

Lake Charles American Press

Rape verdict: not guilty

A week-long trial of a 25-year-old Starks man accused of raping and beating a Sulphur teenager nearly 13 months ago ended Friday with a not guilty verdict.

A jury of eight woman and four men deliberated for three hours in 14th Judicial District Court before acquitting Lonnie Ray Leone on the charge of aggravated rape.

Leone's court-appointed attorney Glen Vamvoras had claimed from the outset that

law enforcement officers had arrested the wrong man.

Leone claimed he was at work attempting to repair a broken-down truck at the time the rape allegedly occurred.

Assistant District Attorney Patricia Head relied heavily on the testimony of the rape victim, who identified Leone as the man who showed her a badge and claimed to be a sheriff's deputy when he offered her a ride in the rain last fall.