

Wirag guilty of two charges in 2013 stabbing

BY JEREMY GRIMALDI
jgrimaldi@yrmg.com

A tense attempted murder trial has wrapped up with guilty verdicts delivered on some of the charges after mere hours of deliberations.

Tyler Wirag, from Mussleman's Lake, was found guilty last Thursday of aggravated assault and assault with a weapon in a brutal attack that left a community shocked and then-20-year-old Whitchurch-Stouffville hockey player Kyle Sauro bloodied and in hospital.

Wirag was acquitted of one assault charge and the attempted murder charge was stayed. Wirag will be further sentenced for breach of recognizance.

Some of the most terrifying testimony during the trial included Sauro explaining how he remembers looking down after being stabbed with a machete only to see one of his organs sticking out of a long wound stretching from his sternum to his belly-button.

The trial began with Sauro explaining he had been at a huge high school party in Gormley where he was told Wirag, 22, had spat on a female friend of his.

After going to the front of the Gormley estate home to fight Wirag, Sauro said he retreated when someone told him Wirag had a knife.

Soon after though, his anger was reignited after seeing his younger brother, Kameron, with a huge gash under his eye, the result of a glassing incident. Sauro was told Wirag was responsible for the injury.

After confronting Wirag as he fled the party, Sauro said he punched him once before he fell to the ground.

On his way to drive his brother to the hospital or the care of their mother, Sauro and his friends said they saw the pickup truck Wirag was in at a stop light and began to follow it to a house in Stouffville.

However, upon arrival, Sauro said he ran the length of a football field once he saw Wirag emerge from the house, near the intersection of Burkholder Street and Rose Avenue, with two machetes.

Sauro said two of Wirag's friends were also carrying weapons, including two pellet guns and an extend-o-bat, which is similar to a police baton.

Wirag stabbed Sauro, resulting in two significant wounds to his stomach. He was taken to hospital in critical condition.

Sauro recounted a frightening detail during the trial, explaining how he remembers looking up to see Wirag slowly approach-



TYLER WIRAG

ing him with the weapons drawn, before Sauro's friends, who had originally fled, returned and hit Wirag with their car.

The machetes were never discovered, although a sheath was found during the ensuing police investigation.

Wirag's version of events, one which the jury quickly rejected, involved him acting in self-defence after fearing for his life as Sauro and his friends bore down on him. However there were key holes in his testimony.

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One involved him allegedly losing his phone at the party, before Crown lawyer Paul Attia showed him a photograph of what appeared to be his phone sitting on his bed beside a charger.

Wirag also had trouble explaining why there was broken glass on the street, when he repeatedly said he broke the car's windows as it was parked on his home's front lawn.

Some of the other assertions made during the trial involved Sauro yelling out racial epithets and holding a gun in the final confrontation. Sauro strenuously denied both of these accounts.

The trial is scheduled to return for sentencing on April 20.

Attempts to reach the Sauro family for comment were unsuccessful.



STAFF PHOTO/MIKE BARRETT

COACH'S CORNER

Mike Smirle gives pointers to Jalen Banks during Whitchurch-Stouffville Minor Hockey Association action at the Stouffville Arena. Saturday is house league day in Stouffville, when coffee-clutching parents bring their young ones to the rinks for non-competitive fun. See more photographs on yorkregion.com under 'Photo Galleries'.

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