

TIMES LEADER

Hanover Township man “not guilty” on rape, other sex offenses

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WILKES-BARRE — A Luzerne County jury acquitted a Hanover Township man on charges he raped a woman after a night of drinking beer with friends last year.

Keith David Eichler, 20, of Steele Street, was charged by township police in August after investigating claims by a woman. She alleged she was raped the night of May 12 and May 13 but did not report it to police until July 11.

After a two day trial before Judge Michael Vough, a jury found Eichler “not guilty” on charges of rape, involuntary deviate sexual intercourse, aggravated indecent assault, sexual assault and indecent assault. The jury deliberated more than four hours before reaching a verdict.

Attorney Nanda Palissery represented Eichler.

Assistant District Attorney Angela Sperrazza prosecuted.

Court records say the woman reported to police she was invited by a male friend to hang out at Eichler's house because his parents were away that weekend. She knew Eichler and another man in the house but never hung out with them.

Police said the woman, Eichler and two other men were at the residence.

She told police she arrived at Eichler's house between 11:30 p.m. and midnight on May 12, and planned to stay the night as she consumed alcohol. She estimated she consumed four beers.

She stayed away with Eichler, playing with his dog, while the two other men fell asleep in different rooms, court records say.

After the woman used the bathroom, she alleged Eichler walked toward her, causing her to walk backward into a bedroom where she fell onto a bed. She claimed she nearly passed out during the alleged assault.

Eichler strongly denied sexually assaulting anyone and denied knowing the woman.

<https://www.timesleader.com/news/739244/hanover-township-man-not-guilty-on-rape-other-sex-offenses>