

Motorcyclist escapes death twice, but not justice

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Not too many people get second chances by driving a motorcycle stupidly and at high speed.

Alexandru Cristache can count himself among the lucky few.

The 28-year-old Hamilton man may have escaped death in both cases but he did not escape justice Tuesday, or the withering glare of Ontario Court Justice Marjoh Agro.

The judge sentenced Cristache to nine months in jail and placed him on probation for 18 months for leading police on a high-speed chase on his motorcycle that ended when he rammed into a car driven by Brandon Lindsay-Bouchard at the corner of Roxborough and Balmoral avenues on Dec. 24, 2010.

Lindsay-Bouchard's parents, Isabel and Brian Dawson, were in the car and dressed like Santa and Mrs. Claus en route to the family Christmas party. Isabel Dawson suffered a serious brain injury.

Cristache, who was prohibited from driving for five years, also suffered serious injuries and spent four months in hospital. A part of the sentence was for a probation breach. Cristache was supposed to have completed a motorcycle safety course prior to the latest accident but failed to do so.

Miraculously, the accident was the second serious one Cristache had caused and survived. In June 2009, he spent 10 weeks in hospital for a crash that saw him convicted of careless driving.

"If that didn't teach him not to drive that way, you would think nothing would, but it didn't set in after the first accident," defence counsel Beth Bromberg told court.

She said her client was remorseful, found a job in a motorcycle shop and attained the dean's honour list at Mohawk College for his quality engineering technician course.

Agro noted that Cristache blew through several stop signs in the latest collision and drove at such high speeds that police called off the pursuit for safety reasons.

"You engaged in this kind of driving 18 months before and you suffered injuries described to this court. Totally inexplicable," the judge noted.

Cristache had been hoping to say goodbye to his mother as he was led off to jail. His wish was denied.

"Bye, bye, scumbag," Brian Dawson said before being ordered out of the courtroom by the judge.

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