

Metro

PANEL PICKED FOR WOODALL SENTENCING

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Admitted killer Robert Keith Woodall of Greenville, Ky., probably won't learn until next week what his sentence will be for killing a 16-year-old girl.

Jury selection began Tuesday in a hearing to sentence Woodall, who has pleaded guilty to the Jan. 25, 1997, kidnapping, rape and murder of Sarah Hansen.

Caldwell Circuit Judge Bill Cunningham advised potential jurors the hearing would likely continue into next week.

Prosecutors and defense attorneys have indicated they may call more than 40 witnesses. The hearing was moved to Caldwell County from Muhlenberg County because of publicity.

Woodall, arrested a few days after Miss Hansen's murder, pleaded guilty in April, just before he was to stand trial.

Miss Hansen, a junior at Muhlenberg South High School where she was a cheerleader and band member, was abducted from the parking lot of a Greenville convenience store.

She was taken to nearby Luzerne Lake, where she was raped. Her throat was slashed and she was thrown into the water.

Woodall's guilty plea was made without a plea bargain with prosecutors, and Muhlenberg Commonwealth's Attorney Ralph Vick has said he will ask jurors to sentence Woodall to death.

Other sentencing options include life without parole, life without

possibility of parole for 25 years, straight life and a term fixed between 20 and 50 years in prison.

In Kentucky, prisoners are eligible for parole consideration after half their term, or no more than 12 years.

A panel of 74 potential jurors was selected Tuesday morning, and Cunningham and the opposing attorneys began questioning each individually for about 15 minutes. Questioning is to continue this morning.

Twelve jurors and two alternates will be seated .

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