Missouri Wrestler Sentenced to at Least 30 Years in HIV Trial

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Michael Johnson
Photo credit: The Counter Narrative Project

Jurors in Missouri recommended a sentence of at least 30 years for Michael Johnson, the former college wrestler found guilty on five counts: one of exposing a partner to HIV, and four of trying to expose another person to the virus, BuzzFeed reports.

If the sentences—the longest of which is 30 years and the shortest is five and a half years—are not served concurrently, Johnson faces a total of 60.5 years. The judge will impose the sentence on July 13.

The jury deliberated a little more than two hours after being presented with new evidence during the hearing trial Friday, May 15.

The case has drawn media attention to the topics of HIV criminalization, disclosure and gay interracial relationships, and it has garnered support and sparked dialogue among HIV advocates.

To read POZ's previous newsfeed item on the Johnson trial, including reader feedback, click here.

To read the POZ.com crosspost of The Counter Narrative Project's open letter of support to Johnson, click here.

And to read the Counter Narrative Project's "We Shall Not Be Removed: Black Gay Men Respond to the Sentencing of Michael Johnson," click here.

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