

The Mississippi Jury Verdict Reporter

The Most Current and Complete Summary of Mississippi Jury Verdicts

May 2026

Statewide Jury Verdict Coverage

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Auto Negligence - After being rear-ended (it was a hard hit) while dropping off kids, a school bus driver complained of a cervical disc injury (aggravating pre-existing injuries and causing a new one) all of which led to radiating pain and then an ACDF at C4-5 and C5-6 – the defendant admitted fault and diminished damages – after a four-day trial a Carthage jury awarded the plaintiff special damages of \$332,000 and the odd number of \$168,000 more for her pain and suffering, all of which equaled the round number of \$500,000

Quates v. Tyson Foods, 23-1

Plaintiff: Rocky Wilkins, John A. Waits, Bradley S. Kelly and William L. Morton, *Morgan & Morgan*, Jackson

Defense: Stuart Robinson, Jr. and Richard G. Norris, *Wells Marble &*

Hurst, Jackson

Verdict: \$500,000 for plaintiff

Court: **Leake**

Judge: Chris Posey

Date: 5-21-26

It was a Friday afternoon on 4-22-22 and Nancy Quates, a teacher and school bus driver in Leake County, was taking kids home on a school bus for the local district. She proceeded on two-lane MS 16. It was a typical school bus. The bus was big. It was yellow. Quates had stopped to let children off the bus. The flashers were illuminated and the familiar school bus stop sign had been deployed.

That same afternoon Benjamin Wilbanks was operating a Ford F-150 for his employer, Tyson Foods. He proceeded on MS 16 and approached the Quates school bus. The record does not indicate why, but for



A recreation of the point of impact in this crash

Historical Mississippi Verdict

Medical Negligence - A retired Air Force Colonel was injured when stung by a stingray at the beach in 1975 – he alleged negligence by an ER doctor and hospital staff in treating the injury which led to a lengthy recovery and him nearly losing his leg – on the third trial (after two mistrials), the jury found the hospital negligent but concluded the plaintiff was already fully compensated by his \$22,500 settlement with the ER doctor

Rawls v. Memorial Hospital,

Plaintiff: Clyde Hurlbert, Gulfport

Defense: William Rainey, Gulfport

Verdict: Finding negligence but

conclusion plaintiff already

compensated by settlement with

other party

Court: **Harrison**

Judge: J. Ruble Griffin

Date: July 15, 1982

Don Rawls, then age 54 and a WWII veteran, was a retired Air Force Colonel on May 24, 1975. As he walked a Gulf Coast beach, he was stung by a stingray. He immediately sought treatment at Memorial Hospital in Gulfport. His care was managed by an ER physician, P.B. Bailey. He was treated and released that day. Rawls alleged that he was in pain and shouldn't have been discharged.

The next day Rawls had a high fever and reported to the hospital on Keesler Air Force Base. He was then hospitalized for 39 days and nearly had his leg amputated. Rawls endured significant pain and scarring.

Rawls filed suit a year later. He alleged negligence by both Bailey and the hospital. Bailey settled in

1979 for \$22,500. That would be about \$100,000 in 2026 dollars.

The case went to trial three times against the hospital. The first two times resulted in mistrials. The third trial was conducted in July of 1982. This was seven years after the incident.

The jury found the hospital was negligent but wrote on the verdict form and that the jury had "assessed damages at an amount already compensated for." Rawls thus took nothing and that was the end of the case.

The presiding trial judge in this case (Griffin) was elevated to the Mississippi Supreme Court upon his election in 1986. He died two years into his term in 1988 of lung cancer. He'd served as a circuit court judge for 13 years from 1972-1985.

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