

WI vs. Taylor Schabusiness Day 1

02 December 2025 13:09

Opening statements [12:35]

State opening statements presented by Caleb Saunders

Defendant had strangled Shad Tyzion to death using a dog collar and after he was dead, she engaged in sex acts with him and dismembered his body with kitchen. A duffle bag was recovered which contained Shad's body parts and the knives that were used. Cleaning products were used after the crime to clean it up including the use of a squeegee and Taylor admitted to committing the murder and dismemberment, it was not intentional and not a mistake so there is no doubt.

Defence opening statements presented by David Froelich

Reminds the jury that the defendant has an absolute right to remain silent and is considered innocent under the law. Stephen Hendrick will testify to last seeing Shad on 21st February and panicked when he was found 23rd February 2022 and Schabusiness was not present. Don't rush to judgement and keep an open mind with this and find his client not guilty on all counts.

Today's Witnesses:

Court TV source:

1. Witness #1 - State Witness #1 - Amy Shannon - Dispatcher/Records Custodian [38:31]
2. Witness #2 - State Witness #2 - Alex Wanish - Patrol Officer [55:50]

Law & Crime Source:

3. Witness #3 - State Witness #3 - Ethan Plonke - Patrol Officer [1:21:24]
4. Witness #4 - State Witness #4 - Kurt Brester - Patrol Sergeant [1:50:45]
5. Witness #5 - State Witness #5 - Steven Hendricks - Boyfriend of victims mother [2:04:44]
6. Witness #6 - State Witness #6 - Terra Packernick - Lead investigator [2:28:32]
7. Witness #7 - State Witness #7 - Ava Wheelock - Victims Sister (Minor testimony) [1:27:49]
8. Witness #8 - State Witness #8 - Petra Schwab - Medical Examiner [2:59:59]
9. Witness #9 - State Witness #9 - Michelle Czarenski - Crime Scene Analyst [3:43:09]
10. Witness #10 - State Witness #10 - Baeligh Andrae - Forensics Specialist [4:31:45]
11. Witness #11 - State Witness #11 - Philip Scanlon - Detective at GBPD [5:49:29]

Testimonies:

1. Witness #1 - State Witness #1 - Amy Shannon - Dispatcher/Records Custodian [38:31]

- a. Direct exam
 - i. Amy Shannon testified to the 911 call audio and it was played for the jury [44:50-52:45]
 - 1) The parents of Shad Tyrion could be heard on audio suspecting that it's their son's head found in the bucket. [49:46-50:25]
- b. Cross exam
 - i. The cross examination focused on reiterating points already covered in the direct exam. No new evidentiary claims, contradictions or timeline changes were introduced.
 - 1) Key observations: no new exhibits, no new impeachment attempts, arguments stayed within previously established testimony.
- c. No redirect exam was conducted

Witness Function

Advance the state timeline

2. Witness #2 - State Witness #2 - Alex Wanish - Patrol Officer [55:50]

- a. Direct exam
 - i. Alex Wanish testifies to finding a severed head in the bucket and being escorted to the basement where he found a green bucket and confirmed seeing a human head in the bucket. [57:45-58:40]
 - ii. Alex Wanish testifies to the body cam footage he wore to visit the resident, timestamped 3:37am, 23/02/2022 and it was played for the jury. [1:02:05-1:07:21]

- 1) Alex Wanish is heard on the bodycam saying "there was a bit of blood down here and he is going to check the rest of the house" whilst he was in a room resembling an office. [1:06:10-1:06:25]
- b. Cross exam [1:11:18]
 - i. Alex Wanish testifies to Taylor Schabusness not being present at the house when he was at the premises. [1:18:28-1:18:40]
 - ii. The cross examination primarily focused on reiterating points already covered in the direct exam. No new evidentiary claims, contradictions or timeline changes were introduced.
 - 1) Key observations: no new exhibits, no new impeachment attempts, arguments stayed within previously established testimony.
- c. No redirect exam was conducted.

Established in this testimony

Finding the head in a bucket at 3:37-3:40am 23/Feb/2022 when he arrived at the property.

Witness Function

Establish the timeline and account of events.

3. Witness #3 - State Witness #3 - Ethan Plonke - Patrol Officer [1:21:24]

- a. Direct exam
 - i. Ethan Plonke testifies to being told by Officer Wanish that he found a severed head in the bucket that he found in the basement. [1:24:15-1:24:50]
- b. Cross exam
 - i. Ethan Plonke testifies to Officer Wanish coming at the same time as he did. [1:27:53-1:28:00]
 - ii. Ethan Plonke testifies to what he learnt about Terra's activity upon finding the body and calling the police. [1:30:43-1:31:40]
 - 1) He testifies to Terra telling him that she was woken up because she heard the residents side door closed.
 - a) He testifies to Terra telling him that she got out of bed to inspect the house to see if anyone was in the house.
 - b) He testifies to Terra telling him about then going downstairs to the basement and found something that terrified her.
 - i) He testifies to Terra telling him that she went up and told her significant other Stephen Hendricks what he saw and then he proceeded to call the police.
 - c. No redirect exam was conducted

Witness Function

Advance the state timeline

4. Witness #4 - State Witness #4 - Kurt Brester - Patrol Sergeant [1:50:45]

- a. Direct exam
 - i. Kurt Brester testifies to Officer Wanish informing him what he found in the basement when he arrived at the scene and he proceeded to conduct a protective sweep where he located no one else at the residence. [1:52:23-1:53:50]
 - ii. Kurt Brester testifies to inspecting the house and seeing no other body parts of the house and found areas of suspected blood in the shower and being informed there was a piece of bone fragment or fatty tissue in the drain of the standup shower [1:53:35-1:54:30]
- b. Cross exam [1:55:28]
 - i. The cross examination focused on reiterating points already covered in the direct exam. No new evidentiary claims, contradictions or timeline changes were introduced.
 - 1) Key observations: no new exhibits, no new impeachment attempts, arguments stayed within previously established testimony.
- c. No redirect exam was conducted

Witness Function

Advance the state timeline

5. Witness #5 - State Witness #5 - Steven Hendricks - Boyfriend of victims mother [2:04:44]

- a. Direct Exam
 - i. Steven Hendricks testifies to Shad leaving with Taylor on the 21st February 2022 in the evening whilst it was still light out and returned at 1 in the morning. [2:08:05-2:09:45]
 - 1) He testifies to only knowing Taylor in passing and met her on this one occasion.
 - 2) He testifies to the only accessible door at the house being the side-door

- ii. Steven Hendricks testifies to seeing both Shad and Taylor going down into the basement and he went upstairs and went to bed. [2:10:33-2:11:50]
 - 1) He says that he last saw Chad at 1 or 2am on 22nd February 2022.
- iii. Steven Hendricks testifies to seeing Taylor come into the kitchen around 9:30am on the 22nd February and asked him if he had a pair of black frames readers glasses. [2:13:12-2:15:40]
 - 1) He testifies to giving Taylor the glasses and didn't notice any weird behaviour
 - 2) He testifies to having an argument with Terra and left the home approximately 40 minutes after meeting Taylor and was out for 6 hours.
 - 3) He testifies to returning to the home 6 hours later and was passed out because he was drinking.
- iv. Steven Hendricks testifies to Terra waking him up saying "I think I have found my sons head in a bucket" at around 2 or 3am or sometime in the middle of the night. [2:15:53-2:18:40]
 - 1) He testifies to going downstairs to seeing what she was talking about, he couldn't see anything
 - a) He says he went downstairs to the basement and blocked it out as he thought it was an animal and saw loads of hair.
 - b) He says that he called the police station and didn't call 911 because he did not know what was going on and was within 30 minutes that he was connected to the dispatcher.
- b. Cross exam [2:20:00]
 - i. The cross examination focused on reiterating points already covered in the direct exam. No new evidentiary claims, contradictions or timeline changes were introduced.
 - 1) Key observations: no new exhibits, no new impeachment attempts, arguments stayed within previously established testimony.
 - c. No redirect exam was conducted - released from sequestration order

Established in this testimony

Shad left with Taylor on the 21st February 2022 in the evening whilst it was still light out [4pm-7pm approx. hours]. Last seen Shad when he returned at 1am or 2am 22nd February 2022 with Taylor Schabusiness where both went down to the basement.
Saw Taylor at 9:30am, 22nd February in the kitchen before leaving the house 40 minutes later.

Witness Function

Establish Taylor Schabusiness character context.
Establish the timeline and account of events.

6. Witness #6 - State Witness #6 - Terra Packernick - Lead investigator [2:28:32]

The feed had cut off and direct exam of her testimony could not be extracted on court TV. Coverage resumes on Law & crime hereon whereupon we learnt that victim did not want audio or video from her testimony [1:12:19]

- a. Cross exam
 - i. Terra Packernick testifies to asking Steven Hendricks to look in the bucket to verify and he moved the towel up to look but he was unsure of what he was seeing.
 - ii. Terra Packernick testifies to Ava getting up and coming downstairs when police was already at the house.
- b. No redirect exam was conducted.

Witness Function

Establish the timeline and account of events.

7. Witness #7 - State Witness #7 - Ava Wheelock - Victims Sister (Minor testimony) [1:27:49]

- a. Direct exam
 - i. Ava Wheelock testifies to hearing a female voice downstairs in the basement when she returned to the residence on the 22nd February 2022. [1:31:38-1:32:50]
 - 1) She testifies to not hearing what was said or conversations.
- b. Cross exam
 - i. The cross examination focused on reiterating points already covered in the direct exam. No new evidentiary claims, contradictions or timeline changes were introduced.
 - 1) Key observations: no new exhibits, no new impeachment attempts, arguments stayed within previously established testimony.
- c. No redirect exam was conducted.

Witness Function

Advance the state timeline

Connection with prior witnesses

Connection with Steven Hendricks who said Shad and Taylor went down the basement at 1 or 2 am on 22nd

February 2022.

8. Witness #8 - State Witness #8 - Petra Schwab - Medical Examiner [2:59:59]

- a. Direct Exam
 - i. Petra Schwab testifies to moving around the scene, collecting evidence with 4 containers documented in total and approached the bucket with a human head in it, located at the bottom of the basement to the right. [3:08:35-3:12:25]
 - 1) She testifies to using an infant size body bags to remove what was found in the bucket and photographed it.
 - 2) She testifies to moving onto the next container after the container 1 [the bucket] which was a blue bag that was on a dresser in front of the bed in the basement.
 - 3) She testifies to the next container a pink and black backpack which was at the bottom of the bed, at the foot of the bed and the floor had some blood staining on it on the outside.
 - a) She testifies to human remains being found in the pink and black backpack.
 - ii. Petra Schwab testifies to finding a substantial amount of blood in the tote bin and found a human torso with the arms attached in the tote. [3:13:21-3:15:10]
- b. Cross Exam
 - i. Petra Schwab testifies to seeing mutilations in her career but never anything like this. [3:35:35-3:35:50]
 - ii. The cross examination primarily focused on reiterating points already covered in the direct exam. No new evidentiary claims, contradictions or timeline changes were introduced.
 - 1) Key observations: no new exhibits, no new impeachment attempts, arguments stayed within previously established testimony.
- c. No redirect exam

Witness Function

Advance the state timeline

Establishes Taylor Schabusiness's motive with the remains found in bags and totes.

9. Witness #9 - State Witness #9 - Michelle Czarenski - Crime Scene Analyst [3:43:09]

- a. Direct Exam
 - i. Michelle Czarenski testifies to her qualifications and role working as a criminalist for the police department. [3:43:35-3:44:10]
 - ii. Michelle Czarenski testifies to being at the residence and told that there was a body part was located at the residence. [3:45:10-3:45:40]
 - iii. Michelle Czarenski testifies to locating and collecting six knives at the scene which were located at the basement. [3:51:55-3:53:20]
 - 1) She testifies to locating three of the knives in one of the bags; two knives in the black bucket; and one of them in the teal tote.
 - a) She testifies to collecting a silver blade and brown wood handle with red substance from the Jimmy Choo bag located on a TV stand.
 - iv. Michelle Czarenski testifies to human remains with some clothing that were in the crockpot box. [3:55:06-3:55:21]
- b. Cross exam [4:00:03]
 - i. The cross examination focused on reiterating points already covered in the direct exam. No new evidentiary claims, contradictions or timeline changes were introduced.
 - 1) Key observations: no new exhibits, no new impeachment attempts, arguments stayed within previously established testimony.
- c. No redirect exam was conducted

Witness Function

Advance the state timeline

10. Witness #10 - State Witness #10 - Baeligh Andrae - Forensics Specialist [4:31:45]

- a. Direct Exam
 - i. Baeligh Andrae testifies to collecting prints from the crockpot box that was found in the mini van. [4:45:31-4:45:45]
 - ii. Baeligh Andrae testifies that the blood went through multiple layers of the top mattress and not the other mattresses. [4:57:25-4:57:50]
 - iii. Baeligh Andrae testifies to collecting 2 latent fingerprints on the Shout cleaning bottle recovered from the scene. [5:00:00-5:02:40]

- b. Cross exam [5:13:36]
 - i. The cross examination focused on reiterating points already covered in the direct exam. No new evidentiary claims, contradictions or timeline changes were introduced.
 - 1) Key observations: no new exhibits, no new impeachment attempts, arguments stayed within previously established testimony.
- c. Redirect exam [5:31:26]
 - i. The redirect examination focused on reiterating points already covered in the direct exam. No new evidentiary claims, contradictions or timeline changes were introduced.
 - 1) Key observations: no new exhibits, no new impeachment attempts, arguments stayed within previously established testimony.
- d. No recross exam was conducted

Witness Function

Advance the state timeline

11. Witness #11 - State Witness #11 - Philip Scanlon - Detective at GBPD [5:49:29]

- a. Direct Exam
 - i. Philip Scanlon testifies to responding to the scene at 6:30am on 23 February 2022 and met Sgt. Tom Bain, Brad Schroff, Sgt. Brester, then later, Ms. Andrae arrived and Det. Cassie Packler arrived. [5:52:48-5:56:27]
 - 1) He testifies to Det. Graf and Det. Kempf spoke with Taylor Schabusiness before he had arrived.
 - a) He testifies to learning that that Taylor was providing them information regarding the body, the containers, and bags which prompted them they will be looking for body parts.
 - ii. Philip Scanlon testifies to finding it remarkable that he observed no blood on the carpeting and there being dried blood on the bed and red substance and bodily tissue on the jimmy choo bag. [6:19:14-6:20:30]
 - iii. Philip Scanlon testifies to finding a methamphetamine pipe; a crystal meth pipe and what he thought was a gen baby. [6:22:46-6:24:20]
 - 1) He testifies to his training and experience working in the drugs task force for a number of years to understand why he suspected drugs.
 - iv. Philip Scanlon testifies to finding a silver dog choke collar chain at the scene and it was displayed for the jury. [6:27:35-6:28:55]
 - v. Philip Scanlon testifies to finding a second chain collected at the scene and described that the chain was a closed shut looped through type of chain. [6:30:03-6:30:45]
 - vi. Philip Scanlon testifies to finding blood stains on the mattress on the left side of the comforter, in front of the pillow and blood drops on the lower part of the mattress. [6:42:30-6:46:56]
 - 1) He testifies to observing a cellphone on the bed where there was a blood staining near it.
 - a) He testifies to moving the items revealing a larger blood stain on the mattress.
 - b) He testifies to the blood soaking through the mattress.
 - vii. Philip Scanlon testifies to observing red substance on the shower walls and the seat of the shower. [6:51:45-6:54:10]
 - 1) He testifies to observing a squeegee behind the shower curtain.
 - 2) He testifies to the blood staining on the walls after they had moved the curtain.
 - 3) He testifies to biological material that was caught in the drain.
 - viii. Philip Scanlon testifies to moving the bed because he thought it was surprising to there being a lack of blood on the carpeting. [6:54:30-6:55:24]
 - 1) He testifies to there being blood stains and wiped up substance underneath the bed.

Court adjourned for the day!

Timestamps based on Law & Court Network & Court TV channels, see sources!

