

Ozark man gets 30 years in jail for violent robbery

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An Ozark man who beat a vendor with a baseball bat last year even after the vendor gave up his wallet and cell phone was sentenced Thursday to 30 years in prison.

Dale County Circuit Judge Kenneth Quattlebaum sentenced Katoni Tellis, 24, for first degree robbery of a local delivery driver. Tellis had entered a blind plea for entering into a storage building near Deloney's Restaurant on U.S. 231 in Ozark around 4 a.m. Sept. 20, 2006, while the driver was loading his truck in the building. Tellis allegedly took the driver's wallet and cell phone and then struck the man in the head with a baseball bat, locked the building and fled from the scene.

Dale County District Attorney Kirke Adams said Tellis was later identified in a photo lineup.

Adams said Tellis claimed he was on drugs at the time of the robbery, but the District Attorney's office still asked Quattlebaum to consider a lengthy sentence.

"This was a senseless crime enhanced by the fact that Tellis hit the victim with a bat after he had already stolen his property," Adams said. "This case is a prime example that drug use does lead to prison.

"Society is tired of hearing excuses from criminals blaming drug use for their actions. No one ever wants treatment until they get caught."