

Acquittal in Main Line rape case

By Mary Anne Janco
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A California executive was acquitted yesterday in Delaware County Court of all charges in connection with the alleged rape of a woman after his then-wife's 50th birthday celebration at a Main Line mansion in 1999.

The jury of eight men and four women deliberated nearly seven hours over two days before acquitting Jack Harlan Douglass of rape by forcible compulsion, rape of an unconscious person, sexual assault, and indecent assault.

After the verdict, Douglass, who had no comment, hugged one of his attorneys as his son, daughter and sister sat behind him in the courtroom.

Douglass, co-owner of the California-based K.R. Anderson Inc., told the jury that he had consensual sex with the Dela-

ware County woman on the stone deck of the Jacuzzi after Rhonda Conner, his wife at the time, went to bed in the early hours of July 10, 1999. The woman was Conner's friend.

He testified that he and his wife had been skinny-dipping in the pool and the woman, clad in her underwear, had joined them in the pool. After getting out of the pool, he said, he tried to get the Jacuzzi to work but could not. His wife went to bed, and he had consensual sex with the woman, he testified.

The woman, now 36, who was surrounded by her family and friends yesterday in the courtroom, had testified that she was awakened by someone raping her while she was in a spare bedroom at the Radnor home. She testified that she tried to fend off her attacker but could not and passed out. She said

that she could not remember the entire attack, but "in my gut, I knew, it was Jack Douglass." In a flashback, she saw the shape of Douglass' body and his glasses, she testified.

The woman testified that she had become totally incapacitated after getting into the pool with the couple. "I felt as though I was drugged," she said.

Her blood-alcohol level was 0.13 percent — over the legal limit to drive — several hours after the alleged attack, defense attorney Michael Malloy had argued.

During his closing argument Wednesday, Malloy picked up the robe that the woman said she was wearing during the attack and draped it over his shoulders. He told the jury that she would not have sustained the injuries that she had to her

back while wearing that robe on a bed. The injuries were consistent with Douglass' version of the event — sex on the stone deck of the Jacuzzi, he said.

Assistant District Attorney Michael Galantino contended that the woman's injuries, which included cuts and bruises, were consistent with a sexual assault, not consensual sex.

Galantino argued that Douglass denied having sex with the woman when he was questioned by police two years ago. Douglass was arrested after police matched his DNA to laboratory samples taken from the woman.

Malloy had told the jury that Douglass' not telling police about the sex is "the worst decision he ever made in his life."

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