

MAN ACQUITTED OF KILLING COP AT DRAG RACE

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Johnny Murray was acquitted Thursday of killing an off-duty Detroit police officer during a shoot-out at an illegal drag race.

Two other men also were killed in the shoot-out in which Officer Gary Greer, 36, was shot four times early on June 7 at the Chrysler Freeway service drive near Holbrook.

Murray, 27, of Detroit, claimed he shot at the officer in self-defense.

A Recorder's Court jury deliberated about three hours, finding him not guilty of second-degree murder.

ONE WITNESS testified that Greer was the first to pull a gun in an argument over a car blocking the starting line for the race.

Police reports and testimony indicated that **Murray**'s cousin, Derrick Pendleton, and a companion, Keith Leatherwood, were killed by Greer.

Murray testified that he picked up a gun belonging to one of the wounded men and returned the fire of a man fleeing the scene. He said he did not know the man was a police officer until he was questioned by police.

During closing arguments to the jury Wednesday, defense attorney W. Otis Culpepper said Greer was not acting as an officer when the shooting occurred.

"His will was to get the Monte Carlo out of the way so he could start that race," Culpepper said.

After the jurors gave their verdict, Culpepper said: "They believed that the officer pulled the gun first. They believed that **Johnny Ray Murray** did what he did in self-defense."

Assistant Wayne County Prosecutor Robert Hood had argued that **Murray** killed Greer "without justification or excuse."

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