

Wednesday, July 17, 2002

LOCAL

Deputy awarded \$115,000 in **lawsuit** ; City police officer to pay damages for
arresting him after fight on The Block

Allison Klein

SUN STAFF

A Baltimore police officer who arrested a Baltimore sheriff's deputy on The Block two years ago must pay \$115,000 in damages for assaulting and imprisoning the man, a jury decided this week.

The jury found in favor of sheriff's deputy Lewis Leo Tuggle, 35, who sued police officer Robert E. Briscoe, 69, after Briscoe arrested Tuggle and charged him with assault and failing to obey a police officer during an early-morning skirmish in the red-light district.

Charges against Tuggle were later dropped.

"My client feels completely vindicated," said **Matthew Bennett**, Tuggle's **lawyer**. "He ... was completely degraded. But we went through the process and got the justice we were seeking."

Briscoe's **lawyer**, Charles G. Byrd, jr., said he was disappointed with the verdict, and is deciding whether to file an appeal or request a new trial.

Briscoe, a 33-year veteran of the Police Department, was not suspended in relation to the incident. He is currently a patrol officer in the Central District.

The incident started shortly before 2 a.m. May 2000, when both **law** enforcement officers had just finished breaking up a heated argument between three men on The Block, Bennett said.

Briscoe was working and in uniform. Tuggle, who was on a date at a hamburger restaurant, was off duty and in plain clothes. He identified himself as a sheriff's deputy, Bennett said.

After the melee was over, Tuggle returned to the restaurant, and the men from the altercation followed him.

When Tuggle noticed the men were there, he began to tell them to leave. It was then that Briscoe grabbed his right wrist and handcuffed it, Bennett said.

Tuggle pulled his left arm back, preventing Briscoe from handcuffing it.

The two men began to tussle, and Briscoe called for backup. A group of about 10 officers handcuffed Tuggle, put him in leg shackles and took him to Central Booking, Bennett said.

Tuggle was arrested, strip-searched and spent several hours in jail. His police powers were suspended for five months, but reinstated after the charges against him were dropped.

The \$2 million **lawsuit** accused Briscoe of assault, battery, false arrest, false imprisonment, and malicious prosecution. Criminal charges were not brought against Briscoe.

Gary McLhinney, president of the city's police union, said the Police Department would be liable for paying the \$100,000 in compensatory damages, but Briscoe could be responsible for the \$15,000 in punitive damages.

---- INDEX REFERENCES ----

NAMED PERSON: TUGGLE, LEWIS LEO; BRISCOE, ROBERT E; BENNETT, MATTHEW

NEWS SUBJECT: Local/Regional Section; English language content; Crime/Courts; Political/General News; Crime; **Lawsuits**; General News; Legal/Judicial; **Law** Enforcement; **Law** Enforcement; Corporate/Industrial News (LCR ENGL GCRIM GCAT CRM LWS GEN C12 GHOME LEN CCAT)

REGION: United States; United States; United States - Maryland; North American Countries; Maryland; North America; Northeast U.S. (US USA USMD NAMZ MD NME USE)