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# OFFICER SLAYS CLUB SHOOTER

FIRES AFTER ATTACK ON COP PAL IN B'KLYN

By IRENE JAY LIU, LARRY CELONA and ERIKA MARTINEZ

March 11, 2007 -- A young tough paid with his life when he fired a shot at an off-duty detective during a scuffle in a crowded Brooklyn nightclub early yesterday - but was cut down by the victim's pal, an off-duty cop, police said.

Kristen McKenzie, 21, a construction worker originally from Trinidad, picked a fight with the detective after the pair bumped into each other during a packed, booze-fueled tribute to slain rapper Notorious B.I.G. in the VIP section of The Elite Ark club in East New York, police said.

McKenzie pulled a gun on the unnamed detective, who tried to grab the weapon but was wrestled to the ground, a police source said. McKenzie straddled the detective, pointed at the man's head and pulled the trigger, missing his mark.

But the 26-year-old narcotics detective was with a buddy, a 28-year-old NYPD cop, who pulled out his own gun, announced he was a police officer, then killed McKenzie with four shots to the chest, thigh, biceps and groin, police said.

The shooting appeared justified, said NYPD spokesman Paul Browne, "based in part on two separate accounts by civilian eyewitnesses, who saw the suspect pull a gun from his waistband behind his back and who saw him aiming the gun at the unarmed officer before he fired."

The detective ended up with a bullet in his left foot. Police are still investigating who fired it.

McKenzie, who came to New York two or three years ago, was a quiet man, though he loved to party, said his distraught sister, Andrea Pollidore. She said he had a clean record.

"He's a nice person. He was always smiling," she said at a press conference with City Councilman Charles Barron (D-Brooklyn), a vehement police critic.

"Why were the officers drinking? Why didn't they try to diffuse the situation? Why did it result in his death?" she said.

An NYPD captain who arrived at the scene deemed the shooting officer to be sober, but Pollidore said witnesses told her both officers had been drinking.

The reggae and hip-hop club, where a 2003 Jean Paul video was reportedly filmed, is in a desolate industrial strip that is also home to a hot-sheets hotel frequented by hookers, neighbors said.

The Elite Ark's patrons are normally checked for weapons carefully, clubgoers said.

"Security is good here usually," a local cop said. "I don't know how they managed to get the gun in here."

Fights do break out at the seven-year-old club, but this was the first shooting, insisted owner Leonard St.Lewis, who said he employs 12 to 15 bouncers a night and 30 to 40 metal-detector wands.

"I have security, good security," he said. "It's a good club, a good place to have fun."

Officials declined to release the names of the officers, but said the pair, who attended the Police Academy together, have been on the force five years and that neither had been involved in a previous shooting.

They had both worked that day - the detective in Manhattan and the officer in the 73rd Precinct, which covers the nearby Brownsville neighborhood. They had been in the club for about an hour when the brawl began, apparently sparked by a dance-floor disturbance.



**HIS LAST BREATHS:** Medics wheel Kristen McKenzie, shot after he allegedly fired this pistol at an off-duty detective, from a Brooklyn club yesterday.

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