



ERIK NASARENKO
VENTURA COUNTY DISTRICT ATTORNEY
NEWS RELEASE



Follow us @VenturaCountyDA
vcdistrictattorney.com

Contact: Joey Buttitta
Title: Communications Manager/PIO
Phone: (805) 767-3400
Email: Joey.Buttitta@ventura.org

Approved: SW
Date: May 30, 2024
Release No.: 24-061

Members of Sophisticated Simi Valley Gambling Operation Charged

VENTURA, Calif. – District Attorney Erik Nasarenko announced today that Evan Ross Avery (DOB 06/09/88), of Los Angeles, Eric Thaichareon (DOB 08/10/77), of Los Angeles, Michael Alexander Romano (DOB 01/09/90), of Panorama City, and Max Jordan Maynard (DOB 07/13/98), of Simi Valley, have been charged with several felonies related to an illicit gambling operation run out of a residence in Simi Valley. All four defendants are charged with three counts of pimping, three counts of pandering prostitution, and one count of bookmaking. Avery and Thaichareon also face an additional charge for money laundering. Each count has a special allegation that the manner in which the crime was carried out indicates planning, sophistication, and professionalism. All four defendants pled not guilty at today's arraignment.

It is alleged that the defendants ran a sophisticated poker operation out of a residence in Simi Valley known as "The Villa." They are accused of arranging commercial sex services at the location and taxing the women who provided those services. Avery and Thaichareon allegedly laundered the proceeds from this illicit gambling operation.

On May 28, 2024, the Simi Valley Police Department arrested Avery, Thaichareon, Romano, and Maynard while serving a search warrant at the residence.

Deputy District Attorney Rikole Kelly, a member of the Ventura County District Attorney's Office Sexual Assault Unit, is prosecuting the case.

Bail was set at \$65,000 for each defendant. Avery has a scheduled bail review hearing on May 31, 2024, at 1:30 p.m. in courtroom 13 and remains in custody. Romano remains in custody with a bail review hearing set for June 3, 2024, at 1:30 p.m. in courtroom 13. Thaichareon also remains in custody. Maynard has posted bail. All four defendants have an early disposition conference scheduled for June 10, 2024, at 1:30 p.m. in courtroom 13 of the Ventura County Superior Court.

Case: 2024014407

Defendant Information:

Evan Ross Avery (DOB 06/09/88)
Los Angeles

Eric Thaichareon (DOB 08/10/77)
Los Angeles

Michael Alexander Romano (DOB 01/09/90)
Panorama City

Max Jordan Maynard (DOB 07/13/98)
Simi Valley

Charges:

- (3 counts) PC 266h(a) – Pimping
- (3 counts) PC 266i(a)(3) – Pandering prostitution
- PC 337a[1] – Engaging in bookmaking
- PC 186.10(a) – Money laundering (Avery and Thaichareon only)

Special Allegations:

- CRC 4.421(a)(8) – The manner in which the crime was carried out indicates planning, sophistication, and professionalism