

Richie Sambora BLAMES DUI BUST ON HEATHER



Troubled exes
in all-out war
over their
daughter



Daughter Ava was in the car with Richie

RICHIE SAMBORA'S DUI arrest has launched an all-out war between the troubled rock star and his equally troubled ex-wife Heather Locklear – and their daughter is caught in the middle, sources say.

The 48-year-old Bon Jovi guitarist is blaming Heather's nagging for driving him to drink – leading to his March 25 arrest with the couple's 10-year-old daughter Ava in the car.

But Heather, 46, has lashed back – blasting him for endangering Ava, according to sources.

Richie, Ava, her friend and his girlfriend Jennifer Mallini – a hot blonde costume stylist who's 16 years his junior – were vacationing at his Laguna Beach getaway during Easter week when the DUI incident occurred.

"Heather just wouldn't leave Richie alone. She called several times a day and badgered him about everything from what Ava should wear to his relationship with Jennifer."

Even worse, Heather's phone calls turned into nasty nag-fests with the "Melrose Place" star reciting a litany of Richie's sins, said the insider.

"She reminded Richie of his mistakes as a husband – the cheating with his assistant, his affair with her former best friend Denise Richards, partying with strippers," said the insider.

"And he claims her relentless nagging drove him to drink."

Sambora – who did two stints in rehab last year for his booze addiction – tried to clear his mind with a late afternoon workout at the Montage Hotel in Laguna, according to the insider.

"Richie had dinner with the girls at home and later drove



BUSTED: Richie was arrested for DUI on March 25

them to a local movie house to see 'Horton Hears A Who!' " said the insider. "But at some point he obviously consumed enough vodka to impair his judgment."

After the movie as he drove everyone home along Pacific Coast Highway, his black Hummer rolled through a stop sign and weaved into another lane.

He was charged with DUI, but because there were minors in the car he could also face child-endangerment charges.

"The next day, Heather got on the horn and started reading Richie the riot act," disclosed the insider. "When he told her the DUI arrest could just have easily happened to her, she backed down because of her own problems brought on by booze, prescription drugs and depression."

"They both say Ava remains their No. 1 priority. They just have a lot of work to do as a family."

by **ROBIN MIZRAHI** and
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