

SUPREME COURT OF KENTUCKY

Matthews v. Commonwealth

168 S.W.3d 14 (Ky. 2005) · No. 2003-SC-0364-MR · Decided April 21, 2005

SUMMARY

The Supreme Court of Kentucky affirmed Walter Gary Matthews, Jr.'s convictions and 45-year sentence for manufacturing methamphetamine, possession of marijuana, possession of drug paraphernalia, and being a first-degree persistent felony offender. The court held that Matthews's request for disposition under Article III of the Interstate Agreement on Detainers waived the shorter Article IV time limit, and it rejected his claims concerning prosecutorial misconduct, an evidentiary hearing, confession suppression, the directed verdict, and the need for a Faretta hearing.

CASE DETAILS

COURT	Supreme Court of Kentucky
WRITING FOR THE COURT	Wintersheimer, Justice
JURISDICTION	Kentucky
DECIDED	April 21, 2005
DOCKET	2003-SC-0364-MR
DISPOSITION	affirmed
PROCEDURAL POSTURE	Direct appeal from a judgment of conviction entered after a jury trial.
STANDARD OF REVIEW	The court reviewed factual findings supporting the suppression ruling for substantial evidence and legal conclusions de novo; prosecutorial-misconduct claims for overall trial fairness and, when unpreserved, for palpable error; the denial of a directed verdict under the sufficiency-of-the-evidence standard; and the asserted failure to conduct a Faretta hearing as a legal issue.
PRECEDENTIAL VALUE	published precedential opinion
PARTIES	Walter Gary Matthews, Jr. v. Commonwealth of Kentucky

TOPICS

- criminal procedure
- speedy trial
- miranda rights
- suppression of evidence
- appellate procedure

PRACTICE AREAS

QUESTIONS PRESENTED

1. Whether Matthews's request for disposition under Article III of the Interstate Agreement on Detainers waived the shorter Article IV trial deadline and whether the case was timely tried.
2. Whether prosecutorial misconduct or palpable error denied Matthews a fair trial.
3. Whether the trial court abused its discretion by failing to conduct an evidentiary hearing concerning which party initiated the IAD proceedings.
4. Whether Matthews's ineffective-assistance claim could be resolved on direct appeal.
5. Whether the confession obtained after renewed questioning and Miranda warnings was voluntary and admissible.
6. Whether the evidence was sufficient to submit the charge of manufacturing methamphetamine to the jury.
7. Whether the trial court was required to conduct a Faretta hearing before permitting Matthews to act as co-counsel for limited purposes.

HOLDINGS

1. When a prisoner affirmatively requests disposition under Article III after the Commonwealth has initiated an Article IV request, the prisoner waives conflicting Article IV rights, including the shorter 120-day deadline; the Article III 180-day period governs.
2. The trial court properly denied dismissal because the Article III 180-day period governed and was satisfied; the record did not establish a violation requiring dismissal.
3. The alleged prosecutorial misconduct did not deny Matthews due process or constitute palpable error because the challenged comments either were not improper in context or were isolated and did not affect the fairness of the trial.
4. The trial court was not required to hold an evidentiary hearing concerning which party filed first under the IAD.
5. The court declined to address Matthews's ineffective-assistance claim on direct appeal.
6. The confession obtained by the second detective was admissible because Matthews knowingly, intelligently, and voluntarily waived his Miranda rights, and the interrogation did not violate the Fifth Amendment.
7. The trial court properly denied a directed verdict because sufficient evidence supported a finding that Matthews possessed the chemicals necessary to manufacture methamphetamine.
8. No Faretta hearing was required because Matthews did not waive counsel or represent himself before the jury; his limited participation in filing pro se motions and conferring with counsel did not trigger Faretta's requirements.

KEY QUOTATIONS

“Accordingly, we hold that the Commonwealth had one hundred eighty days from October 10, 2002, within which to bring Matthews to trial and that such requirement was satisfied in this case.” (168 S.W.3d at 19)

“Only if the ‘totality of the circumstances surrounding the interrogation’ reveal both an uncoerced choice and the requisite level of comprehension may a court properly conclude that the Miranda rights have been waived by the defendant.” (168 S.W.3d at 22)

FACTUAL BACKGROUND

Matthews was arrested in Kentucky after a high-speed car chase involving a vehicle that contained what police described as a rolling methamphetamine laboratory. After questioning, he was released on bond, but his parole on a federal conviction was revoked and he was returned to prison in Illinois. Kentucky and Matthews each initiated procedures under the Interstate Agreement on Detainers, and Matthews was later returned to Kentucky, where he was tried and convicted. During questioning, Matthews initially invoked his right to remain silent, but after a later reinitiation of questioning and renewed Miranda warnings, he gave a confession concerning the methamphetamine laboratory.

PROCEDURAL HISTORY

Matthews was convicted of manufacturing methamphetamine, possession of marijuana, possession of drug paraphernalia, and being a first-degree persistent felony offender. He received an aggregate sentence of forty-five years. The Supreme Court of Kentucky reviewed his claims concerning the Interstate Agreement on Detainers, prosecutorial misconduct, an evidentiary hearing, ineffective assistance of counsel, suppression of his confession, the sufficiency of the evidence supporting the manufacturing conviction, and the need for a Faretta hearing.

DISPOSITION

affirmed

CASES CITED

- Yellen v. Cooper, 828 F.2d 1471 (10th Cir. 1987)
- United States v. Eaddy, 595 F.2d 341 (6th Cir. 1979)
- State v. York, 66 Ohio App. 3d 149, 583 N.E.2d 1046 (1990)
- State v. Webb, 570 N.W.2d 913 (Iowa 1997)
- Shewan v. State, 396 So. 2d 1133 (Fla. Dist. Ct. App. 1980)
- State v. Willoughby, 83 Hawai'i 496, 927 P.2d 1379 (Ct. App. 1996)
- State v. Burrus, 151 Ariz. 729, 729 P.2d 926 (Ct. App. 1986)
- New York v. Hill, 528 U.S. 110 (2000)
- United States v. Mauro, 436 U.S. 340 (1978)
- Slaughter v. Commonwealth, 744 S.W.2d 407 (Ky. 1987)
- Donnelly v. DeChristoforo, 416 U.S. 637 (1974)

- *Humphrey v. Commonwealth*, 962 S.W.2d 870 (Ky. 1998)
- *Michigan v. Mosley*, 423 U.S. 96 (1975)
- *Oregon v. Elstad*, 470 U.S. 298 (1985)
- *Illinois v. Perkins*, 496 U.S. 292 (1990)
- *Colorado v. Spring*, 479 U.S. 564 (1987)
- *Moran v. Burbine*, 475 U.S. 412 (1986)
- *Fare v. Michael C.*, 442 U.S. 707 (1979)
- *Mills v. Commonwealth*, 996 S.W.2d 473 (Ky. 1999)
- *Varble v. Commonwealth*, 125 S.W.3d 246 (Ky. 2004)
- *Faretta v. California*, 422 U.S. 806 (1975)
- *Hill v. Commonwealth*, 125 S.W.3d 221 (Ky. 2004)