

BREAKING: All Charges Against Scharf P '08 Dropped; Civil Suit in Works

Some backstory: Will Scharf '08, the former President of one of Princeton's eating clubs, was charged last December with providing alcohol to minors and maintaining a nuisance. The charges grew out of an unrelated investigation into a brawl between two girls. One girl poured beer on another, and the first struck the second.

But the Borough attempted to coerce these students into testifying against the eating-club as a way of avoiding the law themselves. So instead of charging the two female malefactors, the Borough charged Scharf even though the club had bodyguards and a working wrist-band system in place that night.

In a press-release provided in advance to *IvyGate*, **Scharf's tough-named lawyer Rocco Cipparone** breaks it all down:



Cipparone noted that apparently it has been a pattern of the Borough Police to charge an individual officer of an eating club, only to later dismiss the charges when the eating club itself agrees to take responsibility and admit liability for the charges originally levied against the individual.

It's an old game and a dirty one. But Scharf, however, declined to play. Rocco declares that Scharf, "was not willing to be used by the Borough Police as leverage against his Club, in derogation of his individual rights and civil liberties." Bravo!

After the jump -- "false arrest, malicious prosecution, and federal civil rights violations."

First off, the Borough's case was completely bogus from the beginning. The Borough literally had videotaped testimony from one of the girls that (a) Charter checked ID's at the door, (b) only dispensed wrist-bands to those over 21, and (c) she had only obtained alcohol "in circumvention of the Club's wrist band system by having a 21 yearold student obtain beer for her."

It was time for Rocco to lay down the law. Literally. Cipparone explains:

After further discussion and correspondence between me and the prosecutor, in which I urged him to closely analyze the evidence, the State reassessed its position, and the charges were dismissed.

Don't let the legalese fool you. "Correspondence," "closely analyze," and "reassess" -- this is some serious power politics. You can practically hear the table-pounding. But the story isn't over. As Scharf comments, "These charges were filed without a scintilla of evidence against me and without any regard to the effect the baseless charges could have, would have, and did have on me."

Accordingly, despite the fact that the charges have been dismissed, Scharf intends "to pursue civil claims of false arrest, malicious prosecution, and federal civil rights violations." Looking at the facts of the matter, it's hard to claim he doesn't have a case.

Cipparone summarizes, "The police used the charges inappropriately to pursue their own agenda regarding the eating club. That is unjustifiably wrong."

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