



Michael Mineo says he "can't wait for trial to start" against cops in alleged sodomy. Photo by Alfred Giancarli

Cop who sodomized me 'going to do time,' says angry accuser

BY SCOTT SHIFREL
DAILY NEWS STAFF WRITER

MICHAEL MINEO — the star witness in the trial of a police officer accused of sodomizing him — has a checkered past but says he did nothing to deserve what happened to him.

"I just can't wait for this trial to start," Mineo told the Daily News. "I want justice."

"Do you know how much anger I have? He's going down. He violated me and he tried to sweep it under the rug."

In the trial, starting in Brooklyn Supreme Court this week and expected to last a month, Officer Richard Kern faces 25 years behind bars on charges of sodomizing Mineo with a collapsible police baton on a Prospect Park station subway platform on Oct. 15, 2008.

Officers Alex Cruz and Andrew Morales face four years on

charges of covering up the assault.

The three Brooklyn cops, who have all denied the charges and say no assault took place, chased Mineo, 25, after spotting him with a joint. Kern allegedly assaulted Mineo as he struggled while being cuffed by a fourth officer.

Mineo's lawyer Stephen Jackson has filed a federal civil suit against the police and says his client is still suffering from posttraumatic stress.

Police officials at first scoffed at Mineo's claims, but prosecutors reinterviewed witnesses, viewed Mineo's medical records and took the case to the grand jury, which voted to indict after two police witnesses came forward.

Mineo — who has been busted for marijuana, stolen credit cards and a melee at a tattoo parlor where he was a body piercer — will be the main witness at the trial.

"The evidence will just speak for itself," said Mineo, who now works at Staples. "Talking about [my] arrests doesn't bother me, not one bit. That has nothing to do with me being sodomized."

"I could have been a murderer — that has nothing to do with it. They could say whatever they want about me. They're trying to bring dirt. I'm ready."

Still, how Mineo behaves on the stand may be as crucial as what he says. "I'm going to hold my composure, but I'm not going to be treated like the one who did something wrong," he said. "I'll look him [Kern] in the eye; he won't even be able to look me in the eye. I pray for Richard Kern. . . . He crossed the line and he's going to do time," says Mineo.

"I hope that everything ends up well for him, but I don't forgive him. . . . I pray for him. I pray for all my enemies."

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Mobster minister is busted

Preaching, passed bad checks: cops

BY JONATHAN LEMIRE
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SOME HABITS die hard.

An ex-Colombo family mobster who left the Mafia to become a born-again Christian motivational speaker was busted in Tennessee for writing bad checks, officials said yesterday.

Michael Franzese, the Brooklyn-born mobster once nicknamed "The Prince of the Mafia," was led from a plane on the runway in Knoxville in handcuffs Friday night, police said.

The ex-wiseguy — who has bragged that he made more money than Al Capone — downplayed the arrest in an interview with the Daily News, saying it was an "unfortunate misunderstanding" with a business associate.

"I didn't pass bad checks, I didn't take any merchandise. I didn't do anything wrong," said Franzese, 59.

"It's a dispute with my former manager over a small amount of money — nothing more," said Franzese, the son of famed 92-year-old Colombo enforcer John (Sonny) Franzese.

The younger Franzese, who became a "made" Colombo soldier in 1975, made millions bootlegging gasoline until he was indicted in 1987. Deciding to leave the Mafia behind, he accepted a prison sentence and testified against his former family.

He served three years and upon his release wrote a series of mob-themed inspirational books with

titles like, "The Good, The Bad, and the Forgiven" and "I'll Make You an Offer You Can't Refuse."

He tours the country speaking to church groups, students and professional athletes on the dangers of gambling and fraud.

He said he is worried how the arrest would affect his booming speaking business.

"I'm in a ministry right now and this story has already hurt," Franzese said. "I know I carry baggage from my previous life, but I worked hard to shed my past."

Franzese was in Knoxville to speak to a men's organization at a Baptist church but instead spent the night in jail after being picked up on an outstanding warrant for bad checks.

His former manager "thought I owed him money and chose to get the police involved,"

said Franzese, who declined to elaborate on the specifics of the dispute. "It'll blow over."

A Knoxville police spokesman would not identify the complainant in the case.

Franzese, the founder of a youth counseling group called the Breaking Out Foundation, was released from jail Saturday morning on \$7,500 bond and returned home to Southern California.

He vowed not to let the arrest deter him from his new mission.

"I am going to stay out there preaching my message," he said. "I have overcome a lot and I'm going to keep doing the best I can."

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Michael Franzese



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