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Physical therapist to stand trial for indecent assault

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Saturday, September 30, 2006

According to court documents, Dennis Lasorda, 51, of Gwynedd touched an 18-year-old client on her buttocks and once on her genitalia, while he was treating her for a low-back injury at APP Physical Therapy in Limerick.

According to court documents, shortly after the girl's first treatment, Lasorda offered her a job at the clinic.

The young woman, now 19, identified Lasorda in the court room on Friday, avoiding eye contact with him. She claimed that he told her the buttocks massage was to aid the healing of the back.

The girl was asked to point out to the court where she had been touched, and had to stand up and refer to her low back, thighs and buttocks repeatedly.

Physical therapist Brian Leggin testified for the prosecution that massaging the buttocks does not help the low back and the amount of massage administered, three times a week from August 2005 to December 2005, was more than needed for the girl's injury.

When asked about the touching, which court documents said happened almost every time, the girl said she knew it didn't feel right and would tense up. "I was too scared to say anything," she said.

The second alleged victim, a then 17-year-old, was a friend of the other victim. She testified that she would come and visit her while she was at APP Physical Therapy.

In October 2005, the girl was complaining of back pain, and according to court documents, Lasorda offered to treat her without examination or recommendation from a physician.

The girl said Lasorda touched her buttocks, in the same way the other witness had, and at one point brushed his finger against her genitalia.

Both court documents and the girl stated that she thought the buttocks massage was just how the massage was done, and the touch to the genitalia was an accident.

On Dec. 12, 2005, court documents stated that a Montgomery County detective recorded a conversation between the girl, who was employed by Lasorda, and Lasorda. During the conversation, Lasorda admitted to touching both girls' buttocks, saying he did it because the back muscles are supported by the buttocks muscles, and that massaging them and the inner thighs, "helps to increase your ability to be more elastic and

mobile."

Court documents said Lasorda stated he learned this technique of massage from the University of Pennsylvania.

Leggin, the physical therapist who was also educated at the University of Pennsylvania, negated this claim in his testimony.

Based on the evidence presented, District Judge Walter F. Gadzicki Jr. said the case would move to court, charging Lasorda with two counts of indecent assault, and one count each of unlawful contact with a minor and corruption of minors.

Lasorda was released on \$5,000 unsecured bail and was told to have no contact with any of the people named in the case.

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