

'Red-Haired Tarzan' Sentenced to 5 Years for Robbery and Arson

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A St. Petersburg court on Friday sentenced former mixed-martial-arts fighter Vyacheslav Datsik to five years in prison for robbery and arson.

Datsik, who fought under the nickname "Red-Haired Tarzan," has denied his guilt and intends to appeal the Nevsky District Court's verdict, RIA-Novosti reported, citing Datsik's lawyer.

State prosecutors had sought nine years' imprisonment for Datsik, who was first detained in 2007 on suspicion of robbing cell-phone stores and burning down a church. He was later sent to a psychiatric hospital, from where he escaped and evaded law enforcement officials.

In a bizarre twist, Datsik turned up at Norwegian immigration control in September 2010, seeking asylum and carrying a pistol. He was denied asylum and deported to Russia in March 2011, when he was arrested by Russian law enforcement officials.

In closing statements, the judge said Friday that he had no doubts about Datsik's guilt, pointing to eyewitness accounts that said Datsik had taunted police by asking employees at the cell-phone stores he robbed to pass on "best wishes from the Red-Haired Tarzan," RIA-Novosti said.

Doctors have conducted psychiatric tests on Datsik and declared him criminally sane.

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