

Teen gang member gets 50 years for murder

A jury sentenced Xavier Powell to 50 years in prison on April 17 for murder.

The 18-year old Houston youth was convicted for killing another teenager in a gang-related shooting in February 2008.

According to Assistant District Attorney Jeff Strange, Powell was a member of the 100 Click gang in the Ridgmont Briargate area of Houston when he shot and killed 17-year old Justin Turner last year.

It started when two vehicles from rival gangs began a car chase through the Ridgmont subdivision at speeds in excess of 80 mph. As the two vehicles turned from Hiram Clark onto Ridgcroft Street, the defendant leaned out of a rear window and fired mul-

tiple times at the other car. Powell fired at least 8 shots from a Ruger Mini-14 rifle – shooting Turner in the head and another man in the arm.

Also charged with the murder are Powell's driver, Louis Williams, and the front-seat passenger and owner of the car, Robin Hallman. Hallman then testified against Powell in exchange for a 4-year prison sentence on Aggravated Assault.

The Houston Police Department recovered eight .223 shell casings from the crime scene and a white t-shirt the defendant had used to cover his face during the shooting. Fort Bend County Sheriff's Deputy Keith Pikett testified to the use of his scent-discriminating bloodhounds to link Powell to the recovered

shell casings and t-shirt. No evidence of shooting or firearms was associated with the victim's car. Several residents of the subdivision were also called to court to describe the chase and shooting.

Powell was tried in the 268th District Court of Judge Brady Elliott. Murder is a first-degree felony punishable from 5 to 99 years or life in prison and a fine up to \$10,000. Under current laws, the defendant must serve at least one-half of his sentence before he is eligible for parole. A person is considered an adult at age 17 under state criminal laws. Strange and Assistant District Attorney Amanda Bolin prosecuted the case. Mark Racer and Scott Martinez represented the defendant.