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**SJC AFFIRMS CONVICTIONS OF HYANNIS MURDERER, STRIKES DOWN
BID FOR NEW TRIAL**

BROCKTON – The Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court has affirmed the convictions and denied the bid for a new trial of a man who stabbed and killed a man outside of a Hyannis house party, Plymouth County District Attorney Timothy J. Cruz has announced.

At 1:57 a.m. on October 22, 2016, Barnstable Police received multiple 911 calls about a stabbing at a house party at 133 Beth Lane in Hyannis. Upon arrival, police found the victim, Thomas J. Russell Jr., 26, seriously wounded with multiple stab wounds to his abdomen and lower body, lying in the middle of the road in front of that address. Russell was transported to Cape Cod Hospital where he was pronounced dead of his injuries.

As part of the homicide investigation, Barnstable Police and State Police Detectives gathered and preserved forensic evidence, executed search warrants, reviewed electronic data, and interviewed dozens of witnesses. The Office of the Chief Medical Examiner determined that Russell's death was a homicide caused by multiple sharp, stab wounds to his abdomen and lower extremities. Witness accounts described Kelly D. Ridley as arming himself with a knife before walking down the driveway, engaging in a fight with Russell and stabbing him nine times.

In November, 2018, a jury Ridley, now 24, of Hyannis, guilty of one count of First Degree Murder and two counts of Assault and Battery with a Dangerous Weapon, He was sentenced to state prison without the possibility of parole on the murder charge and 8-10 years to run concurrent on the two counts of Assault and Battery with a Dangerous Weapon. In addition to Russell's murder, Ridley was tried and found guilty of striking the victim with a metal Razor scooter prior to the fatal altercation. He was additionally charged with stabbing another man.

Ridley subsequently moved for a new trial, which was denied. In a published decision today, the SJC rejected all of the defendant's claims on appeal and upheld the defendant's convictions.

“We conclude that there was no reversible error,” the decision stated.

DA Cruz said, “This was a brutal, senseless crime that took the life of a 26-year-old man. Our office fought hard on behalf of this victim, and I am pleased that the SJC confirmed the first degree murder conviction in this case.”

The appeal was handled by Assistant District Attorney Mary Nguyen.

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