

Rodriguez Appears in Court as Mets Win

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Published: August 12, 2010

It was 2 p.m. on Thursday when [Francisco Rodriguez](#) emerged in handcuffs from an unmarked police car at the rear of the [Queens Criminal Court](#) in Kew Gardens.

Dressed in blue jeans and a white shirt with French cuffs that were missing the cuff links, Rodriguez walked through the prisoners' entrance as photographers snapped away, creating an indelible, surreal and painful image for the 2010 [Mets](#) season.

Forty-five minutes later, Rodriguez was in the courtroom of Judge Mary O'Donoghue, and a police officer went over to remind him to place his hands behind his back. He quickly did so.

Rodriguez stood quietly as an assistant district attorney, Kristen Kane, detailed the charges against him — third-degree assault and second-degree harassment. She said that Rodriguez, the Mets' closer, had pummeled the father of his common-law wife in an incident at [Citi Field](#) after Wednesday night's game against the [Rockies](#), and that he had the father "by the neck against the wall and was basically on top of him."

"It wasn't until security guards heard the screaming that they were able to pull him off," she said.

Kane said the district attorney's office was trying to obtain more information about other potential domestic violence incidents involving Rodriguez, at least one of which was cited to the police by his common-law wife, Daian Pena.

Kane requested bail of \$5,000. Rodriguez's lawyer, Christopher Booth, in turn asked O'Donoghue that no bail be imposed, telling O'Donoghue, "All you have to do is check the bullpen in the eighth inning, and you will find him every time."

Then O'Donoghue ruled, issuing an order of protection for both Daian Pena and her father, Carlos, and warning Rodriguez to avoid any contact with Daian and to

move out of the home he shares with her. She said he would have to petition family court to see his 1-year-old twins.

After 10 minutes it was over. A phalanx of court officers escorted Rodriguez outside the courthouse and into a waiting Navigator on Queens Boulevard. As he did when he arrived, Rodriguez ignored questions from reporters.

But his lawyer had more to say at a curbside news conference. When asked to describe his client's state of mind, he said Rodriguez was "obviously distressed."

"He's 28 years old and has never had anything like this happen to him before. It's kind of a shock for a young man to be put in handcuffs and taken away."

He added that Rodriguez was a family man who is "like all the rest of us who have families with various issues, and I think these things will come out eventually."

Another view came from a 33-year-old defendant named Edward Vega, who described himself as a forklift operator and an aide at a senior citizens residence. He was in the courthouse Thursday to be arraigned on charges of driving without a license and [marijuana](#) possession.

He said he was in a holding pen awaiting his court appearance with dozens of other defendants when Rodriguez was suddenly ushered in and "put in the cell right in front of ours."

"We were all asking him what happened and yelling out we knew him," Vega said. "I am a Mets fan, never been for the [Yankees](#), because I'm from Queens even if I live in Pennsylvania now." He said Rodriguez proceeded to call over two correction officers, who emptied Rodriguez's cell so that he was alone.

Vega said that in his own appearance before a judge on Thursday, he admitted to driving without a license but denied possessing marijuana. He said the judge fined him \$400. "When things happen, things happen," he said.

The same rationale could have been applied to Rodriguez, who, his lawyer said, was "very upset, very saddened, very disappointed that he's brought on this type of news and notoriety to his teammates."

It was those teammates who had just beaten the Rockies in a game just a few miles away, but far from what Rodriguez had just endured.

Mick Meenan contributed reporting.

A version of this article appeared in print on August 13, 2010, on page B13 of the New York edition.