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**District Attorney Gains Dog-Fighting Conviction, 15-month Jail Term**

Sterling Honoray Bates has been sentenced to 15 months in state jail on his felony conviction of engaging in dog fighting, as part of a large dog-fight ring that was broken up late last year, District Attorney Patricia Lykos announced Wednesday.

Bates, 35, pleaded guilty to intentionally and knowingly causing a dog to fight during a match in the 6000 block of Milwee on August 28, 2008.

Belinda Smith, an Assistant District Attorney in the Animal Cruelty Section, said evidence showed the fight involving Bates' dog went on for more than an hour and caused injuries to both dogs in that fight.

Bates also pleaded guilty Monday to the Class A misdemeanor offense of attending a dog-fight as a spectator. That fight occurred on October 17, 2008 and was held at the same location on Milwee. Bates received a 100-day jail term in that case.

He was among those arrested last November in what was known as Operation Dead Game, a lengthy investigation into one of the largest dog-fighting rings in the U.S. About 100 animals were seized in Harris County, and more than 50 people were charged with engaging in the dog fights or attending the fights.

District Attorney Lykos praised the work and cooperation among many agencies and offices participating in the operation against dog fighting. They included the Texas Department of Public Safety Criminal Intelligence Division, the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Office of Inspector General, Harris County Public Health and Environmental Services, Houston Humane Society, Harris County Precincts 1 and 5 Constables' Offices, and the Office of Precinct 3 Harris County Commissioner Steve Radack.

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