

Man convicted in Southside murder A jury will now decide if he will be executed or spend life in prison.

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A Jacksonville jury will return to court Tuesday to recommend if the man they convicted of murdering a Southside laundry owner should die for the crime or spend the rest of his life in prison.

Jurors deliberated about 30 minutes Thursday morning before finding Kevin J. Scott, 24, guilty of first-degree murder and attempted armed robbery in the 2007 shooting. They had begun deliberations Wednesday and met for about 90 minutes before Circuit Judge Charles Arnold sent them home.

Scott killed Kristo Binjaku, 45, a former Albanian police officer who brought his family to Jacksonville in 2000 in search of a better life. He was shot once in the face inside the coin laundry he and his wife owned at Toledo Road and Powers Avenue.

Binjaku's widow and daughter wept through much of the three-day trial, still mourning the loss of the family patriarch. His 16-year-old son, Xhulio, testified about seeing his dad's killer, face covered with a white T-shirt, leaning over his father.

"They are pleased with the verdict. They're still distraught over his death," said Assistant State Attorney Bernie de la Rionda. "But they believe the system worked."

Jurors will return Tuesday morning to hear evidence for and against the death penalty then make a recommendation to Arnold. He has the final say on Scott's fate.

De la Rionda said he was glad jurors saw through Scott's "false alibi." Several witnesses testified Wednesday for Scott, saying he was at a Northside birthday party the night of the murder.

Scott's public defenders tried to pin the murder on Desi Eugene Bolling, 22, the admitted getaway driver who helped lead police to Scott. Bolling had pleaded guilty to second-degree murder and testified against Scott.

"Desi Bolling was the killer," Chief Assistant Public Defender Refik Eler said. "Desi Bolling knows all the details because he was there."

But prosecutors played jurors a recording made while Bolling wore a wire for police at the Duval County jail. He recorded Scott describing the shooting and mocking his victim.

The recording was the key piece of evidence against Scott.

"Go back and listen to it," Assistant State Attorney Jeff Moody exhorted jurors. "He'll tell you exactly what he did that night."

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