

Youth acquitted of rape

Job Corps student
held 6 months in jail

By Renee Ordway
Of the NEWS Staff

After spending six months in jail awaiting trial, a jury on Wednesday found Tyjay Hill not guilty of raping a fellow 21-year-old Job Corps student last August.

Hill, 20, of Brooklyn, N.Y., has been in custody, unable to make bail since the alleged rape occurred. He was released Wednesday afternoon after a jury of 11 men and one woman deliberated less than an hour and acquitted him of gross sexual assault.

Hill said on the stand Wednesday morning that the sexual act that

occurred in the woods near the Husson College softball field was a consensual act between himself and the woman who later reported the rape.

His testimony sharply contrasted with testimony the woman gave on Tuesday in which she said Hill pushed her to the ground and climbed on her back and had forced anal and vaginal intercourse with her.

The two-day trial was filled with contradictory testimony with one witness testifying that the woman was very upset and crying when she returned to the dormitory after the alleged rape, and another saying that she saw the woman and Hill leaving the bushes laughing and joking with each other.

During cross examination of Hill, Assistant District Attorney Sharon Silberman-Hummels pointed to statements Hill made the day after the alleged rape.

On the stand Hill said the woman did not cry or tell him that she did not want to have sex and that she cried only when they returned to the dormitory out of concern that her boyfriend would find out what they did.

In earlier statements to Bangor Police Detective Gary Higgins, Hill reportedly said the woman cried as she got dressed immediately following the sexual encounter.

He also told Higgins that on the way back to the dormitory he repeatedly asked the woman why she was crying. On the stand on Wednesday he said that did not happen because she wasn't crying.

Silberman-Hummels pointed out the inconsistencies to the jury during her closing remarks and stressed that the jurors had to weigh the credibility of the victim and the defendant before rendering its decision.

Hill's attorney, Julio DeSanctis, was dramatic during his closing remarks and painted a picture of a woman who walked away hand and hand with Hill to a local "lover's lane." He indicated the woman decided to charge rape after she realized that another student had seen them leaving the wooded area known to be a location for sexual encounters. DeSanctis said the

woman was afraid her boyfriend would find out she had sex with Hill.

He pointed to medical testimony that indicated there were no abrasions to the woman's vagina or rectum and said abrasions on the woman's knees and elbows were consistent with the sexual position the couple chose to use.

He stressed that the woman testified that Hill never threatened or hit her.

The woman did testify that Hill did not threaten her but that the weight of his body on her back prevented her from getting up.

DeSanctis said his client was very pleased with the verdict and would be immediately released from custody. He said he expected that Hill would return to complete his training with the Job Corps.