

Melee erupts at OC nightclub

■ Fights involving 150 people take 49 police officers to control

By Jay Hodgkins
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OCEAN CITY — A massive bar fight at Fager's Island involving about 150 people who were in town for an event with a popular hip-hop disc jockey took dozens of police officers nearly 90 minutes to control early Monday, police said.

Ocean City Pfc. Barry Neeb said two plainclothes officers

were assigned to Fager's because of concern over potential rowdy behavior from the crowd expected there for a party.

According to Brian Stoehr, promoter of the Funkmaster Flex Car and Bike Show, the DJ was internationally known recording artist Biz Markie, who was headlining a private birthday party for Washington Wizards point guard Steve

Blake. Police said they believed the fight was associated with people in town for the car show.

The plainclothes officers radioed for backup at 1:45 a.m. after the fight started in the popular resort nightclub, Neeb said.

"They got there and it looked like 150 people were involved, milling around and in the way," Neeb said. "There were several different fights spread throughout."

The melee required the large police presence to control, Neeb said.

"Forty-nine officers at any location is a lot. It was out of control for a while. Rarely do we ever send that many officers to a scene, and only if an officer calls for help and it is really out of hand," he said.

While attempting to restore order, three officers suffered minor injuries ranging from a bruised hand to a sore knee.

Neeb said the worst injury

was suffered by a Fager's patron, cut when a bottle was smashed over his head. The man, who was not identified by police, was taken to Atlantic General Hospital, where he was later released after treatment.

Stoehr said the Fager's event was not sponsored or related to the car show and that his show had encouraged those in attendance to go to Seacrets that night, although three of the people from his show

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FIGHTS: 8 charged in nightclub incident

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were with Biz Markie.

Charged in connection with the fight were: Terrance Sterrette, 22, of Aberdeen, Md., with first-degree assault and possession of marijuana; Jamie Sutler, 21, of Middle River, Md., with second-degree assault; Yucey Pitt, 23, of Aberdeen with second-degree assault and disorderly conduct; Jason Owens, 24, of Aberdeen with disorderly conduct and resisting arrest; Chad Ahalt, 26, of Ocean City with failure to obey order of police officer; and Donell Nelson, 22, of Bel Air, Md., with dis-

orderly conduct.

Two Maryland men, both under the drinking age of 21 — Curtis Myers, 20, of Baltimore and Jasper Owens, 19, of Aberdeen — were also charged, police said. Owens was charged with hindering and resisting arrest, police said. Myers was charged with disorderly conduct and was found to have an outstanding warrant for failure to follow conditions of probation, according to reports.

Neeb said that the two underage men should not have been in Fager's and the club could face serious repercussions after a liquor board review of the incident.

"It's a serious incident that I'm quite sure the liquor board will look at seriously," Neeb said. "Is their license in trouble of being suspended? Not necessarily. Fager's has a history of being very responsible."

Fager's Island general manager Duane Bell was not available for comment. Bobby Corbitt, personal assistant to owner John Fager, declined comment about the night's events.

The officers cleared the scene at 3:12 a.m., Neeb said.

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