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QB Brendon Lewis' journey from Colorado to Nevada to Memphis football

SPORTS, 1B

THE COMMERCIAL APPEAL

FRIDAY, APRIL 25, 2025 | COMMERCIALAPPEAL.COM

PART OF THE USA TODAY NETWORK

Judge: Ja Morant acted in self-defense when he hit teen in pickup game

Lucas Finton
Memphis Commercial Appeal
USA TODAY NETWORK – TENNESSEE

A Shelby County Circuit Court judge ruled April 21 that Memphis Grizzlies star Ja Morant cannot be sued by the teen he punched during a pickup bas-

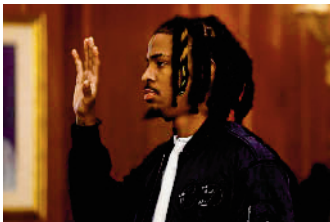
ketball game at Morant's home in Eads, according to a ruling shared by one of Morant's lawyers.

Judge Carol Chumney has presided over the case since Joshua Holloway sued Morant in September 2022. In April 2024, she ruled that Morant would be allowed to plead self-defense in the

case. Her ruling cemented that Morant acted in self-defense.

"The court also takes judicial notice, and from the testimony, that Mr. Morant has an exceptional professional basketball career, and Mr. Holloway, now an

See **JA MORANT**, Page 2A



Ja Morant takes an oath before the stand to testify during a trial about his involvement in an incident at his home on Dec. 11, 2023, at Shelby County Circuit Court in Memphis. STU BOYD II/THE COMMERCIAL APPEAL

GIVING A VOICE TO THE VOICELESS



Pope Francis blesses a child at a refugee camp in Bangui, Central African Republic, in November 2015. Francis focused the Catholic Church and the entire world on one mission: helping the poor, addressing global inequalities and placing the attention of the world on those on the periphery. PHOTOS BY STEFANO RELLANDINI/REUTERS FILE

Francis' papacy mattered for world's poor, marginalized

Stan Chu Ilo DePaul University | THE CONVERSATION

The death of Pope Francis at his residence on April 21 marked the end of a significant era for the Vatican and the global Catholic following of nearly 1.4 billion faithful. The first pope from the Americas and also the first to come from outside the West in the modern era, Pope Francis was elected leader of the Catholic Church in March 2013. By the time the Argentinian Cardinal Jorge Bergoglio was elected pope, there was a general feeling that the Catholic Church was reaching the end of an era. At the time, the church was beset by crises, from corruption to clerical sexual abuse.

See **AFRICA**, Page 4A



In a 2015 trip to the Central African Republic, Pope Francis visited both a Christian church and a mosque to promote the message of peace in the war-torn nation.

What charges are ex-MPD officers accused of killing Tyre Nichols facing

Jack Armstrong
Memphis Commercial Appeal
USA TODAY NETWORK – TENNESSEE

The state criminal trial of four former Memphis police officers in the 2023 death of Tyre Nichols is set to begin on April 28.

The trial comes after three officers, Tadarrius Bean, Demetrius Haley and Justin Smith Jr., were found guilty of federal offenses in January 2024. Two former officers, Michael Mills Jr. and Emmitt Martin, entered into plea deals and were found guilty to using excessive force in a conspiracy to witness tamper during the federal trial.

Bean, Haley and Smith were found guilty in the federal trial on murder charges and Martin's conviction will soon get clarity about his plea deal. All five men are charged with first-degree murder, second-degree murder, aggravated assault-acting in concert, two counts of aggravated kidnapping, two counts of official misconduct and one count of official oppression.

Tennessee state statute defines second-degree murder as "the intentional killing of another." It's a step above first-degree murder (an intentional killing) but a step below voluntary manslaughter, considering it committed "in the heat of passion."

While second-degree murder is not eligible for the death penalty, a conviction for second-degree murder in Tennessee can result in 60 years in prison and a fine of \$50,000.

The five officers could face life in prison due to the addition of aggravated assault-acting in concert, aggravated kidnapping, official misconduct and official oppression.

Jack Armstrong covers Memphis news and the environment for the Commercial Appeal. He can be reached at jack.armstrong@commercialappeal.com.



A moment of silence is held during a march in memory of Tyre Nichols prior to a vigil for the two-year anniversary of Nichols' death at the corner where Nichols was shot by Memphis Police Department officers in Memphis on Jan. 6, 2023. CHRIS DAY/THE COMMERCIAL APPEAL

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