

U.S.

# ***Jury Sees Body Camera Footage of Fatal Shooting by Police Officer***

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Video

## **Officer's Body Cam Video Shows Shooting**

Only about 12 seconds passed between when Dominique Heaggan-Brown, a former Milwaukee police officer, confronted Sylville K. Smith during a traffic stop and when he shot Mr. Smith dead.

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Photo by WISN-TV Milwaukee

MILWAUKEE — Body-camera video in the homicide trial of a former Milwaukee police officer showed the officer running after a man, Sylville K. Smith, then firing two gunshots at him, the final shot coming just after Mr. Smith tossed his own gun over a chain-link fence and as he was on the ground.

Prosecutors showed the video, taken by the officer's body camera, in court on Thursday for the first time.

The trial of the officer, Dominique Heaggan-Brown, is being closely watched in Milwaukee, where the killing of Mr. Smith, 23, last August set off a few days of protests, arson and rioting.

Prosecutors argued that Mr. Smith was unarmed and on the ground when Mr. Heaggan-Brown fired the final shot, but the former officer's lawyers said Mr. Heaggan-Brown was doing what he had been trained to do when pursuing a suspect who was carrying a gun. The episode — beginning with the moment Mr. Heaggan-Brown and his partner confronted Mr. Smith during a traffic stop — unfolded in only about 12 seconds.

The officers were working in Milwaukee's Sherman Park neighborhood when they stopped Mr. Smith for being parked more than 12 inches from the curb. Mr. Smith ran away from the officers, then tripped and fell next to a fence, footage from Mr. Heaggan-Brown's body camera showed. Mr. Smith got up, holding the fence with his left hand and a gun in his right hand.

At that moment, Mr. Heaggan-Brown fired a second shot.

Other officers quickly arrived, and Mr. Heaggan-Brown is heard on the video saying: “He tossed it. He tossed it.”

Mr. Heaggan-Brown then appeared to ask Mr. Smith, “Hey, you still there?” as he squatted down and placed his hands close to Mr. Smith’s chest. “I need gloves,” he said.

Other officers began to apply chest compressions, and Mr. Heaggan-Brown stood up and led other officers to the area where the gun was thrown.

Later, as Mr. Heaggan-Brown sat in a squad car, he is heard saying, “It happened so quick.”

If convicted of first-degree reckless homicide, Mr. Heaggan-Brown could face up to 60 years in prison.

Jonathan Smith, the officer’s lawyer, said that an experienced police trainer was set to testify that officers were taught to use the “one-plus rule” — meaning they should assume that if someone has one weapon, he or she has another.

“A gunfight doesn’t end until the threat is stopped,” Mr. Smith said.

Both the officer and the victim were young black men who grew up on the same side of town.

Weeks after the shooting, Mr. Heaggan-Brown was fired from the Milwaukee Police Department and charged with unrelated felony sex crimes, including the alleged sexual assault of a man one night after the shooting. Those charges are pending, and a separate trial is expected this year.

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