



Man sentenced over gang attack

By Janet Maitland

A local man has been sentenced to six years in a young offender institution for his part in a vicious gang attack. Jason Farinas, 20, from Fallows Close, was one of a gang of six youths who set up a meeting with a rival gang in Watling Park, Burnt Oak, on the pretext of a drugs deal in January 2013.

One man was robbed and a second man was stabbed in the back. A third victim was forced to strip to his underwear and was then stabbed five times. One stab wound was directly to his heart. He was found unconscious by the police who carried out CPR until the air ambulance arrived.

His injuries were so severe

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the surgeon on board had to carry out open heart surgery before he was rushed to St Mary's Hospital in Paddington where further surgery saved his life.

Farinas was convicted of conspiracy to rob and possessing firearms. He was sentenced at Wood Green Crown Court on 20 March alongside the other five gang members who also received custodial sentences.

The defendants were part of a gang known as Finchley. The victims were associated with a gang based in Burnt Oak known as 'Oakboys' or 'D Block'. A police spokesperson said that rivalry between the gangs leading to tit for tat violence had been going on since April 2012.

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Victim of a violent gust

Snap! Decades to grow and gone in a moment. Archer reader Craig Johnson snapped this shot of a tree in full blossom in Twyford Avenue broken in half by the strong winds that battered us over a couple of days at the end of March.



Organisers Greg Swimer, left, and Avi Freeman after testing the course (top left).

Many have already committed to support the project. Anyone who is interested in running or in helping with organisation can register at www.racetheneighbours.com. Runners will be directed to the RunBritain registration page. With spaces limited, it will be over-subscribed so those keen to participate are advised to register early to avoid disappointment. Follow race news on Twitter @northlondon10k.

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Who's the fittest? Time to race the neighbours

An exciting new 10k run has been set up to provoke some friendly rivalry between East Finchley and Muswell Hill and there are already hopes that it will become a major fixture in the community calendar.

Race the Neighbours will take place on Sunday 7 June, starting and finishing in Cherry Tree Wood and taking a route through local parks and leafy open spaces, including Alexandra Palace and Highgate Wood.

It is likely to be a very popular event amongst local fun runners and more serious athletes. Entrants will run for either N2 or N10, and around 250 runners are expected to line up to hear the starter's pistol.

Whose big idea?

The race is the brainchild and dream of a group of local running enthusiasts. Greg Swimer, an East Finchley resident, had the original idea and he has assembled a keen group of local runners who are sorting out the numerous logistical and practical matters involved in setting up such an event. They include East Finchley and Muswell Hill residents Avi Freeman and Steve Ackerman and North London runners Greg Alon and Elliot Wilson.

Greg said: "I've taken part in so many 10k runs, half marathons and marathons but always wanted to do it on my home turf. We know the local community will be up for this and we can't wait for the race to start. Spaces will be quite limited for the first year, but we hope that over the years it will grow to a much bigger event".

Who's joining in?

Local businesses are being asked to provide some backing with low level sponsorship.