

Isenberg pleads guilty

By Bob Watson and Jeff Haldiman

News Tribune

Former Cole County Sheriff's Deputy Michael J. Isenberg pleaded guilty Monday to one perjury count involving a series of Cole County undercover drug cases.

Cass County Circuit Judge Joseph Dandurand accepted the guilty plea and sentenced Isenberg to seven years in prison, then suspended the execution of the sen-

tence and placed Isenberg on five years probation.

The case was being handled by a special prosecutor after the Cole County prosecutor's office removed itself from the case.

Isenberg, now 31, already is serving a 120-day "shock" prison sentence for his Feb. 17 guilty plea to one count of second-degree statutory rape in a separate case.

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and faces a five-year sentence in that case if he doesn't successfully complete the "shock" sentence, or violates conditions of his probation.

The statutory rape case had been moved to Platte County on a change of venue from Cole County, while the perjury case was in Cass County.

Isenberg faced charges of perjuring himself during three different Cole County trials in September 2002 and April and May 2003.

Isenberg had worked undercover narcotics cases for the Cole County Sheriff's Department.

In a probable cause statement included with the charges when they were filed in October 2004, Special Prosecutor David Fry wrote that three confidential informants connected with the original trials gave "sworn statements ... that Isenberg was not present during the drug sale transactions, contrary to Isenberg's sworn, courtroom testimony."

Isenberg originally was charged in May 2003 by Cole County Prosecutor Bill Tackett.

But those charges were dismissed by Dandurand, who ruled Sept. 9, 2004, that Tackett's office had a conflict of interest in the case because its attorneys could be called as witnesses.

The special prosecutor then refiled the charges.