

Man led police on chase down Hwy. 404

From page 77.

suit against York Regional Police alleging excessive force was used in the takedown, which was captured by a TV news crew.

Lieu told The Globe and Mail his upper body was badly bruised and his forehead suffered a deep gash, which required six stitches.

Lieu admits to stealing a pickup truck in Newmarket and leading police on a high-speed chase down Hwy. 404, finally crashing into the centre median near Steeles Avenue.

But he says, at 125 pounds, police had nothing to fear from him, even though he was carrying a pocket knife when he was flushed from the truck.

News footage of the arrest shows Lieu being struck on the head twice with police handguns.

It appears he was struck on the back of the head the first time to stop him from fleeing and was struck a second time to stop him from getting up.

Although the suspect is hidden from the camera's view, one officer appears to stomp on the man's legs three or four times while he is lying behind a stolen truck.

York Regional Police officers have been incensed by negative media coverage of the arrest.

The police officer wife of an officer who was cut during the arrest said allegations of excessive force are hurtful.

"You do a good job by protecting the public and this is what you get," she said last month.

The province's Special Investigations Unit was never called in to probe the arrest because York Regional Police didn't deem the injuries serious enough.

The SIU only probes police chases if someone is killed or suffers what is considered a serious injury. SIU spokesperson Gail Scala said the unit assumes police are reporting the injuries accurately unless they receive contradictory evidence.

Lieu is charged with robbery, assault with a weapon, weapons dangerous, theft over \$5,000, possession of stolen property over \$5,000, escape, lawful custody, dangerous driving, engage police in pursuit, fail to stop and obstruct police.

Men charged in York Region crime spree

BY KATHLEEN GRIFFIN
Staff Writer

Two Toronto men face 110 charges in connection with at least 15 robberies involving 29 victims across York Region.

The pair, 19 and 21, were arrested at their homes early Wednesday morning after a six-month probe of escalating street-level robberies in Thornhill, Richmond Hill, Newmarket and Aurora.

Suspects began by robbing victims of cash and necklaces while brandishing a knife or steel bar.

As they grew more daring, the two men began confining victims while

emptying bank accounts at ATM machines.

"They would pick on students and youth who frequent park areas near malls," said Det. Sgt. Gary Miner, adding the kids were most often strangers.

They would force the teens to give up their PIN numbers, or force them to make a fake deposit then immediately withdraw the maximum amount of cash. If the victims were hesitant, they would hold a friend while the youth went to a bank machine for the money.

"We're sure there are more kids out there who are victims than we know about," said Miner. "Some kids take the

threats seriously and don't report it. This is the tip of the iceberg."

He said the investigation continues and as search warrants are executed, police hope to find evidence to link the pair to more crimes in York and north Toronto.

Each man faces 29 counts of robbery, 10 counts of forcible confinement, nine counts of disguise with intent to commit a crime, five counts of theft under \$5,000 and two counts of possession of stolen property.

Anyone who may have been a victim of such an attack or has information is asked to call their local district station or Crime Stoppers at 222-TIPS.

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