

Editor: Mike Hazelwood, 631-1021;
mhazelwo@visalia.gannett.com

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IN BRIEF

Brothers run in Boston Marathon

Two Tulare brothers finished the Boston Marathon on Monday.

Scott Hillman and Bret Hillman ran in the class for men between ages 45 and 49.

Scott finished 27th in the class with a time of 3:57.17 and Bret finished 32nd at 4:07.27.

Monday's races were the 11th in the event's history.

On the net: www.boston-marathon.org.

Visalia police officers to check for DUIs

Visalia police will conduct a drunken-driving checkpoint within the city limits Saturday.

The purpose of such checkpoints is to deter

Charges dropped against ex-football player

Man still found guilty in burglary, conspiracy

By David Castellon
Staff writer

Troubles with the law aren't over for a former San Jose State University football player convicted with two other men of a Visalia pizza parlor robbery.

Ellis T. Jones III, a cornerback on the school's football team until his arrest last year, faces a trial in Santa Clara County on charges that he's the "Craigslist bandit" who robbed and assaulted people he met through for-sale ads on the Craigslist Web site.

But he did dodge a bullet in Tulare County.

Shortly before the jury

began deliberating last week, Tulare County Superior Court Judge Darryl Ferguson dismissed charges — including attempted

murder — for lack of evidence against Jones, 21, in a July 3 home-invasion robbery in Visalia in which a man was shot and paralyzed.

The jury found Jones guilty Friday of conspiracy and burglary for the pizzeria robbery as well as assault for pointing a gun at people in the business. He faces up to 5 years and eight months in prison.

Jones' two co-defendants in the Visalia cases, Charles Edward Pritchett and



Ellis Jones

Emanuel Anthony Miller, both 22, were found guilty of the home invasion robbery attempt and shooting committed just a few hours after the robbery of the Me-N-Ed's Pizza at 5105 West Goshen Ave.

Miller faces up to 10 years in prison for his conviction on charges in both crimes, that include robbery, burglary, attempted home invasion robbery and use of a dangerous weapon in the commission of crime — a bottle that prosecutors say he hit Mike Thum, 24, over the head with after breaking into his home in the 3900 block of West Feemster Court.

The jury found Miller not guilty of attempted murder but did find him guilty of an alternate charge of attempt-

ed voluntary manslaughter.

Pritchett faces 40 years to life in prison after being convicted of robbery and burglary charges as well as attempted murder, the latter for shooting Thum in the back when he attempted to reach for a gun after waking up to find Pritchett and Miller in his room, said David Alavezos, a supervising district attorney for Tulare County. He said the shooting left Thum a paraplegic.

The jury also found Pritchett guilty of special allegations which included causing great bodily harm resulting in paralysis that will add a 25-year enhancement to his sentence.

Pritchett and Miller were identified by Thum as the men in his room. Alavezos said Thum didn't know

them, but they thought they would find money in the house.

He said a third man was involved in the home invasion, but he went to the room of another resident of the house telling the man there to "stay put," Alavezos said.

All three fled after Thum was shot.

Although Jones was charged for the home invasion robbery on counts of attempted murder, burglary and attempted robbery, Ferguson ruled that not enough evidence was presented during the trial to show he was involved in that crime, and the judge dismissed those charges before the jury began deliberations.

► The reporter can be reached at dcastell@visalia.gannett.com.

WEATHER

For up-to-the minute weather, log onto www.TulareAdvanceRegister.com

Tulie's Forecast

79° 42°

Today:
Mostly sunny



Wednesday through Saturday

Plenty of sun, but cooler Wednesday. High 64, Low 40. Partly sunny and breezy Thursday. High 70, Low 45. Rather cloudy, showers around; cool Friday. High 65, Low 42. Mostly sunny Saturday. High 70, Low 47.

Temperatures

Today's low 48°
Mon.'s high/low .. 78°/50°

Rain

As of 8 a.m. today .. 0.00"
Season to date 3.00"
Last season to date .. 9.57"