship with Coach Ryals started, [REDACTED] explained she use to see him in the halls her freshman year and just started talking to him when she would walk by. [REDACTED] advised she knew she could trust him because he was there to talk to young people about drugs. [REDACTED] advised Coach Ryals was the first person she told about almost being raped her freshman year. [REDACTED] explained Coach Ryals then started calling her out of class and they got close over football. [REDACTED] advised a lot of the girls go to Coach Ryals office because they can sleep in his office to get out of class. [REDACTED] advised football players go into his office too, but never stay the way the girls do.

[REDACTED] explained during her Junior year, she would go to Coach Ryals office to get out of class but he got more "touchy" with her. [REDACTED] advised while in Coach Ryals office, they would play fight and he would pick her up, put her over his shoulder, have her hanging upside down and then touch her butt. [REDACTED] advised she believed Coach Ryals would sometimes take pictures of her butt, but she wasn't sure because she couldn't see. [REDACTED] explained while hanging upside down, she would hear Coach Ryals phone camera make that clicking noise and one time he even dropped the phone and cracked his screen protector from their play fighting. [REDACTED] advised Coach Ryals carries the phone in a case with a carrier on the belt and could hear the phone come out of the holder and then the phone camera making a clicking noise. [REDACTED] went on to explain that Coach Ryals never rubbed her butt under her pants, it was always above, but he would grab her underwear from underneath the back of her pants and pull them up.

When asked if Coach Ryals did this with any other girls, [REDACTED] advised she didn't know but he had told her at the end of her Senior year that someone had "told on him" and he could only give high-fives in the hallway, no more hugs. Coach Ryals went on to explain to [REDACTED] that they could still hug in his office but because of the complaint, he would only be giving high-fives or fist bumps in the hallway. [REDACTED] advised she had talked to her sister, [REDACTED], who told her Coach Ryals had reached out to her too for wrestling over the same August weekend, but she wasn't sure if he ever touched [REDACTED] butt because she didn't ask. [REDACTED] advised [REDACTED] is not close with Coach Ryals anymore because he use to spend a lot of time with both of them "and promised to talk to us to get us out of class, but then wouldn't because he would have the younger girls in his office like Freshmen". [REDACTED] then called [REDACTED] in front of police -see [REDACTED] below statements.

When asked why she didn't tell an adult sooner about Coach Ryals, [REDACTED] advised she didn't want to bring anything else up because of the other case she was going through and didn't see at the time that what Coach Ryals was doing was wrong. [REDACTED] advised she was so upset with Coach Ryals asking her to wrestle that she deleted his messages and contact from her cell phone.

VICTIM STATEMENTS- [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED] was contacted by her sister, [REDACTED] via cell phone and placed on speaker. [REDACTED] advised she was at work and was willing to talk to police at a different time. [REDACTED] then asked [REDACTED] if Coach Ryals ever touched her inappropriately, to which [REDACTED] replied "he would touch my butt but that's it." [REDACTED] then asked [REDACTED] what Coach Ryals asked her about the wrestling and [REDACTED] advised he never came out and said he wanted to wrestle. [REDACTED] explained Coach Ryals asked her to meet him at the high school and bring a couple change of clothes. [REDACTED] advised she never went and hasn't talked to Coach Ryals since. [REDACTED] then got off the phone to go back to work.

Officers attempted to contact [REDACTED] to get her statement but she refused to meet or call back. [REDACTED] advised police at a later date that [REDACTED] had told her she didn't want to be involved.

DETECTIVE ACTIONS/OBSERVATIONS

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I was originally contacted by Sergeant Hayes of the Sarasota County Schools Police and made aware of the allegations that [REDACTED] had reported to The Landings. I then made contact with [REDACTED] at her residence and took the above statements as well as a written affidavit. I met with [REDACTED] separately at her residence and collected her above statements along with a written affidavit. [REDACTED] also signed a consent to search for her cell phone and an extraction was done on September 22, 2022. Sergeant Daneman could not recover the deleted message thread.

I then went back through older messages that [REDACTED] had from a previous cell phone extraction that was done for case 22-0533. Multiple inappropriate messages were found between Brian Ryals and [REDACTED]. Both subjects would tell the other that they loved each other, [REDACTED] referred to Brian as dad in multiple texts and he would respond with calling her daughter, all texts were to Brian's personal cell phone, and multiple texts were done in the evening hours, between 9:00pm-10:00pm. Brian spoke about his likes and told [REDACTED] that they have a lot in common, would speak of visiting her at her work and that he would think of her whenever a commercial for her place of employment came on. Brian would ask her for pictures, demand [REDACTED] to come see him without providing a reason and would text that she was beautiful. Examples of just some of the texts were scanned into this report for reference and the full extraction of texts has been placed into evidence.

At the time of the battery, both victims were 16-17 years old when the coach molested their buttocks. Therefore, felony lewd and lascivious molestation charge does not apply. The charge of misdemeanor battery on both victims was investigated but at this time the available circumstantial evidence does not rise to the level of probable cause for an arrest. The calling and asking of 18 year old former students to meet the suspect to wrestle also does not fall into a criminal category. A meeting with the school principal, Zoltan Kerestely, was conducted on October 13, 2022 and the inappropriate conduct between the coach and the female students was brought to his attention along with the sample cell phone texts. The principal advised he would act immediately on the allegations happening on his campus. This case will be closed and reopened if evidence is found of a crime.

EOR

Case Forms

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- Original Narrative (Detective Narrative) 9/9/22 by Courtney Zak
 - Attached Document 10/13/22 - June 2020 sample texts
 - Attached Document 10/13/22 - September 2020 sample texts

Attached Document 10/13/22 - April 2021 sample texts

Attached Document 10/13/22 - 22-1166 victim written statement

Attached Document 10/13/22 - consent to search 22-1166

Attached Document 10/13/22 - complainant written statement 22-1166

Victim Form for [REDACTED]

Victim Form for [REDACTED]