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Farina found not guilty

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Thursday, March 29 PITTSFIELD — **Karen Farina** went from facing more than seven years in state prison to once again being a free woman yesterday when a Superior Court jury found her not guilty of cocaine trafficking. Farina, 29, of Second Street in Pittsfield, clutched a rosary and wept as the jury declared her not guilty on one charge each of trafficking in cocaine and committing a drug violation in a school zone.

The verdict capped a three-day trial in which Farina's attorney, Raymond Jacoub of Great Barrington, argued that a police informant had enticed his client into drug dealing.

No predisposition

"**Karen Farina** had never been convicted of any crimes in her life," Jacoub said in an interview. "She did not have the predisposition to selling drugs prior to the solicitation by the police informant."

Farina was arrested on Oct. 26, 2005, when the Berkshire County Drug Task Force searched the Enterprise Rent-A-Car on State Street in North Adams, where she worked.

Police found nearly 60 grams of crack cocaine that Farina had allegedly bought at the request of a police informant, Joseph Campbell, also known as Joseph Pini.

Campbell already faced jail time for breaking into the North Adams Elks Lodge in April 2004 and stealing \$1,595 in cash. Police also suspected he was involved in drug transactions on his own, and asked him to record his conversations with Farina.

Campbell agreed, and went to Farina and asked her to buy cocaine for him. Farina consented, leading to her arrest.

Jacoub argued that Campbell approached Farina because he knew that she was familiar with the drug culture, though not a part of it, and was trying to win some leniency from authorities on his other cases. Jacoub asserted that Campbell badgered Farina until she consented to buy cocaine for him, something she would otherwise not have done.

A week after Farina was arrested, Campbell was caught trafficking cocaine in Williamstown.

In exchange for his cooperation with police, Campbell received a reduced sentence of 4 1/2 to 6 years in state prison when he pleaded guilty to the burglary and to the Williamstown drug charges in January 2006.

Farina, meanwhile, went to trial on the charges and faced a minimum of 7 1/2 years in state prison if convicted.

The jurors began deliberations yesterday. In the afternoon, they sent a note to Judge John A. Agostini, asking him to clarify the law surrounding an entrapment defense.

Agostini re-read his instructions, reminding the jury that the state must prove beyond a reasonable doubt that it did not entrap Farina. An hour later, the jury returned with its verdicts of not guilty.

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