

# Wetzlarer Neue Zeitung

## Sammy Baker case: Parents take police officers to court

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**New chapter in the Sammy Baker case causes a stir: After reaching an agreement in the civil lawsuit, the parents of the Wetzlar resident who was killed by Dutch police want to force the prosecution of the police officers.**



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Wetzlar. New chapter in [the Sammy Baker case](#): In August, the parents of the Wetzlar resident who was shot dead in Amsterdam five years ago reached a settlement in the civil lawsuit, and now they have initiated proceedings under Article 12 of Dutch law. They hope that this will enable them to hold the officers who were involved in the operation- criminally accountable after all. The move caused a huge media stir in the Netherlands.

## Sammy's mother: "A stand must be taken"

Just a few weeks ago, Sammy's parents reached an agreement with the Dutch police, bringing the civil proceedings to an end. According to the agreement, Sammy's parents, Justine Seewald-Krieger and Kai Baker, will be reimbursed for part of the costs incurred by the legal dispute.

However, according to Justine Seewald-Krieger, a condition of the agreement was that criminal proceedings could continue against the police officers involved in the operation. "Otherwise, we would have refused the settlement. For us, some kind of consequence for those responsible is more important than anything else. A stand must finally be taken."

The so-called criminal proceedings are no longer directed at the police as an institution, but at the two shooters, the K-9 officer, and the head of operations. They are based on the investigation by the London-based research group Forensic Architecture, an expert opinion by German professor Thomas Feltes, and two expert opinions by a sociologist and a psychologist from the Netherlands. "These four expert opinions will be taken into account," said Sammy's mother.



*On August 13, 2020, police officers and ambulances are at the scene in Western Amsterdam, where 23-year-old Sammy Baker from Wetzlar was shot dead shortly before. © ginopress B.V./ANP/dpa*

She is astonished by the reaction in the Netherlands. Her lawyer's phone has been ringing off the hook since the news broke, and Dutch media outlets such



as De Volkskrant and television stations have reported on the case. "We are surprised by the media uproar and the surprise on the part of the police lawyers themselves, as we explicitly negotiated the possibility of criminal proceedings," says the Wetzlar resident. In the run-up to the trial, the opposing side had always given the criminal proceedings little chance of success.



*Led by parents Justine Seewald-Krieger and Kai Baker, a funeral march for Sammy Baker took place in Wetzlar on August 22, 2020. © Steffen Gross*

Since the death of Wetzlar fitness influencer and student Sammy Baker, who wanted to celebrate his 23rd birthday in Amsterdam in 2020 and was shot by police on August 13, his parents and the Amsterdam police have been at odds: According to the parents, their son would still be alive if the police had treated him differently due to his mental state – the Wetzlar native had fallen into a psychotic state due to cannabis use.

What happened? After a police chase, the situation escalated in a courtyard on Honselerdijkstraat: Sammy Baker held a knife to his throat, police officers tightened their weapons, and a K-9 officer ran towards him from behind with a dog, bringing him down. Shots were fired. Three of the four shots hit Sammy in the chest and stomach, destroying his lung, liver, and spleen. He died instantly.



*Justine Seewald-Krieger and Sammy's grandfather, Al Baker, at a rally at Dam Square in Amsterdam on August 12, 2023. The rally was held in collaboration with CAD ("Controle Alt Delete"), which has been investigating and statistically recording deaths caused by police violence since 2016. © Justine Seewald-Krieger*

In May 2021, the Amsterdam Public Prosecutor's Office decides not to press charges against the two police officers who fired the fatal shots. They acted in self-defense, they say. Sammy's parents disagree, commission expert reports, and have the research group Forensic Architecture reconstruct the events. But the public prosecutor's office stands by its decision.



Baker's parents accuse the police of still not feeling responsible for their son's death: "We hope that those who caused our son's senseless death will now face legal consequences. In the past five years, this has not happened, not even a suspension. We will not stop until justice is done," announces Justine Seewald-Krieger. The case will now be heard in a different location, in Arnhem, the Netherlands. "A different court, a different public prosecutor's office – that also gives us courage and hope."



*Sammy Baker, from Wetzlar, was shot dead in Amsterdam, the Netherlands, on August 13, 2020.*  
© Armin Krieger

Meanwhile, Sammy's parents are filing a complaint against the Amsterdam public prosecutor's office. Its website continues to falsely claim that Sammy stabbed one of the police officers in his protective vest with a knife. According to Sammy's parents, this claim has been refuted several times.

### **Exhibition**

The Sammy Baker case will be part of an exhibition by the London-based research group Forensic Architecture at the Nieuwe Instituut architecture museum in Rotterdam, Netherlands, in spring 2026. In May of this year, the death of the Wetzlar resident, along with other cases of police violence in Europe, was the focus of a research night at the institute.