The bloody battle of King St

STAR WAKE RIOT ROCKS CITY

"It was organised. They were out to make trouble and there was nothing we could have done to prevent it. It was a pre-arranged plan to riot against the police," the officer-in-charge of the Newcastle police division, Snr Insp C. Love said today.

Fourteen police and eight civilians injured, 28 men and three women in court and police vehicles worth $40,000 burned out.

Shocked Newcastle took stock today after the city's bloodiest-ever civil riot last night which followed the Star Hotel closure wake.

Bottles and bricks flew, blood flowed and vehicles burned when 2000 to 3000 drinkers clashed with police and pelted firemen.

SEE PAGES 2,3,4 AND 5
The crowd was high on alcohol and just looking for an excuse to fight when the police moved in to stop outbreaks of violence at the wake of the Star Hotel last night.

The riot which erupted in the streets outside the hotel was mind-boggling.

"They turned on me like a street cat," said a teenager so drunk he couldn't even explain why his hair hadn't been cut for months.

"I had nothing to do with it, I just walked down the whole place," he said.

I was there when things started to go wrong.

At 10pm I saw beer cans and bottles thrown into the street crowds.

Groups of men started to doze off from the alcohol, hopped and smashed windows inside the hotel.

People in the street were laughing.

Then, in the moonlight, a group of police cars stopped and a lot of the street started to scream.

They also thought the entertainment outside was too loud and decided to go home.

King St was suddenly full of people running from the hotel, carrying their belongings.

People were laughing.

This is a well-known incident in Newcastle.

"A young girl standing outside was hit by the crowd and screamed incessantly at the police," said a passerby.

"It was a typical例子 of what happened, and it all ended in a spectacularly violent way.

"Police and rioters surged into the deserted streets and across the whole area.

"Everyone was running, and flying glass was everywhere.

"One of the ringleaders in the front line of the rioters fell to the ground, his face covered with blood.

"The police shot him in the face, and as they drove away into the street the violence died down.

It was this action which sparked the violent street riots which Mr Graham today referred to in his talk on civil unrest in Newcastle.

The youthfulness of the crowd and the way they were treated by the police made them appear to be more rational.

"The police were being stopped and searched by the police, and the young people in Newcastle felt they were being treated without respect.

"This pub has a 94-year history, and fathers and grandfathers of today's regulars used to drink here.

"Mr Graham was obviously still disturbed today as he spoke about last night's incident — pausing at times as he became choked with emotion.

"We have had up to 1000 people here on some nights, and they are left with nowhere else to go.

"Young people have been told to me that it leaves nothing to come to the Port and listen to Newcastle's top bands.

"They have to pay admission prices of other night spots.

"The pub has its share of critics over the years, but it is a tight operation and we clean up the unacceptable elements.

"Over the years it has an international reputation as a favorite spot for sailors.

"We've made such a lot of friends in the six years we've been here — friends from all over the world.

By Prudence Anderson

* Police grapple with one of the crowd at the Star last night.

** Police began to beat the band playing," the licensee of the Star Hotel, Mr Don Graham, said today.

Mr Graham said he was sad to think the era of the Star Hotel had to end this way.

"The people who made the decision to close it had no idea what it meant to the young people of Newcastle," he said.

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Plea for action ‘vindicated’

Attack followed a plan — police

The officer-in-charge of the 50 policemen at last night’s riots at the Star Hotel which caused about $40,000 damage to police vehicles believes the attack took place against a pre-arranged plan.

"It was definitely organised," Insp C. Love, the officer-in-charge of the Newcastle police division, said today. "They were out to make trouble and there was nothing we could have done to prevent it."

"We learned later that there had been a pre-arranged plan to riot against the police."

The senior superintendent of the Newcastle police district, Mr H. Ferris agreed today the crowd had turned on police. "The crowd picked on the police and they did the only thing they could and protected themselves," he said.

"Their job was to restore peace and order and they tried to do that."

"None of us expected anything like this, it was absolutely frightening."

"I got back here and had any indication of what was going to happen we would have gathered more police but it shocked us all."

"A police officer taken from the stand was found unconscious and injured."

"The whole atmosphere was really tense and I was terrified."

"I went straight down to the police station and made a complaint, but they didn’t want to know."

"We had to stay here today as I don’t think the police had any right to treat a bystander like the way they did."

"They should not be allowed to roam streets with guns and anything else they could get from their hands."

"The policemen hadn’t even stopped and were doing their normal duties."

"There was no provocation whatsoever by police."

"Insp Love said he believed the organisers of the riot had damaged property in order to bring police to the scene."

"He said that apart from the two police vehicles which were burnt out, a highway patrol car was extensively damaged by stones, the windows of the Adamin Aboriginal camp were smashed and its body work damaged."

"The large van used to convey prisoners to the courthouse had a side window smashed and body work damaged."

"Two other police traffic cars were also damaged in the riot."

"Insp Love said 14 of the 50 police who were called went back to the hospital injured."

"Two of the policemen were unable to work today because of their injuries."

"I have never seen anything like this anywhere in Australia," he said.

"I have often been in front of angry crowds in the past but I have never experienced a confrontation as serious as last night."
STAR RIOT: THE AFTERMATH.

* These graphic pictures tell the story of the night the Star Hotel died.

They show the violence that erupted soon after 10pm when police attempted to close the hotel, which is to be demolished.

Police have described the street riot as the worst for 30 years.

Royal Newcastle Hospital's casualty department treated 12 police and eight rioters for injuries.

Three men and 29 women were arrested, and charged with several offences, including incitement to riot.

The pictures are by Newcastle Sun photographers Campbell Brodie and Mark Dawson.

Twenty were listed in court for bad behaviour.

About 15 tales from the afternoon.

The men were hundred.

Many of them had fighting.

They arrived.

They were at least.

Many kids.

Being a rough age in a bad week.

Last night.

Rosemary Mabey and her daughter Rosemary, 52, between.

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REPUTATION NOW A REALITY

28 to be charged with 100 offences

Angry parents tag vandals maniacs

The vandalism at the Star Hotel reflected a general attitude among some of Newcastle's young people, the principal of Francis Greenway High School, Mr. T. M. Macroe, said today.

"The violence we have seen at the hotel and in the damage, caused at our school in the past 12 months, is a problem which concerns the whole community," said Mr. Macroe.

More than 30 people demonstrated their concerns by attending the meeting at Jervis Greenway High School last night to discuss the problem of vandalism at the school.

It was revealed that the cost of damage caused at the school in the last 12 months exceeded $90,000.

"The president of the Abbotsleigh Teachers' Association and English teacher at the school, Mr. J. Morris, said there were expressions of anger at the meeting.

"There were many male and female students present, used by some to describe the vandalism," he said.

There was no blind eye being put on any disorders of the school.

MINERS STOP FOR 24HRS

About 30 southern NSW miners were closed today by a 24-hour stoppage by 100 miners.

The miners were protesting against a proposal to force open-cut mining in Gregory, in central Queensland, to work a seven-day week, introducing weekend work.

The Sydney gold futures market was subdued when trading began today and prices ranged up to $3.50 in the first active month, near December and April.

 Goth loses some of its glamour

The Sydney gold futures market was subdued when trading began today and prices ranged up to $3.50 in the first active month, near December and April.

One hundred and forty-eight near-December contracts and 19 April contracts were traded on the opening ring.

Dealers said the drop in international prices overnight and the higher contract deposit of $1300, which became effective this morning, had dampened activity.

Near-December opened at $510, down $3 from yesterday, and reached a low of $410.10 while the April opened $6 lower at $394 and reached a low of $392 for the morning of $396.

In New York prices rallied late in session and although the market closed $137 higher above the London close, it was down $45 on the previous New York close.

Yesterday the Sydney futures broke all previous records with price gains of up to $3.00.

FEWER UNDER-20s ARE MUMS

A report released in Canberra shows that among couples under 20 years marrying in 1970-71, between 70% and 80% of the births were premarital. The report credits the drop in births to a trend to inter-provincial and better contraceptive use by the young.

Backache

Take Bex as directed for quick relief from the pain of backache. Should you have any doubts about your doctor. Meanwhile, to relieve the pain itself take Bex Powders or Tablets.