

# Simpson co-defendant appeals for separate trial

LAS VEGAS (AP) — O.J. Simpson's last remaining co-defendant in an armed robbery and kidnapping case is asking the Nevada Supreme Court for a separate trial, saying if they are tried together he would be unfairly convicted.

Clarence "C.J." Stewart's lawyer says the armed robbery and kidnapping charges

in Las Vegas are all about Simpson.

"Anybody sitting next to him isn't going to get a fair trial," attorney Robert Lucherini said of the trial, which is scheduled to begin on September 8. "Ninety-five percent of the evidence is about O.J."

In 1995, Simpson, a former football star who

worked as an actor and commercial pitchman after retiring from sports, was acquitted of murdering his ex-wife and her friend in a highly publicized criminal trial. Although Simpson was acquitted, his image has remained tarnished.

A state Supreme Court clerk in Carson City said that Stewart's request arrived on

Tuesday. The court did not immediately schedule a hearing.

Stewart is one of five men who accompanied Simpson during a confrontation in September with two sports memorabilia dealers at a casino hotel room. Simpson says he was retrieving items stolen from him.

Another former co-defendant, Charles Ehrlich, pleaded guilty on Tuesday to reduced felony charges and agreed to testify against the Hall of Fame football player. He is the fourth former co-defendant to take a plea deal and agree to testify.

Clark County District Court Judge Jackie Glass has twice rejected requests from Stewart and Ehrlich for separate trials.

Simpson and Stewart have pleaded not guilty to felony kidnapping, armed robbery and assault with a deadly weapon charges that could put them in prison for life if convicted.

Lucherini said he expected Stewart's defense would be "antagonistic and mutually exclusive" of Simpson's.

"Mr. Stewart will acknowledge that... following the events in question, he became aware that Mr. Simpson was involved in persuading others regarding the presence of firearms," Lucherini said. "Mr. Stewart asserts that he was not involved in this persuasion, and paid it no heed."

Simpson has said he never saw guns in the room, didn't

know anyone had guns, and never asked anyone to bring guns.

Lucherini also referred to the trial at which Simpson was acquitted of the murders of his ex-wife, Nicole Brown Simpson, and her friend Ron Goldman. Simpson was later found civilly liable for the deaths and ordered to pay a \$33.5 million judgment.

Lucherini predicted that the Las Vegas jury would be reminded "of the hideous murders that many people believe were committed by Mr. Simpson."

"The problem is that in their zeal to convict Mr. Simpson, and to correct a perceived miscarriage of justice, the jurors will likely... convict Mr. Stewart as well," Lucherini said.

## Alleged shooter in 'Pacman' case indicted by local judge

LAS VEGAS (AP) — A man identified by NFL player Adam "Pacman" Jones as the gunman in a strip club shooting that wounded three people in 2007 was hit with a seven-count felony indictment Friday during his first appearance in a Nevada court.

Arvin Kenti Edwards of Renton, Wash., spoke briefly with his lawyer, Jeffrey Segal, but was not asked to enter a plea before a Las Vegas judge ordered him held without bail pending arraignment Tuesday.

Outside court, Segal said Edwards will plead not guilty to the charges: three counts of attempted murder, three counts of battery with a deadly weapon causing substantial bodily harm, and one charge of being an ex-felon in possession of a firearm. Combined, convictions could bring penalties of up to 186 years in prison.

Edwards is accused of wounding three people outside the Minxx strip club in February 2007 after police say Jones "incited" a brawl inside during NBA All-Star weekend in Las Vegas.

Jones has never acknowledged any role in the shooting. He has been cooperating with police in the investiga-

tion and picked Edwards out of a police lineup in Seattle in April.

Edwards had been arrested in Washington State and fought extradition.

Segal declined comment about the case against Edwards, who claimed in May in a jailhouse telephone interview with a Nashville television station that he was framed by Jones.

Jones, 24, a cornerback drafted sixth in 2005, was suspended all last season following repeated tangles with the law and is seeking reinstatement this season.

Police say Edwards opened fire outside the strip club after Jones was involved in a brawl inside, and later demanded \$15,000 from Jones for "services rendered."

Las Vegas police have characterized the demand for money as extortion, but Edwards was not charged with that crime.

Jones told authorities he didn't order the shooting and declined to pay. But he said he reimbursed a friend after the friend paid the money for him.

Jones pleaded no contest Dec. 6 in Las Vegas to conspiracy to commit disorderly conduct, in a plea deal that

reduced two felony charges of coercion, each carrying a possible sentence of one to six years in prison.

In return, he agreed to tell police what he knew about the gunman.

## Vegas police detain Boston Celtic Pierce

LAS VEGAS (AP) — Police detained NBA star Paul Pierce in handcuffs during a weekend traffic stop on the Las Vegas Strip, but released him without issuing a summons. Las Vegas police Officer Bill Cassell said Monday that Pierce was handcuffed briefly after emerging "a little agitated" from a vehicle he was driving around 3 a.m. Sunday.

Pierce led the Boston Celtics to the championship this year and was MVP of the finals.

The 6-foot-7, 235-pound Pierce was given field sobriety tests and a Breathalyzer, which registered below the legal limit. Cassell said Pierce was not arrested. A valet was called to drive Pierce's car, and Pierce took a cab back to where he was staying. A spokeswoman for the Celtics said the team and Pierce had no comment.

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