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Murder accused 'gouged' McCartney's face -- witness

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By Paul Higgins
Tuesday June 03 2008

[Paul Higgins](#)
ie

THE best friend of murdered [Robert McCartney](#) yesterday told a court he will "never forget" the expression on his alleged's killer's face "til the day I die".

Giving evidence at the [Belfast Crown Court](#) trial, [Brendan Devine](#) said he himself had been attacked and had his throat cut.

But he said that at one point he saw 61-year-old [Terence Davison](#)

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"gouging" at Mr McCartney's face "in a really evil way".

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He told prosecuting lawyer [Ciaran Murphy](#): "I will not forget the expression on his [Davison's] face til the day I die."

Mr Davison denies killing the 30-year-old father-of-two in January 2005 while his co-accused, 39-year-old [James McCormick](#) and [Joseph Fitzpatrick](#), both deny causing an affray.

Mr Devine, who had known Mr McCartney for 15 to 20 years, said they had been drinking and watching football in Magennis's Bar when an argument broke out over a rude gesture which Mr McCartney had made with Mr Davison's wife mistakenly thinking it had been directed at her.

He claimed he had tried to calm the situation down, but the next thing he knew he was hit over the head with a bottle and his throat was cut three times. He showed the court the scarring on his neck.

Expression

Mr Devine said that, covered in blood, he went outside with his best friend and two other men but they were followed by a gang of up to six men and chased into nearby Market Street.

"All I can remember," said Mr Devine, "was turning around and seeing someone grinning in an evil way".

He told the court that he later identified his attacker from a police line-up as Mr McCormick.

As he fled the scene, Mr Devine told the court he looked back and saw Mr McCartney standing with his hands up shouting "nobody deserves this". He added that as he walked back towards him, he saw Mr Davison "gouging at his face".

He told the court he tried to escape up Market Street, trying to "walk fast" while holding his hands to his throat and believing that he saw a blade.

"I thought that they were coming for me," claimed Mr Devine, adding: "Robert McCartney had not an enemy in the world."

He told the court he was "wracked with pain" and had to let go of Mr McCartney, telling him "Bert I'm in trouble here, I've been stabbed".

Mr Devine said they managed to reach a traffic island.

He claimed that Mr McCartney's final words to him were: "Our Gerard needs me and I'm not going to make it" and that afterwards, he heard "gurgling noises".

Mr Devine conceded that although he has claimed he saw Davison gouging at his friend that there was no weapon in his hands when he did it.

The trial continues.

- *Paul Higgins*

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