

EX-GUARD FOR PUFFY SHOT DEAD; [SPORTS FINAL Edition]

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An ex-bodyguard for rap impresario Sean (Puffy) Combs was shot dead early yesterday outside an Atlanta nightclub, authorities said.

The victim, Anthony (Wolf) Jones, 37, was acquitted along with Combs of weapons possession charges by a Manhattan jury two years ago.

Jones' death comes a week before a federal judge in Manhattan is to rule on a civil racketeering lawsuit filed against Combs by Kirk Burrowes, the former president of his music company, Bad Boy Entertainment.

"Anthony Jones would have been a key witness," said John Bostany, the lawyer for Burrowes, who is demanding \$25 million in damages.

Jones was arrested along with Combs, rap star Jamal (Shyne) Barrow and Combs' then girlfriend, actress Jennifer Lopez, after a 1999 shootout in a midtown nightclub in which two people were wounded.

The charge against Lopez was dropped. Barrow was convicted and given a 10-year prison term.

After his acquittal, Jones said he was moving to Atlanta because it was safer.

"Everyone's taken aback by this," said Jones' lawyer Michael Bachner. "After the acquittal, he got his life together and was doing very well" as a producer.

Atlanta police said one witness told them the predawn shootout, in which a second man also was also killed, may have started with a fight over a girl. Two other men were wounded in the melee.

Burrowes' lawsuit suggests that in 1995 Combs ordered the murder of a bodyguard to music industry rival Suge Knight. His court papers say Jones was the triggerman.

But Combs' lawyer, Benjamin Brafman, said that "any suggestion that Mr. Jones is - was - a relevant witness in the Kirk Burrowes lawsuit is as baseless and preposterous as the lawsuit itself."

Brafman said Combs "extends his heartfelt condolences to Mr. Jones' family and is deeply saddened by this tragedy."

[Illustration]

Caption: Anthony (Wolf) Jones

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