

SPARTANBURG COUNTY MAN RECEIVES 90-YEAR PRISON SENTENCE FOR THREE SEXUAL ASSAULTS AT GUNPOINT

A Spartanburg County man received a 90-year prison sentence today after he took responsibility for the armed robbery, kidnapping and sexual assault of three women at gunpoint.

Bennie Riser, 30, pled guilty to three counts of first-degree criminal sexual conduct, three counts of armed robbery, three counts of kidnapping, two counts of carjacking and illegal possession of a weapon. Circuit Judge Derham Cole issued the sentence.

“He got what he deserved – a life sentence,” Assistant Solicitor Susan Olmert said. “Mr. Riser is a sexual predator who will never be allowed to strike again.”

On March 9, 2002, Riser abducted a 37-year-old woman and a 31-year-old woman from the parking lot of a Whitney-area club. The women were in a car together listening to music when Riser approached them and asked if they wanted to die. Riser wore a mask over his face, and he waved a silver gun. He made the women drive to a near-by church parking lot before telling them to disrobe. He sexually assaulted one of the women, and he made the women perform oral sex on each other. He made the women give him money and jewelry before he took the car.

He abducted a Spartanburg Methodist College student from a dorm parking lot on April 4, 2002. He forced the 18-year-old victim into the passenger seat of her car after he brandished a silver handgun. He took \$15 from her and drove her to a nearby dark street. He told the teen to get in the back seat. She refused and he choked her until she followed his direction. He sexually assaulted the victim after he made the victim disrobe. Riser took her watch before he got out of the car and fled the area.

“There is nothing that accurately describes the horror that these women felt,” Olmert said. “It is an experience that will stay with them the rest of their lives.”

Spartanburg County sheriff's deputies arrested Riser on April 9, 2002 during the investigation of a suspicious vehicle. Deputies found the gun, the mask and a jacket with DNA on it. Riser took responsibility for the attacks in a detailed written statement to investigators. Deputies found some of the stolen property in Riser's home.

“Deputy George Sandifer and Deputy Michael Farahvashi need to be commended for a job well-done,” Olmert said. “They took the initiative to closely inspect a vehicle that looked out of place.”

Riser will have to serve 85 percent of the prison sentence before he is eligible for release.

For more information, contact Murray Glenn at 596-3862 or 809-4892.