



# St. Petersburg Police Department News Release



**For Immediate Release**

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**Media Relations Office**

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## **Man Arrested Today for Aggravated Battery during Last Weekend's Tampa Bay Rays - Boston Red Sox Game**

The St. Petersburg Police Department investigated an Aggravated Battery on Saturday May 2, 2009 at about 11:00pm near the conclusion of the Tampa Bay Rays - Boston Red Sox baseball game at Tropicana Field.

The victim, John Thaddeus Ritter, 19, 1280 38th Avenue NE, St. Petersburg, Florida, a Tampa Bay Rays fan, apparently exchanged words with a man later identified as Joseph Michael Norton, a Boston Red Sox fan, as they both were leaving the stadium and walking down the outside ramp at Gate Six.

According to witnesses, Norton ran up behind Ritter and "sucker punched" him in the back of the head, causing to fall forward on the sloping, concrete ramp. Norton struck his head on the concrete pavement and suffered a concussion and serious head injuries. He has since been released from the hospital.

St. Petersburg Police Department's investigation positively identified Joseph Michael Norton, DOB: 12-23-78, 8102 Sheldon Rd., Tampa, Florida as the suspect in the case and obtained a warrant for his arrest this week.

St. Petersburg Police Department detectives requested the assistance of the Hillsborough County Sheriff's Office in locating Norton because he lives in their county.

HCSO deputies arrested Norton this morning at his residence and booked him into the HCSO jail. Please go to their website to obtain a photograph of Norton (none was available earlier today).

St. Petersburg Police Investigators attempted to interview Norton about this case, but he declined to make a statement..

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