

THE CHRONICLE

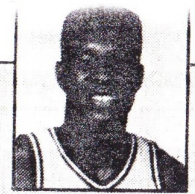
THURSDAY, JANUARY 31, 1991 ©

DUKE UNIVERSITY DURHAM, NORTH CAROLINA

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Jackets got stung

Thomas Hill led the team with 20 points and scored the last two baskets in the 77-75 win over Georgia Tech last night. See Sports.



'Maurice' sentenced to three years

By BEAU DURE

GREENSBORO — The man who posed as Baron Maurice de Rothschild at the University was sentenced to three years in prison after a federal judge heard pleas for a lenient sentence.

Maur Jeffrey Locke Rothschild, formerly Mauro Cortez, was sentenced to two consecutive 18-month terms by Judge Frank Bullock Wednesday. Rothschild was convicted on four counts of fraud in a United States District Court on Nov. 14, and faced a maximum of eight years in prison.

Because Rothschild has spent approximately one year in prison awaiting trial and sentencing, he will be eligible for parole almost immediately. Under federal law,

prisoners are eligible for parole after serving one-third of a sentence.

Rothschild must also pay restitution to the parties that extended credit to him: Duke University Federal Credit Union and Wachovia Bank and Trust Co.

Rothschild may also face charges in Durham County of embezzlement from the Duke-Rinaldi fund, a private charity fund established on behalf of restaurant owner Pete Rinaldi.

After pronouncing the sentence, Bullock stressed Rothschild's need to pursue psychiatric care.

"It's going to take a major effort on your part to change your lifestyle," Bullock said.

During the 40-minute court

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proceedings, Rothschild's attorney, Matthew Martin, urged Bullock to think of Rothschild as someone other than "just a con man." Martin asked the judge to "temper punishment", citing Rothschild's mental state and his willingness to enter psychiatric therapy.

During the trial the defense had stated that Rothschild had been sexually and physically abused as a child, and later entered a "fantasy world" because of his ensuing struggles with his mental health.

"To some extent, he had only some control over the way things went," Martin said.

Martin also testified to Rothschild's ability to lead a successful life outside of prison, saying that Rothschild has "above average intelligence" and has held down several steady jobs.

Bullock said he was "somewhat sympathetic" to Rothschild's mental state, but noted that the defense had waived an insanity plea during the trial.

Rothschild also made a brief statement, explaining his psychiatric troubles. Wearing dark glasses due to trouble with an eye infection, he spoke of his desire to confront his mental difficulties and continue treatment.

But Rothschild also defended his decision to stand trial without an insanity plea.

"I never wished at any time to apply for an insanity defense simply because I do not feel that I am insane," Rothschild said.

Rothschild was twice offered a sentence of time served in exchange for a guilty plea, he said, and that he declined these

offers because he "realized I could not completely recover unless I confront my problems."

The defendant ended his statement with a harrowing description of his relationship with his father, saying he wouldn't recognize his father if he were to enter the courtroom. Rothschild said his father's abuse had left "deep scars" and stated his intent to litigate against his father for parts of his mother's estate.

Rothschild then told the court that he would rather accept the maximum eight-year sentence than return to his father.

During Wednesday's testimony, Bullock noted that the institutions that Rothschild defrauded, including the University, had actually helped him to commit his crime by encouraging his behav-

ior, whether for "monetary gain or masage to their own egos."

The case against Rothschild accused him of providing false information three times to the Duke University Federal Credit Union in 1987, twice to obtain a line of credit and once to obtain a credit card, and one instance of providing false information to Wachovia Bank and Trust Co. for a line of credit.

In each instance, Rothschild was accused of stating his name as "M. de Rothschild," or "Baron M. de Rothschild," and providing an incorrect birthdate.

Rothschild came to the University in 1987 and enrolled in the continuing education program. While enrolled, he joined Sigma Alpha Epsilon fraternity and worked part-time for the Medical Center.