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Lexington Park teenager sues police over arrest for rape

Complaint seeks \$4 million for 'malicious prosecution'

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By **JOHN WHARTON**

Staff writer

A Lexington Park teenager acquitted of a rape charge last winter after more than five months in pretrial custody has filed a lawsuit against two detectives, two girls and the state of Maryland.

The legal complaint filed Tuesday on behalf of John Kendell Edison Jr. seeks \$2 million in compensatory damages and \$2 million in punitive damages on claims including malicious prosecution, the intentional infliction of emotional distress, gross negligence, defamation, false imprisonment and a violation of the teenager's constitutional rights.

Edison was 16 when he was arrested in July 2008 on charges including second-degree rape from an alleged incident with a 12-year-old girl. Jurors acquitted Edison last December at the end of a four-day trial, where defense lawyer Kevin J. McDevitt challenged a police investigation and witness statements that he argued were not supported by medical evidence.

The lawsuit accuses the girl and another child of making false and misleading statements to police including the allegations of rape, and the legal complaint also alleges that detectives William Raddatz and Leo Nims used the false information to get a search warrant to raid Edison's family home.

The lawsuit alleges that Raddatz made a false statement to a doctor at St. Mary's Hospital that Edison had confessed to committing a sexual assault, and that the statement led to an improper medical diagnosis that supported the false claims made against Edison. The lawsuit states that Nims' testimony at an early hearing on the case changed at later proceedings, as to actions and events related to the investigation.

Edison "suffered unspeakable mental and physical harm through his detention including but not limited to physical abuse which has left him with an enormous scar on his back from an 'incident' which occurred during his detention," according to the legal complaint filed by McDevitt and Prince George's County lawyer Michael J. Winkelman. The lawyers have requested that the civil case be tried by a jury.

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