



Office of the District Attorney Stanislaus County

Birgit Fladager
District Attorney

Assistant District Attorney
Dave Harris

Chief Deputies
Doug Raynaud
Annette Rees
Marlisa Ferreira

Bureau of Investigation
Lt. David Hutchinson
Lt. Froilan Mariscal

PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

Date: October 17, 2017
Re: Robbie Blackwell Conviction &
Nicholas Spangler Prison Sentence

For More Information Contact:

John Goold, Public Information Liaison
Phone: (209) 525-6909

Modesto, California - Stanislaus County District Attorney Birgit Fladager announced today that Robbie Blackwell, age 25, of Modesto, has been convicted of two counts of first degree murder. Blackwell's step-brother Nicholas Spangler has also been convicted of voluntary manslaughter in the same case. Deputy District Attorney Wendell Emerson prosecuted the case for the People.

On February 10, 2012 at around 11:15pm, Blackwell was in a vehicle driving through the Vera Cruz Drive area of Modesto. He saw a group of people he didn't like who were standing in front of a home. Blackwell fired multiple rounds from a 9mm handgun into that group, striking victims Rolando Luna and Andrew Ensey. Luna died at the scene while Ensey died a short time later at a local hospital.

Police investigation identified Blackwell as being in the car just prior to the shooting. Afterwards, he fled to the Bay Area to avoid being arrested. Spangler was believed to be the driver of the vehicle at the time of the crime.

On October 12, 2017, Blackwell entered a no contest plea to two counts of first degree murder before Judge Ricardo Cordova. In return, gun enhancements were stricken for the plea. Upon entry of that no contest plea, Judge Cordova found Blackwell guilty of the killings and immediately sentenced him to a 50-year to life sentence in state prison.

On the same date, Spangler was allowed to plead to voluntary manslaughter and admitted having a prior serious felony arson conviction. Upon Spangler's plea, Cordova sentenced him to 12 years in state prison.

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