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City & Region



Meech Mills was treated at Women & Children's Hospital after a dog severed his finger at the knuckle. Doctors couldn't reattach it. Mark Mulville/Buffalo News

Losing half a finger from a dog bite

Lunge by pit bull at Cheektowaga Town Park leaves 9-year-old not only injured, but facing rabies shots as woman flees with pet

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Nine-year-old Meech Mills was holding on to the fence at the basketball courts in Cheektowaga Town Park at about 6:30 p.m. Wednesday when a tan pit bull terrier pulled its owner forward, lunged at him and bit off part of Meech's finger.

Doctors at Women & Children's Hospital in Buffalo were unable to reattach the middle finger on his right hand, which was severed at the knuckle, according to the boy's mother, Amy Prieur.

Making matters worse for the Cheektowaga boy, the woman with the dog fled the park with it after the attack, which means Meech has to undergo a series of rabies shots, Prieur said. "He's going to have to keep going back every two days," she said. "He's just pretty sad about his finger."

Cheektowaga police and Erie County Health Department officials are looking for the dog and its owner.

The owner also allegedly told Meech, "That's what you get," before fleeing, which Prieur called "very coldhearted."

"I'd say, 'How could you do that? How could you leave a little kid there bleeding with half his finger missing?'" said Prieur, who filed a police report Wednesday.

Assistant Police Chief James J. Speyer Jr. requested that any witnesses call 686-3500 and ask to speak with the dog warden.

The owner was described as a white woman in her mid-20s with brown hair that had tips dyed red. Prieur believes that the dog owner's son also was at the basketball court at the time of the attack.

"My son heard her calling her son," Prieur said. "Her son plays at the park; she was walking her dog. So

she obviously must live right there in the neighborhood.”

Police also want to talk with the woman who rushed Meech, a second-grader at Union East Elementary School, home from the park.

“We’d love to talk to her or any other witnesses who saw what happened,” Speyer said.

Dogs are allowed in the park only along a special dog path, which is not near the basketball courts, he said.

“It’s too bad,” Speyer said. “It’s very unfortunate for this kid.”

Prieur said her son is feeling better but is self-conscious about the injury. “He doesn’t want anyone to look at him,” she said. “He’s sad.”

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