

MICHAEL GOODWIN CASE SUMMARY

1. Early in the morning of March 16, 1988, racecar legend Mickey Thompson and his wife were brutally gunned down on their Bradbury Estates driveway.
2. The killers have never found or identified — and no one has actually looked for them.
3. Michael Goodwin, a very successful Supercross promotor and the father of the sport, was originally arrested in Orange County, in December, 2001, for planning the murder of Mickey Thompson in that county.
4. Goodwin was charged on the same evidence on which the L.A.D.A had repeatedly turned down for lack of sufficient evidence, just five days after he opened litigation against Collene Campbell, which would have exposed multi-million dollar crimes by her and her attorney. Goodwin eventually won that litigation, having a 9th Circuit Appeal victory that is worth multiple millions of dollars.
5. In 2001, Michael Goodwin, a highly successful promoter of the sport he created, Supercross, was arrested by the Orange County District Attorney, Tony Rackauckas, who had been the personal attorney and longtime business associate of Thompson's sister, Colleen Campbell. Goodwin's arrest came just 5 days after he opened litigation against Campbell that would have exposed crimes she committed associated with her brother's death. In 2004, The Fourth District Appellate Court ruled that the O.C.D.A had no evidence to prosecute Goodwin in Orange County and unanimously dismissed the case with a stinging rebuke of Rackauckas.
6. Because of undue influence at the highest levels of government, Goodwin was charged in L.A. despite the District Attorney having twice previously declined to prosecute because of "*lack of evidence.*"
7. There was no new *real* evidence so the top prosecutor for Los Angeles, Patrick Dixon, lambasted Goodwin's defense with a fusillade of patently false allegations, counterfeit and forged evidence, massive evidence suppression, false testimony by witnesses eager to participate in the \$1 million reward, phony "expert" witness statements and foisted other common prosecution tricks on Goodwin's crippled and compromised defense. Moreover, unaccountably, Goodwin's defense attorney refused to use the evidence she had available to disprove Dixon's specious charges.

Elena Saris was outgunned by Dixon, a 35-year veteran, *the* top L.A. prosecutor and his assistant, Alan Jackson, 15 years with the D.A.'s office who later was later named "Prosecutor of the Year" and, in 2012, ran unsuccessfully for to replace Steve Cooley, L.A.D.A. Following the election, both Dixon and Jackson, the same team that prosecuted Phil Spector, mysteriously left the D.A.'s office to go into private practice. Saris was also unable to cope with an overtly biased judge who, having worked under the august Dixon, ruled consistently in favor of the prosecution.

On January 4, 2007, Michael Goodwin was convicted of "conspiracy to murder" the Thompsons in 1988. *No evidence has ever been presented that connected Goodwin to the murders in **any** way.*

8. The trial judge prohibited the jury from hearing the strong evidence of the many other suspects, including one who confessed twice, failed three lie detector tests, had no alibi and was identified near the crime scene the morning of the murders. Goodwin's defense was barred from allowing the jury to hear virtually any of the

strong evidence of other suspects. In a post conviction sworn statement by the jury foreman outlining the important elements of how the verdict was reached, said, “...if not Goodwin, then who?”

9. The prosecution falsely alleged that Michael ordered Mickey Thompson killed in order to avoid paying him. The judge stated, “*This whole prosecution is premised on one thing, and that is that the motive for the murders was because of the business dispute that existed and the lengths to which Mr. Goodwin would go to avoid having to satisfy the judgment and basically paying up.*” However, Goodwin *HAD* paid! Three months prior to the murders, Goodwin had deposited \$912,000 with the bankruptcy trustee with explicit instructions to pay Thompson and other creditors. Since he had been in bankruptcy for 16 months prior to the murder, he was proscribed from paying Thompson directly without a special, difficult to get, court order and agreement by other creditors. Those funds were irretrievable! Goodwin would not have gained \$1 by having the Thompsons killed since those funds would have passed to Thompson’s heirs, not back to Goodwin.

The total unsecured bankruptcy debt was \$1.5 million. Goodwin ultimately deposited more than \$3 million in cash and assets with the bankruptcy trustee, however, after fees for the trustee, accountants and attorneys, only \$200,000 was paid to *all* creditors, \$120,000 of it to Thompson.

10. The allegation of Goodwin “conducting surveillance” of the Thompson’s house before the murders is absurd. The Thompson house, 3/4 of a mile away, cannot be seen from where a couple alleged they saw a car. There is no evidence this was reported *before* the \$1 million reward was announced. While the “witnesses” *claimed* they were 8’ behind the car when they saw the person from the side for a few seconds, recent investigation proves they *could have been no closer than 23’*, possibly as far away as 50’, yet 13 years later they identified Michael Goodwin in the courtroom as one of the persons they saw in the car.

11. Judge Schwartz, inexplicably, gave the jury grossly inappropriate instructions on what they could consider in reaching a verdict. Some elements of her instructions to the jury were clearly illegal. The law demands evidence supporting any jury instruction. Three of the judge’s instructions had *no* supporting evidence. The high standard of “...beyond reasonable doubt...” for the jury panel to find Goodwin guilty was misstated by the judge. *Goodwin was never tied to the murders or killers in any way, so a certainty----“beyond reasonable doubt”----that Goodwin was responsible for the murders was clearly impossible.*

12. Goodwin’s right to a speedy appeal was thwarted by the government. Such appeals generally take 18 to 36 months. The appellate court did not rule on Goodwin’s appeal for more than *7 years*. The Superior Court and L.A. District Attorney claimed they could not find their own records for more than 5 years. Goodwin filed 27 motions but got only some of records he was legally entitled to while hundreds of documents, *known to exist* and suppressed at trial, clearly supporting Goodwin’s claim of innocence, are still being hidden by the government. Some of those concealed-yet-known-to-exist documents, identified as BRADY evidence, should result in dismissal of the charges or reversal of the conviction once they are turned over to Goodwin.

All 17 points of Goodwin’s appeal were simply discounted since appellate justices cannot depart from the court trial record. This trial was fraught with the prosecution’s blizzard of contrived evidence. Consequently, on January 26, 2015, Goodwin’s wrongful conviction was affirmed. However, grave doubts were expressed on

several significant issues during the oral arguments, the justices' Q&A session that preceded the court's ruling. State Appellate Courts in general are noted for rubber-stamping lower court rulings.

13. In spite of 7 years of continued, concerted stonewalling by the L.A.D.A. and Superior Court, Goodwin has acquired dozens of pieces of exculpatory evidence, each of which should reverse the conviction if the law was followed. What is more, there is far more powerful evidence in the hands of his trial defense attorney that, though Goodwin is entitled to by law and has requested dozens of times, she has failed to hand over to Goodwin.
14. The lead investigator in Goodwin's case, Det. Mark Lillienfeld, is being investigated by the Los Angeles Sheriff's Department for perjuries, destruction, manipulation and forgery of key evidence, subordination of perjuries, witness intimidation and other crimes he committed during the investigation, prosecution and trial. The Los Angeles District Attorney's office has now assigned a special unit to provide the suppressed evidence for dozens of BRADY violations. Only one material violation is all that is required to overturn a conviction.
15. Goodwin's appellate attorney has filed a petition for review to the California Supreme Court. Goodwin's team is also proceeding with a writ of habeas corpus. This is where the new and previously suppressed evidence will be introduced to finally vindicate him.