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Murder charges are dismissed in shooting at club

By Jason Kandel
Staff Writer

Capital murder charges have been dismissed against a 23 year-old North Hills man after a judge determined he acted in self-defense when he fatally shot two men during a fight outside a Northridge nightclub, officials said Friday.

Alejandro Murillo was freed Thursday following a five-day preliminary hearing on charges of first-degree murder with special circumstances. He could have faced the death penalty if he'd been tried and convicted.

He was accused of fatally shooting Michael Domaloan, 21, and Felix Quiroz, 23, on Sept. 17, 2003, outside Bub Blurs Company, a popular smoking club where a rap music contest was being held.

Witnesses testified that the victims had attacked a friend of Murillo's and were reaching for weapons when the defendant shot them.

"It's very difficult to obtain a dismissal on a murder case, especially when there are two murder counts," said Murillo's attorney, James Blatt. "But I wasn't surprised by the court's final decision. It became crystal clear that the defendant had an honest belief that his friend was in danger and in fact, that belief was reasonable."

Los Angeles County district attorney spokeswoman Sandi Gibbons said prosecutors will not refile charges unless new evidence is found.

"The judge thought long and hard and did dismiss the case on grounds of perfect defense of others, basically that the defense is that you are basically conducting an act to protect others," Gibbons said.