

Off-troubled model cops to assault in NY

NEW YORK (AP) - Naomi Campbell pleaded guilty to misdemeanor assault Tuesday for hitting her maid with a cell phone over a pair of missing jeans.

"I threw a cell phone in the apartment. The cell phone hit Ana," Campbell told Manhattan Criminal Court Judge Robert Mandelbaum. "This was an accident because I did not intend to hit her."

If convicted at trial, Campbell, who originally had been charged with second-degree felony assault, could have been sentenced to two to seven years in prison.

Campbell, 36, hit Ana Scolavino in the back of the head with the phone in the supermodel's Manhattan apartment last March. Scolavino was treated for a head injury.

In exchange for her guilty plea, Campbell must pay Scolavino's medical expenses of \$363, do five days of community service and attend a two-day anger management program.

The British runway model wore stiletto heels, a thin gold anklet on her right leg under sheer black hose, a formfitting black dress under a charcoal gray, waist-length jacket and several gold chains around her neck.

Outside the courthouse, her lawyer, David Breitbart, said he didn't want Campbell exposed to stalkers, so "I'm hopeful she can do the community service indoors."



Naomi Campbell exits Manhattan Criminal Court following her plea of guilty on misdemeanor assault charges on Tuesday in New York. She's had various recent legal issues.

Assistant District Attorney Shanda Strain indicated in court that she had no objection to Campbell working indoors.

Breitbart said Campbell will be working in fashion shows for the next several weeks in California, London, Paris, Milan, Italy and Brazil, will have until May 21 to complete the community service condition in her sentence.

Some 100 members of the media covered her court appearance, but Campbell left the courthouse in a Black Cadillac Escalade without speaking to them.

Campbell's publicist, Howard Bragman, called The Associated Press to issue a statement that he said the model was unable to give because of the media horde.

"I pleaded guilty to a misdemeanor in court today.

That's the best way I know to say I'm sorry to Ana. I accepted responsibility, and I'm prepared to take my punishment. But I'm not going to let this incident define me. The past is the past. My future holds great things, and I'm getting on with my life," the statement said.

Campbell was discovered at age 15 and began a career that landed her in magazines worldwide, including the *Sports Illustrated* swimsuit issue.

The supermodel has a reputation for angry outbursts and abusive behavior with employees dating back almost 10 years. She pleaded guilty in Toronto to assault while making a film in Canada in 1998. Several of her former employees have filed lawsuits accusing her of assault.

Braxton seeks fees, targets ex-manager

NEW YORK (AP) - Toni Braxton sued her former personal manager Friday, saying he owes her at least \$10 million for maneuvering to have her abandon a long, lucrative relationship with her record company and jump to his own record label.

The lawsuit in U.S. District Court in Manhattan accuses Barry Hankerson of putting his financial interests ahead of Braxton's and using fraud, deception and double-dealing to get her to leave Arista Records.

"Hankerson actively sought to destroy Braxton's relationship with Arista through underhanded 'double-talk,' telling Braxton that Arista was not interested in working with her anymore, while telling Arista that Braxton no longer wanted to record for Arista," the lawsuit said.

There was no public telephone listing to reach Hankerson for comment Friday, and a telephone listing for his company, Blackground Records, was not in service.

In March 2003, Braxton ended the business relationship she had begun with Arista in 1991, when she signed a contract that led to her 1993 debut album, "Toni Braxton." That recording rose to No. 1 on the "Billboard 200" and sold more than 10 million albums worldwide.

Braxton received the Grammy Award for best new artist in 1993, and she won

Grammys that year and the next for best female R&B vocal performance.

The singer said in the lawsuit that she hired Hankerson as her personal manager in late 1997 and a year later the singer negotiated a new five-album deal with Arista, receiving more than \$20 million in advances on the records.

In 2002, the lawsuit said, Hankerson began trying to drive a wedge between Arista and Braxton by fabricating creative disputes over the selection of songs, producers and video directors.

A year later, Hankerson, a Manhattan resident, obtained a release for Braxton from any future recording obligations to Arista and convinced her to let him issue a press statement saying she was leaving Arista for Blackground Records, the lawsuit said.

He then duped Braxton into signing a multi-album deal with his label, only to deprive the singer of her rights under the recording agreement by failing to send her accounting statements and by lying about deals he had made, the lawsuit said.

Braxton said she tried to fire Hankerson as her personal manager but he responded by engaging in a vendetta against her, insisting he keep controlling her career and refusing to communicate with any of several personal managers she sought to employ, the lawsuit said.

O.J.: Book no confession

LOS ANGELES (AP) - O.J. Simpson says a chapter from his unpublished book that hypothesizes how he would have killed his ex-wife and her friend was created mostly from a ghostwriter's research and is not a confession.

"I'm saying it's a fictional creation," Simpson said Sunday in a telephone interview. "It has so many [factual] holes in it that anybody who knew anything about it would know that I didn't write it."

His comments came as *Newsweek* published a story for its current issue paraphrasing the chapter, called "The Night in Question," which the magazine said it had obtained from an anonymous source.

Simpson was acquitted of the 1994 murders of his ex-wife, Nicole Brown Simpson, and Ron Goldman after a yearlong trial. A civil jury later held him liable for the killings. On Sunday, Simpson again denied killing the couple.

Simpson declined to provide a copy of the chapter to The Associated Press.

"I don't have it," he said. "I shredded everything I had about it, and I thought I shredded it from my memory."

The magazine's account of the chapter describes Simpson as becoming angry with his ex-wife at his daughter's dance recital. He later went to her condominium to scare her, entering with a knife through a back

gate with a broken latch, the account states.

Simpson encountered Goldman and accused him of planning a sexual encounter with Nicole. He became enraged when Nicole's Akita dog appeared to recognize Goldman as a familiar visitor, the account states.

Nicole rushed at Simpson and fell, hitting her head on the ground, according to the account. Goldman then took a karate stance, further angering Simpson, who dared Goldman to fight before pulling back.

"Then something went horribly wrong, and I know what happened, but I can't tell you exactly how," *Newsweek* quoted Simpson as writing.

(See Simpson, Page 16)

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