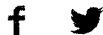


Goodman conviction upheld; blood-draw questions head to Supreme Court

LOCAL By Jane Musgrave - Palm Beach Post Staff Writer



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WEST PALM BEACH — Wellington polo mogul John Goodman's complex claims that a flawed blood draw improperly led to his DUI manslaughter conviction in the 2010 death of Scott Wilson is headed to the Florida Supreme Court.

In a brief ruling on Wednesday, the 4th District Court of Appeal stood by its May opinion, rejecting Goodman's request to throw out his 2014 conviction in the 23-year-old engineering graduate's death. Goodman's appeal claimed a faulty needle used by a nurse and lax procedures at a lab falsely elevated his blood-alcohol levels to twice the level at which Florida drivers are considered impaired.

But, while refusing to change its previous ruling, the West Palm Beach-based appeals court approved Goodman's legal team's request to ask the state's high court to review rules that dictate how blood is gathered and tested when someone is suspected of driving under the influence of alcohol.

Calling it a "matter of great public importance," Judges Alan Forst and Martha Warner — with Judge Jonathan Gerber dissenting — sent these questions to the Supreme Court:

- Are the current rules of the Florida Department of Law Enforcement inadequate for purportedly failing to sufficiently regulate proper blood draw procedures, as well as the homogenization process to 'cure' a clotted blood sample?
- Are the present rules similarly inadequate for failing to specifically regulate the work of analysts screening blood samples, documenting irregularities, and rejecting unfit samples?

As the questions indicate, the issue was the most scientifically and legally complex part of Goodman's second trial in 2014. The issues he raised were heard by a state administrative law judge, who upheld the procedures. That decision allowed the jury to be told that after the crash, Goodman's blood-alcohol level was 0.177 percent. A driver is considered legally impaired if his blood-alcohol level exceeds 0.08 percent.

Goodman, 52, was convicted for a second time of DUI manslaughter with failure to render aid and sentenced to 16 years in prison for Wilson's death. He tried to convince a jury that his Bentley inexplicably surged forward as he was driving home after a day of parties. He alleged the acceleration caused the Bentley to hit Wilson's Hyundai, shoving it into a canal, where Wilson drowned.

Goodman, who has other appeals pending, is being held in Wakulla Correctional Institution south of Tallahassee. He is scheduled to be released in December 2029. His first conviction was tossed out as a result of juror misconduct.
