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Published: Jun 20, 2007 - Page: 1B

DNA evidence police obtained after a sexual assault more than two decades ago was matched to a rapist scheduled to be paroled this week from Louisiana State Penitentiary.

The evidence linked Clarence Mott Jr., 45, to a rape police say he committed months earlier than the one he sits in prison for after receiving a 25-year sentence.

After Louisiana State Police Crime Lab technicians matched Mott's DNA to the September 1985 rape, a Baton Rouge Police Department detective met with the victim last week, who said she knew Mott "because he lived across the street from her mother," an arrest warrant filed Friday said.

The detective filed the warrant for Mott and police placed a hold on his scheduled release, said Angie Norwood, public information officer at Angola.

Angola on Friday released Mott to the East Baton Rouge Parish Prison, where he was booked on counts of aggravated rape and aggravated burglary in the 1985 rape.

Baton Rouge Police Department spokesman Cpl. L'Jean McKneely said the DNA match was made 22 years after the rape because of cooperation between his department and the State Police Crime Lab to solve cold cases.

"Periodically, they check cold cases that we have. They don't just let them lie dormant," McKneely said. "Luckily, we got a hit on it before he (Mott) was able to get out."

He said law enforcement officers have been actively working their way through cold cases by testing evidence for DNA from crimes that happened when DNA testing was not available.

DNA is now collected from all Louisiana Department of Corrections inmates.

After the Crime Lab pulls DNA evidence from the crime

scene, it tries to match it to a convicted offender database.

In January, DNA evidence linked a Georgia inmate to a Baton Rouge murder that occurred four days after the 1985 rape Mott is accused in.

It was Sept. 14, 1985, when a man broke into a woman's residence through a bedroom window in the 100 block of N. 25th Street while she was sleeping. He held a sharp object to her throat, told her not to yell and then raped her.

The rapist then left the home through the bedroom window after telling the victim he would kill her if she called police. The woman called police and was taken to the hospital where she was given a sexual assault examination.

Because DNA testing was not readily available at the time, the case lay dormant.

Months later, Mott became a suspect in another aggravated rape after he was arrested on May 1, 1986, in an armed robbery, court records show.

DNA leads to arrest in 21-year-old case  
Police used his fingerprints and a gold earring taken from him that day as evidence to book him into Parish Prison in the April 28, 1986, rape.

Mott was accused of breaking into the same house — once in December and again in April — where he raped the same woman and stole cash from her in both instances.

In that case Mott was booked on two counts of aggravated rape, aggravated burglary and armed robbery, records show. He eventually pleaded guilty to forcible rape and was sentenced to 25 years in prison.

He was sent to Angola in 1986 and served about 13 years of the sentence when he was released to the East Baton Rouge District Parole Office on Sept. 25, 1999, for "good time," Norwood said. After failing to meet with his parole officer, Mott was found in California and returned to Angola on Oct. 23, 2000.

He remained there until Friday, when he was taken into custody at East Baton Rouge Parish Prison in connection with the cold case rape, Norwood said. If Mott had remained at Angola, he would have been eligible for parole this week.

There is no statute of limitations in an aggravated rape case because it is punishable by death or life imprisonment,

Louisiana law says.

“They’re just pushing forward with the cold cases that they already have, and now we’ve been blessed to come up with a few hits to put some of these victims at ease,” McKneely said.

*Advocate writer Kimberly Vetter contributed to this report.*

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