

FIRST DISTRICT COURT OF APPEAL OF FLORIDA

Antron Colston v. State of Florida

No. 1D2022-2215 (Fla. 1st DCA June 18, 2025) · No. 1D2022-2215 · Decided June 18, 2025

SUMMARY

The First District Court of Appeal of Florida affirmed Antron Colston’s convictions and life sentence for first-degree murder and armed robbery. The court held that GPS records containing handwritten markings were admissible under the business-records exception and that username information from cell phones was not inadmissible hearsay.

CASE DETAILS

COURT	First District Court of Appeal of Florida
WRITING FOR THE COURT	Per Curiam; Chief Judge Osterhaus; Judge Bilbrey; Judge Nordby
JURISDICTION	First District Court of Appeal, Florida
DECIDED	June 18, 2025
DOCKET	1D2022-2215
DISPOSITION	affirmed
PROCEDURAL POSTURE	Colston appealed his judgment and life sentence following convictions for first-degree murder and armed robbery, challenging the admission of GPS records with handwritten marks and username information extracted from two cell phones.
STANDARD OF REVIEW	Evidentiary rulings are generally reviewed for abuse of discretion, but whether a statement constitutes hearsay is reviewed de novo as a question of law.
PRECEDENTIAL VALUE	published
PARTIES	Antron Colston v. State of Florida

TOPICS

- hearsay
- evidence
- appellate procedure
- standard of review
- criminal procedure

PRACTICE AREAS

- Florida criminal law
- evidence
- criminal appellate procedure

QUESTIONS PRESENTED

1. Whether handwritten marks on GPS-record screenshots rendered the exhibit inadmissible hearsay despite the business-records exception.
2. Whether username information, including an email address incorporating the victim's name, constituted inadmissible hearsay.

HOLDINGS

1. The handwritten marks did not make the GPS exhibit inadmissible under the hearsay rule or remove it from the business-records exception because Colston identified no authority prohibiting such marks on a business record and no record evidence showed that the marks were not made in the ordinary course of a regularly conducted business activity.
2. The username information was not inadmissible hearsay because it was not established that the information was offered to prove the truth of a matter asserted, and the court rejected the argument that a username necessarily constitutes a statement establishing ownership.

KEY QUOTATIONS

“the question of whether a statement is hearsay is a matter of law and is subject to de novo review on appeal.” (at 2)

FACTUAL BACKGROUND

The State introduced GPS data from a witness's ankle monitor, including digital map screenshots with blue handwritten marks indicating the witness's location at the time of the crime. The State also introduced username information, including an email address incorporating the victim's name, extracted from two cell phones found at the crime scene. Colston was convicted of first-degree murder and armed robbery and sentenced to life imprisonment.

PROCEDURAL HISTORY

Before trial, Colston moved to exclude GPS records from a witness's ankle monitor and objected to username information extracted from two cell phones. The circuit court admitted both categories of evidence, a jury convicted Colston of first-degree murder and armed robbery, and the court imposed a life sentence. The First District Court of Appeal affirmed.

DISPOSITION

affirmed

CASES CITED

- Cannon v. State, 180 So. 3d 1023, 1037 (Fla. 2015)
- Jean-Philippe v. State, 123 So. 3d 1071, 1080 (Fla. 2013)
- Thurston v. State, 307 So. 3d 714, 716 (Fla. 4th DCA 2020)

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