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## Ex-cop says he was wrongfully arrested in suit

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**(03-09) 10:14 PST SAN FRANCISCO --** A former San Francisco police officer is suing the city in federal court, saying two fellow officers wrongfully arrested him as he was jogging in Golden Gate Park, causing him to be fired from the department.



Bret Cornell, 27, said he was jogging on a park path on the morning of July 10, a little more than two months after he graduated from the police academy. He heard a man say, "I will shoot you!" and turned to see a "dark figure" pointing a gun at him, according to the lawsuit filed in U.S. District Court in San Francisco.

Cornell did not realize until later that the man was Officer David Brandt, the suit said, so he continued running until he stumbled, rolled down a hill and saw uniformed Sgt. Wallace Gin and asked him for help. Gin ordered him at gunpoint to hold up his hands, and Cornell complied, the suit said.

Cornell told the officers, "I'm a cop" and identified witnesses that could confirm that he had been running in the park, but they arrested him for resisting arrest and seized his duty weapon from his parked Ford Bronco, handcuffs from his pants, star and police identification, the suit said.

Cornell was fired from the department two days later, according to the lawsuit, which alleges assault, battery and false imprisonment and seeks unspecified damages.

No charges were ever filed against Cornell.

Jack Song, a spokesman for City Attorney Dennis Herrera, declined comment Tuesday, saying the city had not been served with the suit.

In their police reports, Brandt and Officer Richard Bodisco wrote that Cornell spotted their marked police car and had a "look of worry" on his face after emerging from some bushes near the top of the park known as Hippie Hill, a known high-crime spot.

When the officers appeared to be leaving the area, Cornell "turned back and started walking back toward the direction in which we initially observed him," Brandt wrote.

After detaining him, Cornell claimed his SUV was near Stow Lake when it was parked more than a mile away at the Conservatory of Flowers, police said.

Cornell's attorney, Michael Haddad, said Tuesday that his client, who has served with the U.S. Coast Guard in Iraq, had been winded after running four miles and that he likely had a "look of exhaustion" on his face while simply jogging after working an overnight shift as an officer.

"This goes to show that cowboy tactics used by some cops can ensnare the innocent - even another officer," Haddad said. "He's heartbroken, because it was his dream since childhood to be a San Francisco police officer."

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