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Ex-U player Hagemo gets strict probation

By **PAUL WALSH**, Star Tribune

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Nate Hagemo, the troubled former Gophers hockey prodigy whose numerous run-ins with the law followed an injury that derailed his NHL dreams, has been sentenced to probation and ordered to abide by a slew of conditions to avoid incarceration.

Meanwhile, the Minneapolis City Attorney's Office this afternoon said it will investigate a traffic accident last fall involving Hagemo in which police say he ran a red light and struck and seriously hurt a bicyclist. He has yet to be cited in that case.

Hagemo, 22, of Edina, pleaded guilty Tuesday and was sentenced in Hennepin County District Court to three years' probation for failing to submit to chemical testing following a traffic accident in September in Minneapolis. Careless driving and disorderly conduct charges were dismissed.

In order to avoid a year in the workhouse, Hagemo must attend Alcoholics Anonymous meetings three times a week, abstain from illicit drugs and alcohol, submit to random drug testing, complete alcohol assessment and have no traffic-related violations. He also was ordered to pay a fine and court fees totaling \$525.

Also Tuesday, Hagemo pleaded guilty to careless driving stemming from another crash in December in Minneapolis. Police say he drove his pickup through a red light at E. 38th Street and Portland Avenue S. He was given a year's probation in that case and has 30 days in the workhouse hanging over him should he violate any terms of that probation. A driving after revocation charge was dropped.

Still pending are potential felony drug possession charges against Hagemo involving the discovery of suspected heroin in his car early this year in Minneapolis. Police are waiting for test results on the suspected drug.

Calls to Hagemo's attorney today and last week for comment have not been returned.

On Sept. 11, according to court documents, Hagemo drove his pickup truck into a parked car on Lyndale Avenue, appeared to be under the influence of alcohol or drugs and fought paramedics as they tried to put him on a gurney.

Paramedics also told police that he had track marks on his arms, possibly from using needles. Medical staff at the hospital where Hagemo was taken said he had taken heroin three days ago. On advice of counsel, he refused blood and urine tests.

A search of Hagemo's vehicle uncovered a drug kit that included a rubber hose, cotton swabs and an alcohol wipe.

Hagemo played for the Gophers in 2004-05, but a shoulder injury in October 2004 cut deeply into the defenseman's playing time and ultimately brought his career to an end.

As a freshman at Holy Angels in Richfield, Hagemo helped his team win the 2002 Class AA state title. He then played two seasons in the prestigious U.S. National Team Development Program in Ann Arbor, Mich. The Carolina Hurricanes chose Hagemo in the second round of the 2005 NHL draft.

In November, Hagemo ran a red light at an intersection near Loring Park, hit a car and then struck bicyclist Mark Jorgensen in the crosswalk, the accident report said. No one else was hurt.

No drug or alcohol tests were done, police said, and Hagemo was not cited. Police spokesman Sgt. William Palmer said today that declining to cite Hagemo at the scene was the "officer's discretion."

Assistant City Attorney Judd Gushwa, who prosecuted Hagemo's cases Tuesday and is a former Minneapolis police officer, said he will interview Jorgensen and others at the scene and "take whatever actions are appropriate ... if there is physical evidence to support" what the witnesses tell him.

Gushwa said his records show that Hagemo was driving on a revoked license at the time. Palmer said the police accident report indicates that Hagemo's license was valid.

The prosecutor said he only became aware of the November accident after he was approached Tuesday by Jorgensen, who attended Hagemo's court proceeding.

Jorgensen, 54, said he was unconscious for hours after being hit and spent two months in a wheelchair recovering from broken bones in his face, a broken leg, a damaged knee and a lacerated spleen.

Jorgensen said he brought the accident to the attention of authorities "to have a kid with a problem fix his life and ... feel bad for the trail of broken bones he has left behind him."

Star Tribune staff writer Rochelle Olson contributed to this report.

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