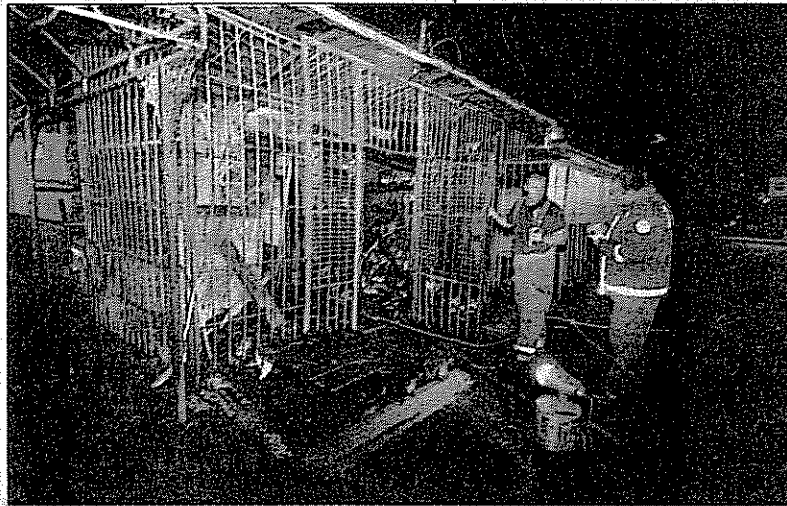


LITTLE HAVANA

Glory days long gone, Bowl Bar gutted by fire



TIM CHAPMAN/MIAMI HERALD STAFF

ON THE SCENE: Miami firefighters investigate a fire that damaged the Bowl Bar, 1700 NW Seventh St., just after 5 a.m. Thursday.

BY KATHLEEN McGRORY
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Orlando Padrón was the last to leave the Bowl Bar after business Thursday morning. He locked the doors to the squatty aqua-and-orange building around 3 a.m. and drove home.

Two hours later, he got a call: a fire had gutted his Little Havana sports bar.

"It's terrible," said Padrón while sifting through the rubble

on Miami's Northwest Seventh Street, the Orange Bowl looming behind him. "Just terrible."

Investigators believe the blaze is a result of arsonists, in part, because a surveillance tape taken Thursday morning from a nearby business shows two men getting out of a car and deliberately setting the building on fire.

Also, investigators say, someone tried to torch the building six

•TURN TO BOWL BAR, 2B

A DECLINE TIMELINE

1960s & 1970s: Heyday for the Bowl Bar, when Miami Dolphins players were regulars and patrons often spilled out the doors on game days.

1987: Dolphins relocate to Joe Robbie Stadium.

1990s: Neighborhood declines, bar often is shut down after it becomes a haven for drug use and prostitution.

1995: Owner Oscar Cuni sentenced to life in prison for running drug business out of the bar.

2006: Bowl Bar catches fire twice in six months.

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