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Dodge City Gang Member Pleads Guilty Of Attempted Murder

A member of a Dodge City street gang targeted in a federal racketeering case has pleaded guilty to attempted murder.

Jason Najera, 29, pleaded guilty to one count of attempted murder in furtherance of racketeering. In his plea, Najera admitted that on Aug. 27, 2011, he used a knife to stab two men he mistakenly believed were members of a rival gang.

On that date, Najera accompanied co-defendant Humberto Ortiz when Ortiz went to a residence at 703 9th Avenue in Dodge City. Ortiz and Najera confronted some men they suspected of being members of the Surenos street gang. Ortiz was a member of Los Carnales Chingones and Najera was a member of Diablos Viejos, both of which were associated with the Nortenos street gang and considered Surenos their common enemies.

When a fight started, Najera used a knife to stab victims Gabriel Rivera and Carlos Ramirez. During the fight, both Rivera and Ramirez were stabbed, with Rivera's injuries requiring a life-flight to a hospital in Wichita.

In his plea, Najera admitted that as a member of the Diablos Viejos he was part of an ongoing criminal conspiracy involving the Nortenos street gang whose members used murder, robbery, assault and acts of violence to protect and expand their operations.

Sentencing is set for May 6. He faces a maximum penalty of 10 years in federal prison and a fine up to \$250,000.

In January, co-defendant Humberto Ortiz was sentenced to 46 months in federal prison.

Najera and Ortiz were among 23 defendants indicted in May who were charged under the federal RICO Act (Racketeering Influenced and Corrupt Organizations Act.) The indictment marked only the second time federal prosecutors in Kansas have filed charges under RICO and VICAR (Violent Crimes in Aid of Racketeering).

US Attorney's Office