



ERIK NASARENKO

VENTURA COUNTY DISTRICT ATTORNEY

NEWS RELEASE



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1994 Attack Victim Seeks Justice as Convicted Rapist Faces New Charges



VENTURA, Calif. – Ventura County District Attorney Erik Nasarenko announced today the filing of felony charges against former Los Angeles Police Department detective and convicted rapist Michael Douglas Brambles (DOB 11/27/48), of Santa Maria, in connection with the 1994 kidnapping and robbery of a Thousand Oaks business owner.

At a news conference today, District Attorney Nasarenko and Ventura County Sheriff Jim Fryhoff detailed the decades-old case, while the victim, identified as SW, courageously spoke publicly about the attack.

Brambles is charged with kidnapping to commit robbery while personally using a firearm. The complaint also alleges several aggravating circumstances, including that the crime involved great violence, the victim was particularly vulnerable, the manner in which the crime was carried out indicated planning, sophistication or professionalism, and that Brambles engaged in violent conduct indicating a serious danger to society. Brambles was arrested August 12 in Santa Maria by District Attorney investigators, with the assistance of the Santa Maria Police Department.

On April 19, 1994, Brambles is accused of entering Arabella Boutique in Thousand Oaks as SW was closing the business. Brambles allegedly pointed a handgun at SW, forced her into a backroom, tied her hands behind her back and sexually assaulted her. Brambles then allegedly stole property from the business. Once Brambles left, SW called 911 and deputies with the Ventura County Sheriff's Office responded.

The sexual assault allegations from 1994 cannot be charged because the statute of limitations has expired.

Investigators identified Brambles as a suspect within months of the 1994 crime. At the time, however, Brambles was being prosecuted in Los Angeles County for an extensive crime spree involving 18 cases, including armed robberies and sexual assaults. He was ultimately convicted of 26 counts, including 18 armed robberies and multiple sexual assaults. He was also convicted of using a firearm in each case. He was sentenced to 102 years in state prison.

Because Brambles had received what was effectively a life sentence, the Ventura County case was dismissed. SW agreed with that decision because she believed Brambles would remain in prison for the rest of his life. Brambles was later released on parole in 2020 after serving approximately 26 years of his 102-year sentence.

While the primary objective for Ventura County District Attorney's Office investigators assigned to these cases is identifying offenders connected to unsolved cases, they also test DNA from previous convictions and closed cases. It was during the examination of this closed case that investigators learned that Brambles had been released.

"Without her courage, bravery and resolve to once again face the person who allegedly attacked her, we would not be here today," said District Attorney Erik Nasarenko. "Despite the passage of time and the long road ahead, SW is committed to seeing Michael Brambles held responsible for these violent accusations from 32 years ago, and so are we."

SW said she agreed to come forward in the hope that her case can help other victims.

"A few months ago, when investigators from the Ventura County District Attorney's Office contacted me, I was shocked to hear not only that this man was walking free, but that he had been out of prison for six years," said SW. "The justice that I and his other victims deserved was denied when he was only required to serve a fraction of the sentence he earned. I am thankful to have this opportunity now to seek justice for myself and for his other victims."

Senior Deputy District Attorney Emily Reber, a member of the Ventura County District Attorney's Office Sexual Assault Kit Initiative Unit, is prosecuting the case. If you believe you may have been a victim of Brambles in a previously unreported crime, please contact District Attorney Investigator Mike McManama at 805-477-1652.

Brambles was transported to Ventura County and is likely to be arraigned on August 14, 2026. He is being held on \$2 million bail and faces a maximum sentence of 12 years to life in state prison if convicted of all counts.

Case: 2026021380 – Court #: 26CF100217

Defendant Information:

Michael Douglas Brambles (DOB 11/27/48)
Santa Maria

Charges:

- PC 209(b)(1) – Kidnapping for robbery

Special Allegations:

- PC 12022.3(a) – Sex Offense – Use of weapon
- PC 290.006 – Registration for offenses committed out of sexual compulsion or gratification
- CRC 4.421(a)(1) – The crime involved great violence
- CRC 4.421(a)(3) – Victim was vulnerable
- CRC 4.421(a)(8) – The manner in which the crime was carried out indicates planning, sophistication, or professionalism
- CRC 4.421(b)(1) – Defendant has engaged in violent conduct

