

Jefferson City man found guilty of rape

By **STEPHEN FOUTES**
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A Cole County jury's verdict could mean an extended prison term for a Jefferson City man who on Thursday was convicted of forcible rape.

James W. Roberson Jr., 23, was charged with the crime April 26. Prosecutors said he and his brother, Dorselle, raped a woman at her apartment in the 600 block of Mulberry Street.

Dorselle Roberson's trial is scheduled for next week.

A jury of nine women and three men deliberated about 40 minutes before returning its verdict.

The offense brings with it a sentence of five years to life in prison, said Assistant Prosecutor William Tackett. Tackett said Roberson's prior criminal record — three convictions on drug charges in other jurisdictions — will likely impact sentencing.

During the trial, two prosecu-

tion witnesses told the court they heard a woman screaming, "no, stop and don't" on the night of the incident.

Those witnesses said they could not pinpoint where the screams were coming from.

But the woman in a neighboring apartment had a video surveillance unit that prosecutors said recorded the screams.

However, that portion of the tape was not used in court because the neighbor accidentally recorded over it.

She said she was panicked when one or two men began knocking on her door and yelling at her shortly after the incident and before police arrived. She had rewound the tape and began recording to capture those men on tape.

The men, though, had moved the eye of the camera and were covering it up.

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Another part of the Tackett's case dealt with the possible use of a drug that rendered the victim unconscious.

The victim said she drank "gin and juice," given to her by the suspects.

Witnesses said the victim was incoherent and could barely stand up after ingesting the drink.

Angela Eckman, a lab analyst from the Highway Patrol, testified that blood samples taken from the victim about one hour after the incident showed no signs of ethyl alcohol or marijuana.

But she said no tests could be done to determine if a "date-rape" type drug was used on the victim.

Near the end of the trial, Roberson took the stand and testified that he and his brother engaged in consensual sex with the victim. "She did not protest," Roberson testified.