

FINEST SLUGS SUSP'S GAL PAL

Teen decked during Harlem melee over bust of armed man wanted in slay try



Images from video show confrontation between Tamani Crum and NYPD Detective Kendo Kinsey, who punched Crum when she tried to interfere in the arrest of her beau, Elvin James, in Harlem on Tuesday evening.

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The teen girlfriend of an attempted-murder suspect was slugged by a city cop during a wild caught-on-video melee that erupted as cops tried to arrest the wanted man on a Harlem street.

The woman, identified as 19-year-old Tamani Crum of the Bronx, hit the sidewalk hard after confronting an officer identified by sources as NYPD Detective Kendo Kinsey, with police officials defending the Tuesday night confrontation that sparked instant outrage.

"You just hit a little girl!" says one onlooker in the video. "You're wilding, Bro!"

Crum remained hospitalized Wednesday with unspecified injuries from the knockdown punch, said a liaison to the Rev. Al Sharpton.

The video shows police appeared to have had 22-year-old suspect Elvin James under control in handcuffs when Crum approached them.

But NYPD sources with

knowledge of the incident said police and detectives appeared justified in their response to the scene, and that Crum's actions posed a danger — especially because James possessed a gun at the time of his arrest.

"That guy had a loaded firearm on him," said one source. "If she was successful in stopping the arrest, then he could have pulled that gun and hurt someone."

The second source said the Black officer's response was a legitimate use of force: "A lot of people see cops struggling and wrestling with people. But they have to understand that punching someone is a justifiable action, too."

The video, posted to Twitter, shows police officers arresting

James on W. 136th St. near Adam Clayton Powell Jr. Blvd. just before 5 p.m. Tuesday. Crum appears in the frame and slaps at Kinsey — who responds by walloping her in the head.

Crum, who fell backward to the pavement before police picked her up, was charged with assault and resisting arrest, cops said.

Relatives of both Crum and James quickly blasted the NYPD for its handling of the situation, as did Sharpton's National Action Network. "The question for the NYPD is when it became a tactic for crowd control to knock somebody unconscious," said the National Action Network's Rev. Stephen Marshall.

Julia Crum, whose granddaughter was arrested, defended the

teen and said the police had no business putting their hands on the young neighborhood hairstylist who weighs about 110 pounds.

"He cold knocked her out," she told the Daily News. "He's not better than the people who are knocking people out in the street. ... He should never have put his hands on her or any female. He's wrong. He's wrong. He's wrong."

James' namesake father Elvin was equally upset about what happened, saying too many Black youths were victims of excessive force.

"We're just looking for accountability," he said. "Someone needs to be held accountable. It's unacceptable, and we're not going to have it!"

Mayor Adams, an ex-NYPD officer, encouraged New Yorkers to wait for an investigation before jumping to conclusions about what happened, noting the officers were in the "high stressful environment" of arresting an armed suspect, and commended them for getting a gun off the streets.

"It's a lot of madness going on. This is not just something that is a theatrical performance. This is real danger. This person was wanted for murder," said Adams, misstating the charge. "This

person had a loaded gun."

Kinsey and other cops were arresting James in connection with an Aug. 12 attempted murder when he was found with the loaded gun and drugs, police sources said.

As police moved in on James, a crowd gathered and began yelling at the officers and assaulting them, according to the sources, with one officer sustaining a minor injury to his head before Crum allegedly accosted Kinsey.

Crum was charged with assault on a cop, obstructing governmental administration and resisting arrest. Faith Harrell, 27, was also hit with those charges, along with menacing and harassment. A 26-year-old woman was given a summons for spitting at an officer.

An NYPD spokesman said that "the matter is under internal review, and the investigation is ongoing."

Kinsey, the officer believed to have punched Crum, joined the department in 2005. He has two substantiated civilian complaints against him filed between 2010 and 2020, records show, and lost 25 days of vacation after his service weapon was left inside the glove compartment of his car and stolen in 2014.

With Tim Balk