



COUNTY OF YOLO
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Date: November 6, 2009 **Contact:** Jonathan Raven, Asst. Chief Deputy District Attorney
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JURY CONVICTS TWO FOR GANG ACTIVITY

Woodland, CA – District Attorney Jeff Reisig announced that on November 4, 2009, a Yolo County jury convicted two young West Sacramento men of being active participants in the Norteno Criminal Street Gang. Charles Rios (16) and Benito Morales Jr.(16) were convicted of felonies, under Penal Code section 186.22(a), as well as theft, under Penal Code section 484. Rios was also convicted of felony receiving stolen property, pursuant to Penal Code section 496. The jury hung 11 to 1 to convict the pair for Assault by Means of Force Likely to Cause Great Bodily Injury, pursuant to Penal Code section 245(a)(1). Both individuals were charged and tried as adults.

On March 12, 2008, a National Guard soldier was in a parking lot in West Sacramento, where he was beaten into a coma and his wallet was taken. One witness to the incident reported that five minutes prior to incident, Charles Rios asked him for a knife and told him to leave because he was plotting something. A separate witness heard the commotion, and identified Rios and Morales as fleeing from the fallen victim. As they ran away, the witness heard Rios yell out “Broderick in the house!” The witness heard Morales boasting that he had jumped the victim. Police later located Charles Rios in possession of the victim’s credit cards and social security card.

Benito Morales Jr and Charles Rios were both identified by West Sacramento Police as members of the Norteno criminal street gang.

The case will next be heard on November 16, 2009 at 8:30 a.m. in Department 6 to set a date for retrial on the hung count.

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