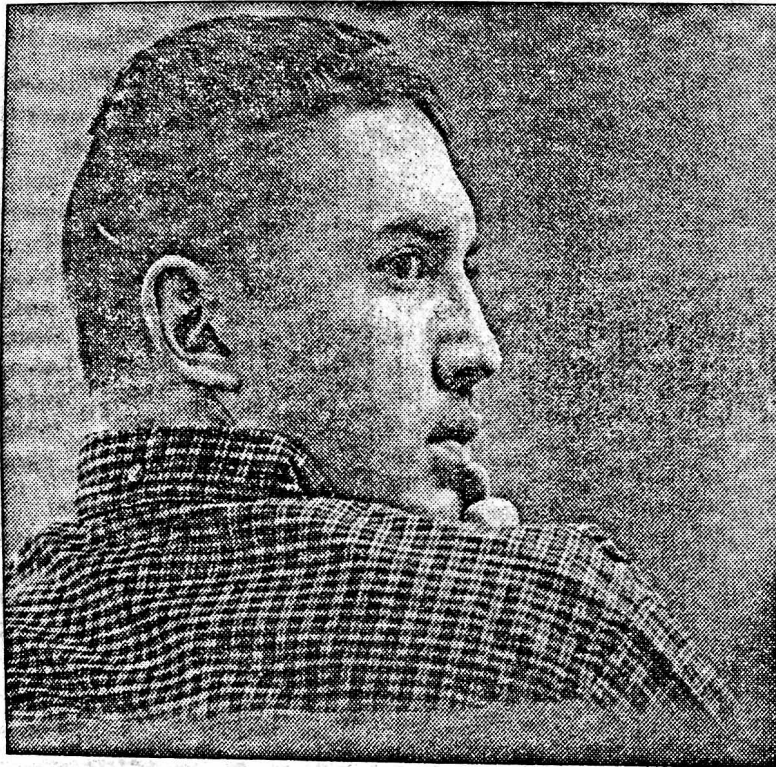


THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 29, 1996

Witness: Passenger chided driver in fatal crash



E-T photo/SUE BEYER

Nicholas Glosser looks over his shoulder in court Wednesday.

By TOM QUIGLEY
The Express-Times

BELVIDERE — Kari Hackett knew the car was about to crash, so she got ready for the impact.

"I couldn't find my seat belt so I just ducked behind the seat," she testified on Wednesday.

The 20-year-old Washington Township woman had trouble recalling how long it took before the car sailed through the air and crashed into a stand of trees near Asbury-Anderson Road in Washington Township.

Almost two years have passed since the March 5, 1994, crash that ended the life of Jason D. Lindner, 16, of Washington Township.

But Hackett said she did remember one important detail about the 2 a.m. crash. She testified that then-18-year-old Nicholas Glosser — another backseat passenger — said something to the driver before the accident.

"He said, 'I don't respect anyone who doesn't do 140 (mph) or more,'" she testified.

That testimony came on the second day of Glosser's trial in the Warren County Courthouse. He's charged with death-by-auto in connection with Lindner's death.

Authorities claim Glosser urged the driver of the car — Washington Township resident Glenn A. Howell Jr. — to go faster.

"When he heard the statement, what did Mr. Howell do?" Warren County Prosecutor John J. O'Reilly asked the witness.

"He started to go faster," Hackett replied.

Lindner — the boy killed in the crash — then started to call out the speeds as the car accelerated along the winding back roads of Washington Township, Hackett testified.

"... 65, 75, 85 ...," she said.

The accident happened after Howell sped through a stop sign near the intersection of Rymon and Asbury-Anderson roads in Washington Township. Lindner was thrown from the car and killed. The car's four other occupants were injured in the crash, including Glosser.

Howell was admitted to a pre-trial intervention program in June, and the death-by-auto charge against him will be dismissed if he successfully completes the program.

Glosser turned down a similar offer and decided to go to trial. He faces a maximum sentence of three to five years in prison if convicted.

The trial is scheduled to resume at 9 a.m. Monday before Superior Court Judge John F. Kingfield. Defense Attorney Leonard Artigliere is expected to cross-examine Hackett then.