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Accused Denies Murder, Claims He Was 'Fighting for Life' in Brawl That Killed Matthew Daulby

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– Categories: Crime



A man accused of killing 19-year-old Matthew Daulby during a street fight in Ormskirk has told a court he was acting in self-defence, claiming he was under attack by a group of ten people and feared for his own life.

Thomas Dures, 21, from Whalley Drive, Aughton, admitted carrying a knife and being involved in the fight, but has denied charges of murder, grievous bodily harm (GBH), and

violent disorder.

During cross-examination at Preston Crown Court, Peter Glenser KC (King's Counsel) pressed Dures on whether he stabbed the teenager. In response, Dures insisted he could not confirm whether he had, stating, "I can't say, sir. I was being attacked by 10 people. I was clearly fighting for my life. What do you want me to do? Stand there and get stabbed?"

The prosecution has presented a timeline of Dures' actions following the violent confrontation. After the fight, Mr Daulby reportedly managed to walk around 150 metres to nearby Moorgate before collapsing. He was later pronounced dead.

Evidence presented in court suggests that Dures discarded his blue jacket in a nearby park, handed over a shoulder bag he was carrying to a friend, and washed his face in the toilets of The Railway pub. It is further alleged that he disposed of the knife in a back alley before travelling by taxi back to his home in Aughton.

According to testimony, Dures went to a friend's house after returning home, where he claimed he first heard someone had been seriously hurt. "I didn't believe it," he told the court. "I didn't think anyone was seriously injured because I've clearly seen (sic) everyone was able to run away."

The court also heard that at around 9 a.m. that morning, Dures saw a post on Facebook stating that someone had died during the fight. He then travelled to his uncle's home, asking him to contact his father. From there, he went to The Pottery café and then on to The Plough Inn, where he was later picked up and driven to Kent.

Dures has maintained that he did not know anyone had suffered life-threatening injuries during the fight and continued to deny that he had any intention to kill or cause serious harm.

Daulby, from Lydiate, died in the early hours of July 29, 2023, after sustaining a stab wound to the chest and trauma to the head. The incident took place shortly after midnight on Railway Road, where a mass brawl broke out involving multiple individuals.

The incident has drawn significant attention due to the chaotic nature of the brawl and the tragic loss of a young man's life. The courtroom remains divided, with the prosecution pushing to establish responsibility for Daulby's death, while the defence argues that Dures was overwhelmed, acting in panic under threat.

Dures has not disputed his presence at the scene or possession of the knife, but maintains that his actions were not driven by malice. The trial, which is expected to continue into next week, will determine whether the jury is convinced by Dures' claims of self-defence or by the prosecution's assertion of intentional and unlawful violence.