

CRIME: Victim, 15, in coma

Teens face attempted murder charges

BY JENNIFER BROWN
Staff Writer

Three youths have been charged with attempted murder and assault following a vicious beating that has left a 15-year-old Newmarket resident in a coma.

All three teens appeared for a hearing yesterday in Newmarket court. Under the Young Offenders Act, they cannot be identified.

The three are charged in the attack of Jonathan Wamback, who was brutally assaulted at a parkette near his home in the Stonehaven subdivision around 7 p.m. June 29.

According to police, Wamback was pursued by a group of boys and knocked to the ground. He was then repeatedly kicked in the head resulting in serious life-threatening head injuries.

The accused fled Ken Sturgeon Park in a vehicle.

Police made their first arrest last Friday afternoon, charging a 16-year-old with attempted murder and assault. Two other 17-year-olds were arrested on July 3 and 4 and charged with attempted murder.

Sgt. Dave Carnell said the arrests were made after information was obtained from people living in the area where Wamback was attacked.

Carnell said Wamback managed to walk home following the beating and was able to provide information about his attackers before falling into unconsciousness.

He was taken to York County Hospital in Newmarket and later transferred to the Hospital for Sick Children, where he remains in critical condition.

"Young people supplied the information that matched the description of the assailant provided by the victim and the family," Carnell said.

According to police, the three male youth are from the immediate and surrounding area where the incident took place.

Wamback, who is a graduate of Bogart Public School and attends Newmarket High School, remains in a coma at the Hospital for Sick Children. Sources close to the family say he has been responsive to the sound of his parents' voices.

The maximum a young offender can receive is three years plus two years probation. If the Crown attorney decides to apply to have the youth tried as adults, they could serve an adult term of 25 years. Under the current Young Offenders Act, 16 and 17-year-olds can be subjected to adult sentences.

Police are reluctant to say the incident was gang-related.

"I don't think we want to put that label on it. People may refer to them as a gang but that may not be taken to mean it is a huge gang," Carnell said.



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