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## Marine acquitted in fatal fight at Dillon Beach

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Casey Adams, 26, was found dead in the sand after a fight last year on Dillon Beach

A reserve in the U.S. Marines was acquitted of manslaughter, assault and battery charges Friday in a Dillon Beach fight that left a camper dead last year.

Robert Martell, 25, of Napa faced up to four years in state prison if convicted in the confrontation with Casey Adams, a 26-year-old Santa Rosa resident.

After a trial of nearly seven days, a unanimous jury found Martell not guilty of involuntary

manslaughter, battery with serious bodily injury and assault with force likely to produce great bodily injury.

"They got it right. He acted in self-defense," said Martell's lawyer, Stephen Naratil of Benicia. "He's just relieved that this is done with. This has been a tough 14 months."

Two other co-defendants were convicted previously. Daren Corbett Bell, 25, of Napa was sentenced to a year in jail after pleading guilty to assault by force likely to produce great bodily injury.

Robert Allen Marcus, 22, of Elk Grove pleaded guilty last month to battery causing serious bodily injury. He faces up to four years in prison when he is sentenced Sept. 10 by Judge Paul Haakenson.

The incident occurred about 1 a.m. on May 27, 2007, when Adams was camping at the beach with friends and co-workers. He got into a confrontation with other beach visitors and was found dead in the sand.

Bell admitted hitting Adams in the back of the head with a flashlight, but a doctor testified that the flashlight blow did not kill him. The cause of death was a severed artery at the base of the brain.

Late last year, the district attorney's office offered to reduce the manslaughter charges against Martell to felony assault in exchange for his guilty plea. He rejected the offer and took the case to trial.

"We knew that the case would be difficult, but we believe there was evidence to hold him accountable for the death," District Attorney Ed Berberian said Friday. "(The jurors) have to make the decision."

Adams' sister, Jennifer Adams, said her family was



devastated by the verdict.

"Casey was a non violent person and it's a sad day for Marin County to see that you can attack someone with two of your friends until he dies and then claim self defense because your a marine," she said in an e-mail.

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