



PRESS RELEASE

Rapist Receives Maximum Sentence for Sex Assault

July 12, 2021

Bryan, TX – Today, Justin Batten, 21, of Snook pled guilty and was sentenced to the maximum sentence of 20 years in prison for sexual assault. Batten was also sentenced to 18 years in prison for the offense of Aggravated Kidnapping.

In the early morning hours of June 3, 2019, Bryan Police responded to the Kroger Shopping Center located at the intersection of Highway 6 and Boonville Road in response to a reported sexual assault. The victim, an 18-year-old employee of Subway sandwich shop, was closing the store for the night. As she was closing and getting ready to ride her bike home, the victim accidentally locked herself outside of the back door. The victim called her boss and asked her boss to let her in to retrieve the key to her bike lock. While the victim awaited her boss, she sat on the curb in the alleyway behind the shopping center and called a friend.

Shortly thereafter, the victim reported that a white man with long blond hair came out from behind the dumpster shared by the stores in the shopping center. Believing that the man was an employee of one of the stores, she did not take notice of him. The victim reported that the next thing she knew, the white male came up behind her, placed her in a chokehold, told her not to scream, and forced her behind the dumpster. The defendant then sexually assaulted the victim and fled the scene. The victim's boss arrived shortly thereafter.

Bryan Police obtained surveillance footage from the surrounding businesses. The manager of one of the businesses was able to identify the white male as Justin Batten, a recently hired employee. The surveillance footage from this business showed the defendant clocking out of work approximately thirty minutes prior to the attack. The defendant then drove his vehicle to Premiere Movie Theatre, where he hid his vehicle and snuck back to the area behind the Subway. The defendant then laid in wait behind the dumpster in the alleyway. The rest of the surveillance video confirmed the victim's account of the defendant grabbing her and forcing her behind the dumpster.

After reviewing the video, the police executed a search warrant at the defendant's home. Police recovered clothing matching the one wore by the attacker in the surveillance video. Ultimately, DNA evidence obtained from the defendant matched that taken from the victim following the victim's medical exam.





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This case was investigated by the Bryan Police Department with assistance from the Baylor Scott and White Forensic Team and the Texas Department of Public Safety Crime Lab. First Assistant District Attorney Brian Baker and Assistant District Attorney Jessica Escue prosecuted the case for the State of Texas with the assistance of Victim Assistance Coordinator Melissa Carter and Investigator Michael Johse.

“Justin Batten is the reason that we can never tell our children that they don’t have to be afraid of the dark. He came out of the night and violently attacked a young woman who was doing nothing but working hard and minding her own business. He is exactly where he needs to be, in prison.”

—Brian Baker & Jessica Escue, Assistant District Attorneys

