



Written by [R. Cort Kirkwood](#) on September 16, 2024

Routh Criminal Complaint Says He Waited 12 Hours for Trump. Suspect Appears in Court

The federal criminal complaint against Ryan Wesley Routh, who attempted to assassinate former President Trump on Sunday, offered more details about Routh's failed attempt.

Notably, Routh landed at the golf course two hours after midnight Saturday and waited for his chance to murder Trump, the complaint alleges.

The complaint also offers more details about Routh's weapon and other equipment he would use to attack Trump.

Routh appeared in court for the first time today, and police released body-camera of the would-be assassin's arrest.



YouTube
Routh being apprehended by police

Exact Times

The complaint, filed by an FBI agent, says a Secret Service agent was walking the perimeter of the Trump International Golf Club at about 1:31 p.m., where Trump was playing a round with a donor. The agent spotted "what appeared to be a rifle poking out off the tree line," the [complaint says](#).

The agent fired his or her weapon, and as [The New American reported](#) earlier today, a "witness saw a male, later identified as ROUTH, fleeing the area of the tree line and entering a Nissan sport utility vehicle. The witness then observed the Nissan leave the area at a high rate of speed."

The complaint says agents "found a digital camera, two (2) bags, including a backpack, a loaded SKS-style, 7.62×39 caliber rifle with a scope, and a black plastic bag containing food."

The FBI agents wrote that the rifle's serial number was "obliterated," and concluded that the rifle "previously traveled interstate or foreign commerce."

The complaint includes photos of the rifle and other items.

Routh was headed northbound on Interstate 95 when the Martin County Sheriff's office stopped him. When asked, Routh told deputies that he knew why he was stopped. The license plate on the truck, [the complaint alleges](#), "is registered to a 2012 white Ford truck and has been reported stolen."

And again, the witness who saw Routh flee the scene identified him as the same man the witness saw drive away in the Nissan SUV.

On Facebook, Routh told followers to contact him through WhatsApp at a phone number served by T-Mobile, the complaint continues

Routh's phone records "indicated that ROUTH's mobile phone was located in the vicinity of the area along the tree line described above from approximately 1:59 AM until approximately 1:31 PM" the next day.



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The [complaint also details](#) Routh's criminal past, including a standoff with police in Greensboro, North Carolina, on December 20, 2022.

In that case, Routh was convicted of a Class F felony for possessing a "weapon of mass death."

"Law enforcement indices further reflected that, on or about March 3, 2010," the complaint alleges, "ROUTH Was convicted of multiple counts of possession of stolen goods," a Class H felony.

The complaint concluded that authorities have probable cause to charge Routh with [possession of a firearm by a convicted felon](#) and receipt and possession of a firearm with an obliterated serial number.

Both crimes are felonies. [Federal courts have ruled](#) dissimilarly on the question of whether the law that criminalizes merely possessing a firearm [without a serial number](#) is constitutional.

The complaint does charge Routh with the crime of trying to assassinate a former president.

Body Camera Footage

In his first court appearance today, Routh smiled and laughed as he spoke with his attorney, [Fox News reported](#).

"Routh, 58, appeared fully engaged and answered all the questions from the judge during the about 10-minute-long hearing Monday," the network reported.

More federal charges could be forthcoming, and Routh will be arraigned in two weeks.

Routh, 58, might well die in prison if convicted. He faces a maximum of 15 years in prison on the first charge and five years on the second, and \$500,000 in fines — \$250,000 for each offense.

Routh told the judge he had too little money to pay for an attorney. He earned about \$36,000 annually and has no savings or real property, [Fox reported](#).

He is still helping support his 25-year-old son.

Video of Routh's arrest shows sheriff's deputies as they arrested Routh.

"Driver," one shouts, "take two steps to your right. Take two steps to your right."

"Driver," the deputy continued, "walk straight back. Keep walking."

After that, the heavily-armed deputies — one with a police dog ready for action — cuffed the would-be assassin and led him to a vehicle. He appeared to be wearing a pink shirt.

Question Unanswered

One unanswered question is how Routh got so close to Trump just two months after a previous assassination attempt.

He was about 400 yards away from Trump on the golf course.

The West Palm Beach sheriff, Ric Bradshaw, told reporters that Trump didn't merit more security at the course because he isn't the president.

"At this level that he is at right now, he's not the sitting president," Bradshaw said. "If he was, we would have had this entire golf course surrounded. But because he's not, security is limited to the areas that the Secret Service deems possible."



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But Trump was nearly assassinated in Butler, Pennsylvania, on July 13, when the Secret Service left perimeter security [to the local police](#). Thomas Matthew Crooks was less than 200 yards from Trump and had a clear shot at the former president.

The fallout from that disastrous performance has ruined the reputation of the once-storied agency. And it [forced the resignation](#) of its director, Kim Cheatle, after her [pathetic performance before](#) a U.S. House committee. That followed [Cheatle's embarrassing interview](#) with ABC News.

Last week, Acting Director Ron Rowe appeared before the joint hearing of the U.S. Senate Committees on the Judiciary and Homeland Security.

"I think the American people are going to be shocked, astonished and appalled by what we will report to them about the failures by the Secret Service in this assassination attempt on the former president," Democrat Senator Richard Blumenthal of Connecticut [told Fox News](#) after the hearing. "But I think they also ought to be appalled and astonished by the failure of the Department of Homeland Security to be more forthcoming, to be as candid and frank, as it should be to them in terms of providing information."

Soon, agency officials might find themselves before House and Senate committee again. If so, they will likely have to explain how yet another would-be assassin got so close to the former president.

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