



People for Proper Policing in North Wales

Fatal hit-and-run driver gets hospital detention order.

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A driver who knocked down and killed an 11-year-old boy as she drove at double the speed limit was given an **indefinite hospital detention order** today.

Hannah Saaf, 28, was found after a nine-day police hunt sitting in a field 10 miles from the scene of the crash in Bristol. When she was taken into custody she broke down in tears and said: "I've stolen a life".

It emerged at today's hearing at Bristol crown court that Saaf, a law graduate and mother of twins, had **spent the night before the crash on 1 May smoking cannabis and listening to music, and had not slept.**

It was revealed that the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA) had revoked Saaf's driving licence due to concerns about her mental health in February. Between February 2008 and April 2009 she was detained under the mental health act and **discharged four times.**

The family of **Sam Riddall**, who was killed as he walked home from church, said they were trying to forgive her.

Speaking outside court, **Sam's father, Martin**, who works for a Christian organisation, said: *"In four days' time we celebrate Christmas and it's going to be our first Christmas without our Sam. It's going to be very hard for us indeed, because we still miss him very much.*

"At Christmas we remember that God sent his son Jesus into the world to bring peace. It's the same God that is giving us the strength and helping us to forgive Hannah for the terrible thing she's done to us by killing our son.

"It's not easy, it's not going to be easy. But with God's help we know that it is possible."

Sam was hit as he walked back from a Christian service for young people in Westbury-on-Trym with a GP, Peter Harbord, the father of one of his friends.

Robin Shellard, prosecuting, said: *"As he walked he (Harbord) became aware of a car coming towards them. Dr Harbord was aware the speed limit was 30mph so was shocked to see the car heading towards them at speed."*

Harbord was clipped by the car. When he reached Sam he realised the boy was beyond help. Saaf ditched her car, a white Ford Focus estate, and walked away.

The police search for Saaf, of Bristol, ended when she was found in a field in Somerset. She had been sleeping rough in a barn.

Shellard told the court Saaf was driving at at least 61mph before she attempted to stop.

Saaf made no comment during police questioning, but handed over a statement prepared by her solicitor, in which she admitted driving the vehicle.

She said: "Since I've had the accident I've been alone and very scared. I've found myself in a grave and serious situation and felt out of my depth.

"I'm deeply upset with the loss of Sam's life, as a mother myself I feel greatly for his parents. I feel deep remorse and am very sorry for what has happened."

Saaf previously pleaded guilty to causing death by dangerous driving, driving not in accordance with a licence, failing to stop at an accident, failing to report an accident and driving without insurance.

Sentencing her, **Judge Simon Darwall-Smith** said if it were not for Saaf's mental state she would have faced **"a very substantial custodial sentence"**.

"You were not permitted to drive at all, you were clearly under the influence of cannabis, and you were doing so while driving twice the speed limit allowed.

"Finally, you left the scene having killed the victim. There's no sentence a court can pass that will ever compensate for a tragic loss such as this."

The PPP comments ... 11 year old Sam was killed because the 'system' allowed a dangerous drug user out of Hospital on **four occasions**. The DVLC had revoked her driving licence (we assume on medical advice!). Did the DVLC or the medics advise the local Police Force of her condition and was the vehicle legally hers ??!. Will this sentence actually keep her off the road?. Her vehicle should be impounded. No doubt her legal representation was on legal aid. The people in the system claim that being wise after the event is easy BUT crime and incident PREVENTION is all about being WISE AFTER AN EVENT which serves as a warning of worst things to come. We believe that drink, drugs and otherwise deranged individual drivers cause most serious and fatal incidents. These incidents are then used to justify the abusive use of cameras and the breathalyser to persecute millions of safe and responsible drivers whilst the maniacs continue to put us all at risk. 4 years ago we warned about the dangers of the so-called 'recreational' drugs