

Murder charge against Reed dismissed Friday

The case against Mickey Reed, accused murderer of Loretta Lynn Willoughby, was thrown out of court last Friday due to lack of enough evidence to sustain a conviction.

According to Reed's attorney, William Chambliss, the order dismissing the case cited that the Commonwealth did not have proof to sustain a conviction of Reed and questioned whether a crime was committed at all.

"The evidence gathered said that Willoughby was killed by a blow to the head, but it didn't rule out an accident," Chambliss said. "It certainly didn't connect Mickey Reed to it."

The dismissal comes after an 18-month grand jury investigation into Willoughby's death, and a trial date for Reed had been set for May 15.

Missing for three months, Willoughby's body was found in a wooded area behind Irvine on May 10, 1985 by Reed. She was 15.

A coroner's report said that Willoughby's death was a

homicide.

The commonwealth is still able to continue investigating the case and return it to the grand jury again if more information surfaces, but Assistant Commonwealth Attorney Phillip Owens said he doubts the investigation will continue unless something new shows up.

Owens said the grand jury, which does not determine guilt, did a thorough job in its investigation and felt there was enough evidence to make a charge; but as the trial drew closer, the evidence wasn't enough to convict Reed.

"I could prove she was dead, I could prove how she died, but I couldn't place her with anyone...it was too remote," Owens said. "The judge asked me...I told him what evidence I had and he said, 'That's not much, is it?'"

Owens said that there wasn't a statute of limitations on a felony case in Kentucky so the case would not be closed.

"We never close a case," he said.