

Victim describes savage beating at hands of 5 men

1 on trial, others take deals

BY MEGAN BRODERICK
REPUBLICAN-AMERICAN

LITCHFIELD — James Fabiaschi testified Tuesday he was beaten so severely during a random attack in Winsted Jan. 9 that he feared he might die.

The trial of Christopher Layton, one of five men charged with the attack, began Tuesday in Litchfield Superior Court with several hours of dramatic testimony from Fabiaschi, 50, of Winsted. He told the court he pleaded with the men to stop, but they continued even after he went limp and played dead.

Layton, 24, of Avon, is the only one of the co-defendants to opt for a trial. The other four charged with beating Fabiaschi and another man that night have taken plea deals.

Fabiaschi said he left his Highland Lake home about 11 p.m. Jan. 9, listening to music on his iPod. He walked down West Wakefield Boulevard on a two-hour loop around the lake, a route he had walked at least 100 times.

About 90 minutes into his walk, he crossed paths with the five men who had been drinking beer and whiskey and smoking marijuana all day, according to Adam Salazar, 21, of Winsted, one of the co-defendants, who testified Tuesday as part of his plea deal.

Salazar said the men were angry because they had been tossed from several motels where they hoped to get a room to drink and

smoke, and were “hyped up” to beat someone.

Four of the men, without Layton, had attacked Ruben Castillo, also of Winsted, less than an hour before in downtown Winsted, Salazar said.

Fabiaschi said his only concern on his walk was getting hit by a car, so he wore a reflective vest — ultimately, Salazar said, what led the men to spot him.

“As they got close, I put my flashlight up toward them. I said ‘Hi guys,’ trying to make conversation, to see what’s going on,” Fabiaschi said. “Then I caught a fist thrown right into my right eye.”

His glasses broke, and he felt two more punches to his face before he dropped to his stomach to try to protect himself, he said. “Almost immediately I started being kicked,” he said.

“I started thinking, ‘What do I do next to get them to stop kicking?’” he said. He started yelling, hoping someone might come to his aid. “I’m done. You win. What do you want?”

He tried to jump up and push through the pack, thinking if he didn’t try he would die or become unconscious in the freezing temperatures.

But he said he was yanked back and the kicking resumed.

“I thought I was going to die, less than two miles from my house,” he said.

The group finally let up, he said, when the men saw headlights from an approaching car.

The trial continues today.



Layton