

Man using pencils, pen to stab three of his "court appointed" attorneys.

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Joshua Monson will be in a Washington state courtroom Monday, but he may not have a lawyer with him. Monson, who was recently convicted on a felony drug charge, stabbed three court-appointed attorneys during his trial, according to authorities.

The alleged serial stabbings of defense attorneys transformed what would usually be a run-of-the-mill local criminal trial into a national news story.

"I've heard of a defendant going after an attorney from time to time," said Craig Matheson, senior deputy at the Snohomish County prosecutor's office in Everett. "But I have never seen a serial case like this."

Matheson's office recently prosecuted the 27-year-old Monson on a methamphetamine charge.

The trouble started for Monson's defense attorneys -- none of whom were seriously injured in the stabbing spree -- even before opening statements.

On May 9, when Monson and his court-appointed attorney, Tom Cox, were still picking a jury, the defendant snatched a pencil and stabbed Cox in the neck, authorities said.

Attorney Gurjit Pandher was then appointed to defend Monson. Authorities alleged that on May 13, Monson hid a pencil in his pants before a meeting with the attorney. During that meeting, Monson stabbed Pandher in the neck, authorities said.

The trial was delayed as authorities tried to find another replacement attorney. The judge in the case also ordered that Monson be restrained in court once the trial resumes.

Local attorney Jesse Cantor was recruited to defend Monson. Cantor argued that his new client should not be restrained in court because he would not get a fair trial.

"There were extensive arguments as to the level of confinement for Mr. Monson; his lawyer argued to lessen the restraint," Matheson said.

In November during opening statements, the unrestrained Monson grabbed Cantor's pen and stabbed him in the head with it, authorities said.

The three attorneys suffered only superficial wounds, according to authorities.

A judge ruled that Monson had forfeited his right to an attorney, and the trial went on with Monson representing himself from a restraint chair.

He was convicted on the drug charge and is scheduled to be in court on Monday for a sentencing hearing. At least one new charge is pending in the wake of the stabbings.

Another replacement attorney has been appointed to advise Monson but legal experts say defense attorneys do not have many duties at a sentencing hearing.

Meanwhile, there are other future legal proceedings for Monson.

He has a pending unrelated murder trial scheduled for the near future, according to Snohomish County prosecutors.

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