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Five years prison for woman who killed two in Miami-Dade crash

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Lindsay Armada, about to surrender for prison Tuesday, is flanked by her lawyer, Edward O'Donnell. She killed two friends and injured a third in an August 2010 car crash in North Miami-Dade. MIAMI HERALD / DAVID OVALLE

Lindsay Armada tested positive for the drug Ecstasy and a small amount of alcohol – but prosecutors could never prove that she was impaired on the August 2010 morning she plowed her Lexus into a palm tree off the Palmetto Expressway.

But Armada nevertheless paid a price on Tuesday.

The former Internet model surrendered to serve five years in prison for the wreck that killed two of her passengers and left a third in a body cast for six months.

“Miss Armada is not walking away scot-free,” Miami-Dade Circuit Judge Ellen Sue Venzer told

relatives of the victims in court. "She will pay many, many years for her behavior."

Armada, sobbing and unable to look at the relatives of the dead watching from the gallery, read from a letter.

"I'd trade anything to bring the boys back," said Armada, 25, a mother of two.

The dead victims: Nicolas Garzon, 21, and Luis Suarez, 20, a high school baseball standout who had recently signed to play professionally in Venezuela. He was part of two state championship teams at Flanagan High in Pembroke Pines, friends said.

Severely injured in the crash was Ashley Tellez.

"We lost a lot that day," their friend Jose Gonzalez told the judge.

The crash happened on August 22, 2010, at 7 a.m., after the group of friends had been closing out their summer by partying at the clubs Nocturnal and Space in Downtown Miami.

According to the state troopers, Armada had been trying to pass a car on the Palmetto but lost control on a curve, crashing into the tree on the side of the highway. A passing motorist estimated her speed to be 90 miles per hour.

Armada could not be charged with DUI manslaughter because investigators could not prove when she had taken the Ecstasy drug, and her blood alcohol content level was well below the legal limit. But prosecutors did file charges of vehicular manslaughter.

Armada pleaded guilty last year, but was allowed to surrender Tuesday so she'd have time to give birth to her second child.

The case had dragged on for years — at one point, Armada rejected a plea deal of two years in prison.

Now, she'll do five years behind bars, plus eight years of probation, a period in which she'll be unable to hold a driver's license. Many of Garzon's and Suarez's relatives could not bring themselves to attend Tuesday's hearing.

"The family's pain is so incredibly raw," prosecutor Eileen Keeley told the judge. "The fact that this case has been going on for so long, it's so very hard for them."