

# The Palm Beach Post

July 30, 2009

## **CHARGES REDUCED AGAINST STARKS**

By EDGAR THOMPSON

Dolphins defensive end Randy Starks will no longer face a felony charge of aggravated assault of a police officer, stemming from an incident over the Memorial Day weekend.

Instead, prosecutors decided Tuesday to charge Starks with misdemeanor culpable negligence, according to Miami-Dade County court records.

Under the original charges, Starks, who reports to training camp with his teammates this weekend, faced a minimum sentence of five years in state prison. Culpable negligence is a second-degree misdemeanor unlikely to lead to jail-time.

Starks, 25 and entering his sixth NFL season, was arrested in the early morning hours of May 24 after allegedly using his large truck to strike an officer who, while on foot, tried to stop the slow-moving vehicle during a traffic jam in South Beach.

Defense attorney Ed O'Donnell disputed the officer's account of the incident and said Starks should have received no more than a traffic ticket.

O'Donnell prepared depositions from Starks and the eight passengers in the vehicle, including two current NFL players and former college teammates of Starks at the University of Maryland - Dolphins linebacker William Kershaw and Cleveland Browns linebacker D'Qwell Jackson.

O'Donnell was in Pensacola Wednesday taking depositions and unavailable for comment, according to an assistant in his Miami offices.