

Mistrial in case of man accused of trying to shoot officers

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Mike Worthy did nothing wrong to those officers," Blumenthal said.

Luna, a self-proclaimed drug dealer, testified Worthy threatened him with a .22-caliber rifle when he didn't supply him crack cocaine for the \$50 that Worthy had given him earlier.

The other civilian victim, Nathaniel Short, 40, of Langley Park, was arrested on charges of selling drugs to an undercover agent on his way home from the courthouse after dropping off two state witnesses. Jurors were not told of his arrest.

Short, who is being held on a \$15,000 bond, called 911 after Worthy fired two shots at the apartment complex. He said Worthy was acting recklessly with the rifle.

Worthy, who has a long criminal record spanning 20 years, didn't testify during the two-week trial. Most of his convictions are drug-related offenses and some handgun of-

fenses. Most recently he served about three years in prison on an unauthorized use of a vehicle charge.

He has been diagnosed with myotonic dystrophy, a muscular disease that prevents him from working and being able to grip items. The illness often is consistent with a mild form of mental retardation, according to court testimony.

Witnesses said Worthy was standing outside the apartment complex when about seven police officers arrived at the scene. Worthy was threatening Luna, who was hiding in the apartment complex, witnesses said.

The officers said Worthy turned toward them as if to fire, and refused to drop the rifle. Four of the seven officers, Cpl. Andre V. Brooks, Cpl. Jeffrey P. Moran, and Officer Larry McMullen and Cpl. Randall S. Mathews then fired 13 rounds at Worthy, according to testimony.

A medical report also indicated Worthy sustained a broken jaw.

McMullen told the jury that Worthy's jaw may have been injured when he was handcuf-

fed and accidentally dropped face-down into the pavement. All the officers were cleared in a police internal investigation of any wrongdoing.

Blumenthal argued to the jury that Worthy was in a "zone" from his physical and mental illness and did not try to shoot the officers.

He said the medical evidence belies the suggestion that Worthy turned to shoot four officers because he was shot in the middle of the back and not the side.

"Mike Worthy has physical limitations," Blumenthal said in his closing arguments. "Mike Worthy isn't in a position on his best day to have a shootout with a Girl Scout. That's insane."

But Moore countered that the officers' actions were appropriate, noting four of them fired because they saw Worthy turn and point the rifle at them.

"When the defendant raised the rifle, he intended to shoot the officers," Moore said. "Maybe he had a death wish. I don't know. He was going to go out that night in a hail of gunfire."