

A 28-year-old Mexican national, who lived in Wallace, pleaded not guilty to first-degree assault after he allegedly shot another man over a boxing bet.

Jose Florez-Sosa also pleaded not guilty to use of a deadly weapon to commit a felony in Lincoln County Court through an interpreter in Lincoln County District Court.

Judge John Murphy set Florez-Sosa's trial for March 15. Florez-Sosa could face a maximum 100-years imprisonment if convicted of both crimes.

Two other men, brothers Ezequiel Rodriguez-Serrano, 29, and Sergio Jesus Rodriguez-Serrano, 21, both of Wellfleet, were charged as accessories in the crime. Each of them was charged with terroristic threats and use of a firearm to commit a felony.

A Lincoln County Sheriff's Office spokesman said Florez-Sosa and Leopold Apodaca-Munoz, 23, also of Wallace, had a \$100 bet on the outcome of the Manny Pacquiao vs. Antonio Margarito fight aired on HBO Nov. 13, 2010. The men attended a party to watch the fight on TV.

Florez-Sosa won the bet.

Sometime after the match, and after everyone had gone elsewhere, Florez-Sosa decided that Apodaca-Munoz had short-changed him on the payoff, according to the spokesman. He called Apodaca-Munoz and said they needed to discuss the issue.

The men agreed to meet at the Wallace roping arena, the spokesman said.

The spokesman said Apodaca-Munoz came with a friend, Edgar Ochoa.

When the men arrived, Apodaca-Munoz got out of his vehicle carrying a .12-gauge shotgun, the spokesman said.

The spokesman said the Serrano brothers were armed with .22-caliber rifles. They allegedly pointed the rifles at Apodaca-Munoz.

An argument ensued and the three suspects managed to snag the gun away from Apodaca-Munoz. During the dispute, prosecutors said, Florez-Sosa pulled the trigger.

The men fled the scene and Ochoa began driving Apodaca-Munoz to the hospital. He called 911 but had difficulty describing which country roads he was driving on. He wrecked the car just south of Dairy Road.

Deputies arrived on the scene and gave Apodaca-Munoz first aid until the ambulances arrived.

Leopold Apodaca-Munoz, 23, was life-flighted from Great Plains Regional Medical Center and is in critical but stable condition in an Omaha hospital, according to a Lincoln County Sheriff's Office spokesman.

The spokesman said Apodaca-Munoz was shot once in the abdomen with the .12-gauge shotgun.

A spokesman said Apodaca-Munoz was still recovering from the gunshot but it appeared he was going to make it.

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Frank Graham, North Platte Bulletin

