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Division 10 Bus Operator saves the day in a tight clinch with rioting Laker fans.

Film at 11: Story of Metro Bus Operator whose clear-thinking, cool-handed actions led his passengers to safety when Laker fans targeted his bus, then finished his owl shift run, topped the CBS2 evening news reports on Tuesday.

Click here or on image to [See the CBS2 exclusive report](#)



(June 18, 2009) Talk about being in the right place at the wrong time, Metro Bus Operator Jose Recinos was operating Line 33 down Figueroa near the Staples Center when mobs of Laker fans, who had been watching the NBA championship game on the big screen, lost control in a frenzy of celebration after the Laker's surprise victory.

Bursting into the street, a mob attacked the bus, now trapped in traffic under the 10 freeway bridge, and began pelting the bus with objects and breaking all of the windows.

Onboard the bus, Recinos was looking out for the safety of his passengers while trying to maneuver the bus out of the area. After breaking the front windows with a giant trash can, the mob stormed to the rear of the bus, giving Recinos and his five passengers a chance to exit safely.

Fortunately, it was all caught on tape. Local CBS2 news crews were on the scene during the regular Sunday night newscast at 9 p.m. and broadcast the incident live. After extensive reporting on the four-hour disturbance, the news team followed up during the week with reports on the chaos and damages caused by the violent revelers.

The interview that led the top of the Channel 2 evening news report on Tuesday was the one with Metro Bus Operator Jose Recinos.



Above, Jose Recinos bus 6549, below, a field supervisors unit ransacked and burned near the Metro Blue Line Pico Station. Metro sustained an estimated \$58,000 in damages to eight buses with broken windows and graffiti, the burnt-out Vehicle Operations unit, and the Metro Blue Line car at the Pico Station pelted by objects large enough to break the train windows.



Meanwhile, the dedication and professionalism of Operator Recinos did not go unnoticed at the workplace.

Jorge Galvan, assistant operations control manager on duty at Bus Operations Control, Sunday night, said in a report that Recinos "kept the passengers and himself safe until police arrived, then drove the bus out of the danger zone and into Division 10 yard."

But since Recinos is the regular owl assignment operator on Line 33, Galvan said Recinos did not want to disappoint his regular customers who depend on him to pick them up, so he pulled out another bus and continued in service for the remainder of his all-night owl assignment.

"He has received commendations from Bus Operations Control, his manager (Div. 10 Transportation Manager Alva Carrasco) and Chief Operating Officer Carolyn Flowers," said Jody Feerst Litvak, Operations Community Relations Manager at Metro Westside/Central Sector.

"This is about someone from Metro who went above and beyond in a difficult situation. It is not about the 'incident'," she said.

--from Gayle Anderson