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Former Flynt bodyguard awarded \$8.6 million

By CAROL BAKER | Nov. 21, 1989

SANTA MONICA, Calif. -- A former bodyguard for Hustler magazine publisher Larry Flynt won an \$8.6 million jury award Tuesday in a harassment suit against the sex magazine magnate.

After 7 days of deliberations, the Superior Court jury ruled in favor of William Rider and his wife, Marsha, who were both fired by Flynt in 1983, according to the Riders' lawyer, Sharon Green.

During a six-week trial, the Riders said they were harassed and slandered by Flynt after he allegedly fired William Rider for refusing to lie for him in the criminal trial of former auto entrepreneur John DeLorean.

The jury found that Flynt, the self-proclaimed 'king of sleaze,' was guilty of malice and oppression in his actions against the Riders, Green said.

'One thing the jury did take seriously is that they wanted (Flynt) to know his actions were intolerable,' Green said. 'It's unheard of for an employee to be harassed after he's been terminated.'

Flynt's lawyers could not be reached for comment.

William Rider testified that he was fired by Flynt after refusing to go along with Flynt's plan to lie about the source of videotapes Flynt released on the government's surveillance of DeLorean for the criminal case, Green said.

Flynt allegedly wanted Rider to tell the judge in the DeLorean case that the tapes were supplied by the FBI.

DeLorean in 1984 was acquitted of charges that he tried to sell \$24 million worth of cocaine to save his ailing car company.

Flynt was jailed for contempt of court and paid thousands of dollars in fines for refusing to reveal the source of the DeLorean tapes.

After firing Rider, Flynt publicly accused his former employee of raping his daughter, Green said.

'The jury found that the charge was false and that the sole reason for the Riders' terminations was William Rider's refusal to commit perjury,' Green said.

The Riders contended they were harassed by Flynt. Once, while Flynt was in federal custody, he allegedly said he would kill Rider if only he were not being detained, Green said.

'People called (the Riders) and said, 'Get out of the Flynt situation or you'll be shot,' Green said.

Green said Flynt offered Marsha Rider her job back as his executive assistant if she would leave her husband.

The Riders are now receiving law enforcement protection because William Rider is a key witness in the pending 'Cotton Club' murder trial in Los

Angeles. He is expected to testify against two other former Flynt guards charged with the murder of New York theatrical producer Roy Radin.

Green said Flynt is believed to be worth more than \$50 million and that his company, LFP Inc., a co-defendant in the case, made more than a \$3.5 million profit in 1988.

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