

Man pleads guilty to assault

Faces up to five years for attacking police officer

By Matt Busse

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A Lynchburg man pleaded guilty Thursday to attacking a police officer who had to subdue the man by using pepper spray and twisting his genitals.

Derek Rashad Jones, 27, pleaded

guilty in Lynchburg Circuit Court to a single count of assault and battery of a law enforcement officer.

He faces up to five years in prison at his Sept. 8 sentencing.

Lynchburg Police Officer Brian Smith was arresting Jones on an unrelated warrant March 11 on the 1300 block of 16th Street when Jones tried to run, said deputy commonwealth's

attorney Chuck Felmlee.

Smith grabbed Jones' shirt to stop him, Felmlee said. Jones spun around and punched the officer in the face.

The two exchanged more blows before ending up on the ground.

Fearing that Jones might reach for his service pistol, Smith shot pepper spray in Jones' face. Jones wasn't fazed.

The two stood up and fought more before Jones pushed the officer back down and jumped on top of him, Felmlee said.

The officer's foot became caught in a chain-link fence. Jones refused to let go of him, Felmlee said.

Smith grabbed Jones by the genitals, squeezed and twisted. Jones still wasn't fazed.

Smith tried again, this time with more pressure. Jones let go.

The officer handcuffed Jones and freed his foot from the fence, Felmlee said.

Smith suffered bruises to his head and upper body and pain in his right thumb.

Felmlee said witnesses heard Jones bragging about the fight, telling Smith, "I got you with my right, didn't I? You're feeling that."

Jones is held without bond at the Blue Ridge Regional Jail in Lynchburg.