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Minn. R. Civ. App. P. 136.01, subd. 1(c).*

**STATE OF MINNESOTA
IN COURT OF APPEALS
A25-1480**

State of Minnesota,
Respondent,

vs.

Latalia Anjolie Margalli,
Appellant.

**Filed July 20, 2026
Affirmed
Ross, Judge**

Hennepin County District Court
File No. 27-CR-24-21257

Keith Ellison, Attorney General, St. Paul, Minnesota; and

Mary F. Moriarty, Hennepin County Attorney, Mark V. Griffin, Assistant County Attorney, Minneapolis, Minnesota (for respondent)

Cathryn Middlebrook, Chief Appellate Public Defender, Sharon E. Jacks, Assistant Public Defender, St. Paul, Minnesota (for appellant)

Considered and decided by Ross, Presiding Judge; Cochran, Judge; and Bentley, Judge.

NONPRECEDENTIAL OPINION

ROSS, Judge

Latalia Margalli intentionally torpedoed her car into a crowd of 15 people, targeting and killing the 16-year-old girl she had been fighting with and injuring five others—one seriously. Then she sped away. The state charged Margalli with one count of intentional

second-degree murder and five counts of second-degree assault with a dangerous weapon. After she pleaded guilty to unintentional second-degree murder and all five assault charges, the district court sentenced her to serve six consecutive prison terms: five 21-month terms for the assaults and a 180-month term for the murder. She argues on appeal that the aggregate sentence of 285 months unfairly exaggerates the seriousness of her criminal conduct. Because the sentence resulted from the district court's discretionary weighing of the severity of Margalli's criminal conduct and because imposing consecutive terms does not reflect an abuse of its sentencing discretion, we affirm.

FACTS

Latalia Margalli ingested Ecstasy and drank alcohol one evening in September 2024 before going to downtown Minneapolis with her sister and two friends for an evening of revelry. Margalli allegedly drove the group to visit various bars along Hennepin Avenue. She eventually encountered the father of her daughter, leading to an argument about parenting. Others joined in the spat and soon 16-year-old De'Miaya Broome, who was aligned with the group that rivaled Margalli's group, began fighting with Margalli's sister. Margalli attempted to separate Broome from her sister, threatened to shoot the bystanding group, and abruptly entered her SUV. She put it in reverse and accelerated backward with her passenger door open, knocking one of her friends to the ground. Then she put the SUV in drive, directed it toward Broome and those gathered around her, and rapidly accelerated toward them. Margalli drove her SUV into the crowd, striking Broome and five others. She then raced away in the SUV down Fifth Street in the wrong direction against its one-way designation.

The collision killed Broome. It left one of the victims with a broken ankle and serious head injury. Four others suffered less-severe injuries.

The state charged Margalli with one count of second-degree intentional murder and five counts of second-degree assault with a dangerous weapon. The state and Margalli reached an agreement in which Margalli would plead guilty to an amended charge of second-degree unintentional murder under Minnesota Statutes section 609.19, subdivision 2(1) (2024), and the five assault charges under section 609.222, subdivision 1 (2024). The parties reached no agreement about sentencing.

Margalli admitted guilt during her plea hearing, acknowledging that she intentionally drove her vehicle into the crowd. She admitted that she caused Broome's death and the other victims' injuries. The district court requested a presentence investigation report, which calculated a presumptive sentencing range under the guidelines of 233 to 285 months' imprisonment based on consecutive sentencing. The report noted that Margalli did not appreciate the severity of her actions. The report observed that her current convictions and prior adjudications for assaultive behavior manifested her lack of "any ability to regulate and control her anger." The state filed a sentencing brief, arguing for a top-of-the-box, 285-month sentence. Margalli filed an opposing brief, arguing against consecutive sentencing as excessive.

The district court conducted a sentencing hearing during which it heard victim-impact statements from Broome's family and two other victims and discussed the parties' sentencing positions. It rejected Margalli's challenge to consecutive sentencing, reasoning that concurrent sentencing would "seriously understate the criminality of [her] offense."

The district court observed that her conduct posed “incredible danger to the public,” adding, “[I]t’s that much worse knowing that she barreled her car into a group of 15 or more people, any or all of whom could have been killed.” The district court imposed a sentence consisting of five consecutive 21-month prison terms for the assault convictions and a top-of-the-box, 180-month sentence for the unintentional-murder conviction, resulting in an aggregated sentence of 285 months.

Margalli appeals.

DECISION

Margalli challenges only the consecutive nature of her sentencing, which she says unfairly punishes her for a single act. The district court may issue multiple sentences for multiple crimes arising from a single act if the crimes involve multiple victims. *State v. Skipin the day*, 717 N.W.2d 423, 426 (Minn. 2006). We review the fairness of the district court’s decision to impose a permissive consecutive sentence for an abuse of discretion. *State v. McInnis*, 962 N.W.2d 874, 892 (Minn. 2021). And we will leave the consecutive sentence intact unless it “unfairly exaggerates the criminality of the defendant’s conduct.” *Id.* (quotation omitted). We have carefully reviewed the record and considered the competing arguments, and we conclude that the district court sentenced consecutively within its broad discretion.

Margalli is correct to point us to comparative caselaw to review the district court’s consecutive-term sentencing decision. *See id.* (“In evaluating a sentence, we look to past sentences received by other offenders in determining whether the district court abused its discretion.” (quotation omitted)). But she mistakenly begins her comparative-case

argument by minimizing the criminal conduct leading to her convictions, describing it as “one reckless act” that “unintentionally caused injury to six people.” On this premise, she argues that consecutive rather than concurrent sentencing results in punishment that unfairly exaggerates the criminality of her conduct. She then lists a host of cases for the proposition that defendants who caused multiple deaths or injuries “while driving recklessly” received shorter aggregate sentences than she received. Margalli’s attempt to characterize her criminal state of mind as “reckless” and compare her sentence to those who caused deaths or injuries “while driving recklessly” is unavailing on its face. The circumstances imply Margalli’s malicious intent, not mere reckless rashness. She did not plead guilty merely to reckless conduct. She admitted that she “*intentionally* drove [her] car at the crowd of people,” that she knew that “a car is a dangerous weapon and that when it is driven at people, it is capable of producing death or great bodily harm.” Cases involving deaths and injuries from merely reckless or grossly negligent driving are materially distinct from and therefore irrelevant to this case. By its nature, reckless driving that causes death is less severe than Margalli’s intentional conduct. Those cases therefore merit no particularized discussion, and her argument fails.

We are also not persuaded to reverse by Margalli’s reliance on various case examples leading to her assertion that, “in almost every case affirming multiple consecutive sentences for defendants’ conduct during a single incident, they had engaged in multiple criminal acts to harm multiple victims.” We do not think these cases involve conduct with fundamentally dissimilar criminal severity to Margalli’s conduct in this case. She cites four cases in which the supreme court affirmed multiple prison terms that she maintains were

justified because the defendant in each case fired multiple gunshots toward multiple victims. See *McInnis*, 962 N.W.2d at 880, 892–94 (involving seven shots toward two victims); *State v. Hough*, 585 N.W.2d 393, 394, 397–98 (Minn. 1998) (involving seven shots toward six victims); *State v. Marquardt*, 294 N.W.2d 849, 850 (Minn. 1980) (involving two shots toward seven victims); *State v. Briggs*, 256 N.W.2d 305, 306 (Minn. 1977) (involving 20 shots toward three victims). Margalli does not explain her implicit premise that the act of intentionally crashing a car into a crowd of people while knowing that the act could kill or seriously injure any number of them is less criminally culpable than firing multiple bullets toward multiple people. And no convincing explanation is apparent to us. It is true that the cited cases involve multiple acts of pulling a trigger and this case involves a single act of accelerating a vehicle. But as the district court told Margalli during sentencing, when she intentionally plowed “into a group of 15 or more people,” she could have killed “any or all of [them].” Margalli posits that affirming multiple terms of imprisonment “makes sense” in these cases when a shooter jeopardized multiple lives. We conclude that, for the same reasons discussed in those cases, consecutive sentencing makes sense in this case too.

Also unconvincing is Margalli’s alternative argument based on *State v. Norris* that, even if some consecutive sentencing may be fair, five consecutive assault sentences are too many. 428 N.W.2d 61, 70 (Minn. 1988). *Norris* bears some resemblance to this case, but its resulting sentence does not help Margalli. The *Norris* appellant had been convicted of first-degree murder and five counts of second-degree assault after he and accomplices committed an armed robbery during which Norris shot and killed a Minneapolis bar

occupant and endangered at least five others. *Id.* at 63–65. It is true that the *Norris* court reduced the number of terms that he must serve consecutively. *Id.* at 71. Specifically, the *Norris* court held that “five terms of 60 months each for a total of 300 months, added to a sentence of life imprisonment for murder in the first degree, on the facts and circumstances [involved], unfairly exaggerates the criminality of [Norris’s] conduct.” *Id.* The supreme court reduced Norris’s consecutive five, 60-month sentences for assault down to three, resulting in an aggregate assault sentence of 180 months. *Id.* at 72. In other words, while the supreme court deemed 180 months’ imprisonment for Norris’s having assaulted five people to be fair, Margalli deems her 105 months’ imprisonment for having assaulted five people to be unfair. We recognize that Norris’s extensive criminal history extended each of his prison terms for assault longer than each of Margalli’s. *Id.* at 70. But comparing the aggregate sentences nevertheless convinces us that the *Norris* holding does not advance Margalli’s assertion that her consecutive sentencing resulted in an unfair punishment.

We have not overlooked the fact that the *Norris* court indeed reduced the number of consecutive prison terms to three and that Margalli is left with five. But its decision in *State v. Rieck* defeats Margalli’s contention that five consecutive imprisonment terms are too many for a single assaultive act endangering five victims. 286 N.W.2d 724, 727 (Minn. 1979). The *Rieck* court affirmed all five consecutive sentences for aggravated assault by a defendant convicted for having fire-bombed a house when he knew or should have known five occupants were inside. *Id.* Similarly in *State v. Whittaker*, the supreme court affirmed all six consecutive 36-month prison terms for second-degree assault convictions, which were added to the defendant’s life sentence for first-degree murder and 180-month sentence

for first-degree attempted murder. 568 N.W.2d 440, 453 (Minn. 1997). These cases belie Margalli's supposition that the consecutive nature of her five assault sentences is unfair simply based on the number of them. We hold that the district court did not impose a sentence that unfairly exaggerates the criminality of Margalli's conduct and that it acted within its broad sentencing discretion.

Affirmed.