Benjamin Mendy found not guilty of six counts of rape

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Manchester City footballer Benjamin Mendy has been found not guilty of six counts of rape and one count of sexual assault, relating to four young women or teenagers.  
  
Jurors could not reach verdicts on one count of rape and one of attempted rape and a retrial will take place.  
  
Louis Saha Matturie, 41, was also found not guilty of three counts of rape.  
  
The jury failed to reach verdicts on three counts of rape and three counts of sexual assault against him.  
  
Mr Mendy, 28, and his friend Mr Matturie, had been accused of raping women at the player’s home in Prestbury, Cheshire, and at a Manchester flat.  
  
Mr Mendy covered his face with both hands as the jury foreman repeated “not guilty” to the six counts.  
  
During a six-month trial at Chester Crown Court, prosecutors told the jury Mr Mendy was a “predator” who turned the pursuit of women for sex into a game.  
  
But jurors were also told by defence lawyers that while the trial, involving money, sex and celebrity, had “all the makings of a good drama”, it came with a significant “plot twist” – that the accused were innocent.  
  
The unanimous verdicts were delivered on Wednesday by the seven men and four women on the jury, one juror having been discharged earlier for medical reasons.  
  
The verdicts could not be reported until jurors concluded considering the remaining two counts, after they were given a majority direction by Judge Steven Everett, meaning he would accept a 10-1 majority on any verdict.  
  
But after 14 days of deliberation, jurors could not reach verdicts on Mr Mendy’s alleged attempted rape of a woman, 29, in 2018 and the alleged rape of another woman, 24, in October 2020.  
  
Judge Everett discharged the jury on Friday, ending the trial.  
  
Both men had been on trial since 10 August, accused by 13 women of multiple sexual offences.  
  
Lockdown-busting parties were held both at Mr Mendy’s home and an apartment he rented on Chapel Street near Manchester city centre, the court heard.  
  
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