

Los Angeles Times

FBI Fugitive Child Molester located by Private Investigator Richard Crouch

Michael Zeve coached at Wayne Gretzky's Roller Hockey Center.

From Newswire Services

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WESTMINSTER - A judge denied bail Monday for a man who fled the country on the eve of his trial but was arrested in Israel and returned to



Michael Leon Zeve

Orange County, a court clerk said. Michael Leon Zeve, 31, who is accused of sexual encounters with children under the age of 14 in Irvine from 1996 to 2000, made his initial court appearance after his return.

Orange County Superior Court Judge Thomas Goethals rescheduled his arraignment for Wednesday, the clerk said.

Zeve fled a day before the Nov. 15, 2001, scheduled start of his trial. He was apprehended this year by Tel Aviv authorities after being tracked down and located by Richard Crouch and his private investigation company Option-One Investigations.

Richard Crouch was hired by the insurance company that had bonded Zeve out of jail on a \$100,000.00 bond. Mr. Crouch had been tracking Zeve since November 2001 when he failed to appear in court.

"We followed numerous investigative leads including sending investigators to Israel; we knew he had a connection to Israel from our background

investigation. He had been using an alias," said Mr. Crouch.

Mr. Crouch gave his information to the FBI and Orange County task force which led to Zeve being arrested and deported back to the US.

Zeve is suspected of meeting two of the Irvine children while coaching a roller hockey team. Another child lived in his neighborhood. After befriending the youngsters, Zeve gave them alcohol and molested them, authorities allege.