

JUSTICE: Matthew Bobbett killed on Hwy. 48 in 2002

# Hit-and-run sentencing takes twist in court

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The lawyer for a Toronto man convicted in the fatal hit-and-run of a Whitchurch-Stouffville youth is off the case.

Charn Gill, lawyer for Omar Sharef Hassan, asked Justice Edwin Minden to remove him from the case before his client, convicted in the Aug. 25, 2002 death of Matthew Bobbett, 16, is sentenced.

Mr. Hassan was convicted of failing to remain at the scene of the fatal collision.

While the exact reasons for the request were not publicly discussed during a hearing at the Newmarket courthouse Nov. 23, Justice Minden told the court the content of a pre-sentence report called into question if Mr. Hassan should be represented by a different lawyer.

Justice Minden has given Mr. Hassan to Dec. 8 to find a new lawyer.

Developments in the case suggested independent legal advice was needed, Mr. Gill said outside the courtroom, noting he could not elaborate.

Matthew was killed Aug. 25, 2002, when he was hit by a car as he walked with friends along Hwy. 48 near St. John's Sideroad.

He was struck by a Ford Mustang and

died a short time later.

Despite evidence at the scene, which included two crucial DNA samples found on broken glass from the car's windshield, police were unable to identify the driver, Ontario Provincial Police said.

*Charn Gill, lawyer for Omar Sharef Hassan, asked Justice Edwin Minden to remove him from the case ...*

Undercover work and other investigative techniques eventually revealed a new twist to police.

While Mr. Hassan was driving the car every day, he wasn't listed on the ownership because he couldn't afford to insure the Mustang, OPP Insp. Scott Naylor has said.

Mr. Hassan and a friend agreed he would drive the car, but the friend would pay the insurance, with the promise of reimbursement by Mr. Hassan, Insp. Naylor said.

The car was reported stolen after the crash, he added.

# IDA

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