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## Unruly crowds erupt into riot after Stanley Cup loss

STEPHANIE IP, 24 HOURS

Rioters looted stores, set cars on fire and tore through the streets of downtown Vancouver well into the wee hours as police reinforcements from outlying areas flooded the core.

As many as 70 people were sent to hospital, including three people with stab wounds and two suffering trauma, while a number of others were treated in the courtyard of a downtown hospital for the effects of tear gas.

There were reports one person was killed after falling off the Georgia Viaduct, however, it could not be confirmed. Coastal Health said around midnight there were no fatalities reported at any of the city hospitals.

The turn of tragic events, repeating the historic riots 17 years and one day earlier after a similar Canucks loss, were called shameful and embarrassing by civic leaders as well as fans and ordinary Vancouverites.

"Vancouver is a world-class city and it is embarrassing and shameful to see the type of violence and disorder we've seen tonight," Vancouver Mayor Gregor Robertson said as the evening wore on.

While there was a mass exodus of people before the end of the second period, when the Canucks were already down by three, tens of thousands of people were still downtown when the crowd turned ugly under the glow of a full moon.

When the third-period buzzer went, fans started throwing bottles and cans at the massive TV screens set up at the Georgia and Hamilton intersection and the violence quickly escalated.

One Canucks fan reported that a man in a Bruins shirt turned to him and punched him in the face, leaving him bleeding.

The drama initially unfolded in front of the Canada Post building, where a vehicle was overturned and its bumper and doors ripped off before people jumped on the top of it and set it on fire. A second car was also set ablaze.

Within a few minutes, at least a hundred police in riot gear were pushing back the crowds of mostly youths, some of whom had their faces covered with scarves and were trying to incite the crowd and police.

During the ensuing unrest, the windows of the Bank of Montreal at Homer and Georgia were smashed.

While only a few appeared to be participating in the destruction, many more followed the crowds with cameras, snapping pictures, videotaping and tweeting what was happening.

The crowd ignored orders by police over loudspeakers to disperse.

As the tension on the street mounted, Robertson took to Twitter and urged people to "keep things respectful and safe."

Many were disappointed with the turn of events.

"All of us in Vancouver and Lower Mainland are way better than this," said Surrey Mayor Dianne Watts, whose city sent RCMP reinforcements to assist Vancouver police.

Brent Gardner, 27, said: "I'm not going to embarrass this city and break anything. I will be a good sport about it and hope people follow my lead."

Unfortunately, that's not what happened.

Police used flash-bang grenades to push the crowd back and at least one person was arrested.

It was a tragic turn of events many hoped would not happen.

Others prepared for the worst-case scenario, boarding up windows in the event of a loss, fearing a repeat of the riot in 1994 that caused \$1.1 million in damage and injured scores.

"We're probably the only ones (on the block) who boarded up in '94 and we're the only store that wasn't destroyed (by the riots)," said Simon Coutts, owner of Simon's Bike Shop on Robson.

Earlier in the day Vancouver police said they were ready for a long night.

"I think everyone was really hoping for something special and magical this year," Const. Lindsey Houghton said.