

# Chris Bateman Exonerated Of Drunk Driving By Pub's CCTV Video

Chris Bateman's driving while intoxicated conviction [has been overturned](#) on appeal based on the new evidence of CCTV video recorded at the pub in Sunderland, England where he was arrested. Sunderland is almost 300 miles north of London.

Bateman stopped at two pubs on the early evening of June 26, 2014. He had one beer at both pubs. Just before 10 p.m. he drove to the residence of his ex-partner to talk to her. During their conversation he started to



Chris Bateman in January 2015 (Sunderland Echo)

shout at her. She told him to come back later when he had calmed down. Bateman got into his Volkswagen Passat and drove to the nearby Buffs Club, on Old Mill Road in Sunderland's Southwick borough.

Bateman's partner called the police. She told them about the incident, that she could smell alcohol on his breath, and that he was going to Buffs.

Police officers went to Buffs and arrested Bateman for suspicion of assault. The police record showed Bateman was arrested at 10:30 p.m. He was taken to the police station where at 11:45 p.m. he was given a breathalyzer test that found 97 microgrammes of alcohol in 100ml of breath. The legal limit is 35 microgrammes. That is the blood alcohol equivalent of 0.22, with the legal limit 0.08.

Bateman was charged with driving while intoxicated based on his admission he had driven to Buffs from his former girlfriend's house, but he was not charged with assault.

Bateman refused to pled guilty, and his bench trial before a magistrate was held on November 7, 2014.

The prosecution's case was circumstantial because there was no witness to him driving drunk. The prosecution asserted Bateman had to have been intoxicated when he drove to Buffs because he was there for less than 30 minutes before his arrest, and he still had almost three times the legal limit of alcohol in his system when breathalyzed more than an hour later.

Bateman's defense was the police report was wrong. He testified that he wasn't intoxicated when he drove to Buffs about 10 p.m., because he only had one beer at each of the two pubs he visited during the two hours before arriving at his former partner's residence. He also said he had a number of beers during the hour-and-a-half hours he was at Buffs before the police arrived at 11:30 p.m. -- not 10:30. An employee at Buffs supported Bateman's account by testifying the police came to the club about 11:30.

The magistrate accepted the police officer's testimony about arriving at 10:30 p.m., and convicted him of driving to the club while intoxicated.

Bateman was sentenced on January 6, 2015

to a two year driving ban, ordered to perform 130 hours of community service, and to pay prosecution costs of £120 and a £60 victim surcharge. His driving ban [was stayed](#) pending the outcome of his appeal. However, Bateman, a self-employed taxi driver, had his taxi license revoked.

Bateman's appeal presented the new evidence of CCTV video from Buffs that showed he arrived at 10:05 p.m., and he consumed at least eight beers before the police arrived at 11:30 p.m. The video discredited the police trial testimony about the time of his arrest, while it corroborated the testimony of Bateman and the Buffs employee about when the police arrived, and that he became intoxicated after arriving at Buffs. On May 6, 2015 the Newcastle Crown Court quashed Bateman's conviction as a miscarriage of justice, and ordered return of the payments he had made.

Afterwards the 49-year-old Bateman, a taxi driver for 28 years, [told reporters](#): "My life has been on hold for 11 months. My taxi licence was revoked and the DVLA required me to send my licence away. Now my driving licence is being returned, my taxi badges are being returned, my community order has been canceled and my fine is being returned."



Chris Bateman by his taxi in January 2015 (Sunderland Echo)

Source: [Taxi driver gets drink-drive conviction quashed](#) after CCTV proves off-duty drinking defence, *Sunderland Echo*, May 7, 2015

[Sunderland taxi driver fights](#) to clear his name after drink-drive conviction, *Sunderland Echo*, January 8, 2015

[Drink-driving Sunderland taxi driver](#) allowed to keep his licence, *Sunderland Echo*, January 7, 2015

## Hodgkins cont. from page 7

On September 24, 2015 the Supreme Court denied the State of Florida's Motion for Rehearing. On October 12, 2015 the Supreme Court issued a Mandate to the Pasco County Circuit Court commanding it to act in accordance with the Court's opinion of June 18, 2015. [Hodgkins, 55, was released](#) from death row to the street on October 12, 2015. A judgment of acquittal was entered by the Pasco County Circuit Court on October 20, 2015. Hodgkins' probation violation and sentence based on his murder conviction was also vacated. The constitutional prohibition against double-jeopardy bars Hodgkins' retrial.

After Hodgkins' acquittal by the Supreme Court his 34-year-old son, Wayne Hodgkins, [told reporters](#) that he believed "from the get-go" that his father was innocent. He said about Lodge and his father, "They just got too much history and they (were) just too loving with each other." Wayne said he knew Lodge as "Aunt Teresa," and that after his father was released from prison he and his father spent time with Lodge, they went fishing with her, and watched movies together.

[Click here to read](#) the Florida Supreme Court's ruling in *Derral Wayne Hodgkins v. State of Florida*, No. SC13-1004 (FL Sup. Ct., 6-18-2015).

Source: [Derral Wayne Hodgkins v. State of Florida](#), No. SC13-1004 (Flor. Sup. Ct., 6-18-2015) (Reversing conviction based on insufficient evidence to support guilt beyond a reasonable doubt.)

[Pasco man released from death row](#) after murder conviction overturned, By Erin Maloney, Bay New 9 (St. Petersburg, FL.), October 13, 2015

[Supreme Court vacates death sentence](#) of Pasco man convicted in Land O'Lakes murder, By Molly Moorhead, Tampa Bay Times, June 18, 2015

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