



Spector trial is delayed again

Continued medical problems for a defense lawyer push testimony back until Monday of next week.

By John Spano, Times Staff Writer
May 2, 2007

Testimony in the murder trial of music producer Phil Spector was postponed again Tuesday as lawyers prepared for legal battles over expert witnesses.

Continued medical problems for noted defense lawyer Bruce Cutler prompted the latest delay, which court officials said would push testimony back until Monday of next week.

Cutler, whose health issues forced cancellation of Monday's court session, has said he has been experiencing problems with his diabetes medication. The lawyer is expected to be back on his feet and at the defense table Monday, associates said.

Cutler will "be fine. He's doing fine," said Ed Hayes, a New York lawyer who has worked with Cutler and spoke with him Tuesday. "I just don't think it's a big deal, frankly."

Meanwhile, lawyers are expected in court today to argue over a prosecutor's motion accusing the defense of sandbagging him with late forensics evidence.

In its response filed with the court Tuesday, the defense denied it intentionally delayed giving prosecutors blood-spatter test results suggesting Spector was at least six feet from actress Lana Clarkson when she was killed. Clarkson was shot in the mouth.

The scientific evidence could be key to determining whether Spector shot Clarkson when she tried to leave his Alhambra mansion in February 2003, as the prosecution says, or the actress pulled the trigger in an "accidental suicide," as the defense claims.

Deputy Dist. Atty. Alan Jackson accused the defense of withholding the test results until after its forensic scientist, Henry Lee, had discussed them on television last week. Jackson has asked Los Angeles County Superior Court Judge Larry Fidler to impose defense sanctions.

The defense motion response said that Jackson's claim is "devoid of factual merit and legally misplaced." Multiple notes and reports by Lee were turned over to prosecutors, defense lawyers said, including the scientist's 2003 crime-scene observations.

Attorney Christopher J. Plourd, in the defense papers, accused prosecutors of failing to turn over all relevant evidence to the defense. He acknowledged that the defense was late in disclosing several defense witness statements to prosecutors.

Spector, a legendary music producer who worked with the Beatles, Rolling Stones, Ike and Tina Turner and many other icons of the 1960s, has pleaded not guilty to a charge of murder and is free on \$1-million bail. If convicted, he faces up to 15 years to life in prison.

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