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## Local & National

# Oversight sees journalists given judgement before McCartneys

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Crime Correspondent Deborah McAleese reports on the McCartney verdict

Saturday, June 28, 2008

Surrounded by a media scrum, a smartly-dressed Terence Malachy Davison was rushed out of Lagside Courthouse in the rain, past dozens of armed police officers and ushered into a waiting car.

As he was driven off — a free man — Mr Davison retained the same impassive composure he had demonstrated throughout his four week non-jury trial.

Even when Judge Mr Justice Gillen announced he was acquitting him of the murder of Robert McCartney, his remained expressionless.

Mr Davison was led into courtroom 12 shortly after 10.30am yesterday morning.

Ten minutes before he entered the room an "administrative oversight" saw the 40-plus journalists who were cramped into the courtroom receive advance copies of the 60 page judgement, even before the Judge had left his chambers to deliver his verdict.

A flurry of activity as reporters flicked through the document alerted Mr McCartney's family, who were sitting in the public gallery, that the media was aware of the outcome.

The family and their supporters unexpectedly left the court and prosecution barrister Gordon Kerr QC, annoyed by the "oversight", told Mr Gillen that the family had been alerted to the judgement by the press and refused to come back.

It took an hour for the Judge to read through the facts surrounding Mr McCartney's murder and sum up the evidence.

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