



SANTA CRUZ POLICE DEPARTMENT

155 Center Street, Santa Cruz, CA 95060

MEDIA RELEASE



DATE/TIME: May 28, 2014

TOPIC: Sexual Assault Arrest

CASE NUMBER: 14S-03563 & 14S-03125

INFORMATION:

The Santa Cruz Police Department is investigating a series of sexual assaults where the victims were heavily intoxicated at the time of the assault. The suspect would meet his victims in local bars, while targeting women who were heavily intoxicated. The suspect would take advantage of the victim's intoxicated state and eventually have sex with them while they were blacked out, or too intoxicated to give consent. The suspect has been identified as:

James Sharp – 36 Years Old, Santa Cruz resident

Mr. Sharp was initially arrested on May 9, 2014 for a case that was reported to SCPD on May 6, 2014 (Case #14S-03563). Information on his arrest was withheld until now because of the need to complete additional investigation.

During the initial arrest, SCPD Detectives also served a search warrant on Mr. Sharp's residence in the 800 block of California Street. Evidence was obtained that connected Mr. Sharp to additional victims. Mr. Sharp collected trophies in remembrance of his victims that included photos or personal items.

While analyzing the evidence seized, SCPD Detectives immediately recognized another victim depicted in photos. That victim had reported a sexual assault, with extremely limited suspect information. This victim was assaulted after having blacked out while in Mr. Sharp's company. This was reported to SCPD on April 21, 2014 (Case #14S-03125). The victim in this case had since moved out of the Santa Cruz area.

Detectives located this victim and confirmed the identity of Mr. Sharp as the suspect in this case. Based on this investigation, SCPD Detectives developed cause to arrest Mr. Sharp on the second case.

Mr. Sharp was out of custody after having posted bail on his first case. On May 24, 2014, Mr. Sharp was located in a local bar and arrested by SCPD officers. Upon this second arrest, detectives requested a bail increase for Mr. Sharp. The Honorable Judge Gallagher approved a bail increase to \$5 million. Mr. Sharp was booked into Santa Cruz County Jail on the second case.

Detectives are working to identify additional victims in this case. We believe there are more victims who have not come forward with reports. We are encouraging any victims to come forward and report any assaults involving Mr. Sharp. SCPD is committed to resolving the cases and providing care for the victims of these crimes.

Unfortunately, Mr. Sharp's method of operation is a fact pattern too often reported to SCPD. In these situations females report being victimized after drinking to the point where they pass out and/or black out and are unable to adequately care for themselves. In these circumstances they are extremely vulnerable and oftentimes cannot recall details of the attack. These are incredibly difficult cases to solve, as oftentimes there is little or no suspect information or evidence. California Penal Code Section 261 specifically addresses cases of sexual assault where the victim is too intoxicated to give constructive consent and/or unconscious of the act.

The Santa Cruz Police Department encourages responsible alcohol consumption and recommends traveling with a designated driver and friends when planning to drink.

Attached and included below are Mr. Sharp's two booking photos.

For additional information, contact: Deputy Chief Steve Clark

Phone: (831) 420-5815

Anonymous tips can also be sent to the police department through our Tip Line (831) 420-5995, or from our Website; www.santacruzpolice.com . Tipsters can also submit an anonymous tip via our smartphone app or from an SMS text. Visit our Website for instructions.





