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CHRISTMAS TV

WHAT'S ON THE BOX OVER THE FESTIVE SEASON? 12-PAGE GUIDE INSIDE

THUG JAILED OVER REVENGE ATTACK

Report by Marion Brennan

A THUG who battered a father-of-three in a brutal revenge attack has been jailed for seven years.

It followed an earlier assault by Marlon Dell, 28, on the same man that was so forceful that a passer-by, who intervened, thought he was going to kill his victim, Wolverhampton Crown Court heard.

Dell and Gary Hill had a history of hostility following a fight between Mr Hill and Dell's brother four years before, said Mr Mark Phillips, prosecuting.

On April 8 at around 2.30pm, Dell pounced on Mr Hill in Drummond Street by the Molineux stadium, hitting him with a concrete slab and shouting: "This is for hitting my brother."

Mr Phillips said: "It was only when a passer-by intervened, shouting 'You're going to kill him, stop' that he ceased." Mr Hill had to have five teeth removed and a plate fitted.

Two months later on June 6, Mr Hill was parking outside his flat when a dark Ford Focus pulled up behind him and the occupants, including Dell, set upon him with a hammer, wheel brace and iron bars.

In the 10-minute attack which only ended when a neighbour alerted police, Mr Hill was struck around 60 times, suffering cuts, a broken arm and extensive bruising. Mr Phillips said that although the others were disguised, Dell did not hide his identity.

Mr Hill told the court he was afraid to return to his flat and was unable to work. Defending, Mr Jon Row told the court that Dell, of Greenwood Road, Oxley, had been law-abiding for the past five years and had written a letter of apology to his victim.

He admitted assault causing actual bodily harm and attempted robbery and was jailed for seven years. An indefinite restraining order was made barring him from contacting Mr Hill. Recorder Ben Mills told him: "You are a man who can live a responsible life. It's a sad consequence of your actions that you are going to spend some years without that."

Don drums up support for old school pal



Don Powell returned to the city to help his old friend celebrate his music shop's 35th anniversary

Slade drummer Don Powell returned to Wolverhampton to visit his schoolmate's shop and celebrate its 35th anniversary.

Don has sold millions of records and entertained crowds around the world since the 1960s.

He shot to number one with Slade in the early 1970s and has been on the road ever since – and just kicked off another UK tour.

But Don, who lives in Denmark, stopped by

to see school friend Mike Brookes and help celebrate the special day at One Way Music.

He diverted from an ongoing Slade UK tour for the occasion, travelling up from Norfolk.

The business has had a city centre presence for three decades, but has just moved to new premises. Mike and Don were former classmates

at Etheridge Senior School and grew up together on the same estate in Bilston.

Don said: "I've been around the world but I'll always be Black Country in my heart and it's great to see people who I started out with. It's great to see an old school pal and I wish him all the best."

Don chatted to a handful of Slade fans – young and old – and signed autographs at the event.

NEWS BRIEFING

Gun hijack of defrosting car

A gunman threatened a man while he was defrosting his car only to abandon the hijacking when he got stuck on the ice.

It was the first of three incidents amid a morning of drama in the Walsall area which culminated in armed police descending on Aldridge.

The events unfolded from 5.45am at Central Close, Dudley Fields, in Central Close Bloxwich.

The victim said the assailant waved a gun at him ordering him out of his vehicle while he was waiting for ice to melt. But when the suspect tried to speed off in the car he got stuck on the driveway and then fled on foot.

There was another incident involving a couple in Sutton Coldfield and a third at Northgate, Aldridge.

There, a man got into a taxi holding what was thought to be a gun but later ran off. Police said they arrested a man in connection with all three crimes.



SHORTAGE

Train refugees as GPs – health boss

A health boss has announced that refugees and asylum seekers could be trained to work as GPs in the region.

The move comes amid staffing shortages across the NHS, according to Andy Williams the Black Country Sustainability and Transformation Partnership lead. The refugees and asylum seekers would need five years of training and have to pass clinical and language tests, as well as having to undergo GP training.

Mr Williams said the doctors would need prior clinical qualifications

As well as helping relieve the shortage of GPs, the move would also be cost effective at around £25,000 a year, added Mr Williams.

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POLICE

Summit to tackle drugs

A crunch meeting will be held to tackle drug problems. West Midlands Police and Crime Commissioner David Jamieson revealed the summit on Friday.

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