

Quote of the day

"Alabama fans are the best fans anywhere."

— Sophomore April Bowlin, p. 5.

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Serving the University of Alabama since 1894 • Volume 99, Number 83

Riley assaulted by masked intruder

By Scott Travis
Student Politics Editor

A masked assailant apparently entered SGA Presidential candidate Minda Riley's home last night and physically assaulted her.

Riley, who stayed overnight in Russell Student Health Center, has a golf-ball-size bruise on

her cheek, a busted lip and a knife wound on the side of her face, according to brother Rob Riley and campaign manager Scott Batey.

Batey said Riley's two roommates had just gone out at around 8 p.m. when Riley heard the front door open. He said Riley called out a roommate's name, then encountered a white male with panty hose

stretched over his head. Batey said the man attacked her, yelling "You f--- with the wrong people, you get f---ed."

Riley's father, not knowing about the incident, called her from Birmingham last night, and could tell she was upset, according to Riley's brother Rob. However, Minda Riley did not tell her father what had happened. Rob Riley later

called, and Minda explained the incident to him.

Rob Riley then drove to Tuscaloosa, called Vice President for Student Affairs Harry Knopke, and both escorted Minda to the Tuscaloosa police station. Batey and Campaign director Eric Pruitt also went, Batey said.

Knopke confirmed that Riley was assaulted, and said he

accompanied Minda and Rob Riley to the police station and the health center. He said he also contacted the University of Alabama Department of Public Safety and said an investigation should begin soon.

At 3 a.m. Monday morning, Rob Riley was staying with his sister at the health center. He said Minda was not feeling well and could not talk to the

press. "She's emotionally drained," Rob Riley said. "She's in pain due to what the cowards did to her tonight."

Rob Riley, who was the Machine-backed SGA president in 1987, said he has "no doubt" that the Machine or a Machine-backed candidate was

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responsible for the assault. "I was in the Machine. I was endorsed by the Machine for president. At that time, it was just a political organization," Riley said.

"Today the Machine is a little club of thugs and cowards. I wouldn't be associated with the Machine today for any price, and I don't blame my sister for not wanting to associate

with this group either," he said. The Machine is an all-white coalition of select fraternities and sororities designed to influence campus politics.

Batey said the assailant was not wearing any Machine paraphernalia at the time of the incident.

After assisting Riley, Pruitt said he found a receptacle full of trash on top of his car but knew of no damage to the car.

Rob Riley said this incident will not affect his sister's decision to run for SGA president.

"Minda Riley, nor anyone in her family, is going to let hot

shots like these people intimidate her out of the SGA presidential race," he said.

Riley campaign spokesman Brian Jackson said if Riley's health permits, she will attend the scheduled debate at the Ferguson Center ballroom tonight.

"We're sickened and outraged this type of action could even take place at this point in time," Jackson said. "We have no evidence substantial enough to accuse anyone of this crime, but the only parties that could possibly benefit are members of the Machine and members of

Neil Duthie's campaign."

Duthie, however, said he had no part of the incident, and said he doesn't believe the Machine was responsible either.

"(The Machine) hasn't done anything like that since I've been on campus," Duthie said. "I think it's really horrible it happened."

Batey said Riley was hesitant to call the police, because some people accused her of staging a recent incident where a cross was burned on her lawn. Rob Riley said he convinced her to notify the police.