

Gun collector's statements vary about '94 robbery, witnesses say

Associated Press

DENVER — A gun collector allegedly robbed by Terry Nichols to finance the Oklahoma City bombing gave conflicting statements about the crime, including the value of the loss and whether the robber fired his weapon, witnesses testified Thursday.

Oklahoma BOMBING



TRIAL

Nichols' attorneys raced through nine witnesses as they attacked Roger Moore's credibility and tried to convince jurors that he faked the crime as part of an insurance scam.

All of the witnesses testified that Moore gave the same basic story of being confronted by a masked, armed gunman, who tied him up and stole weapons, precious metals and coins on Nov. 5, 1994.

Prosecutors contend that the robber was Nichols and that he sold the weapons to help pay expenses while he and Timothy McVeigh worked on bombing preparations.

On the witness stand, Larry Hethcox of Little Rock looked at a Remington .308-caliber rifle seized from Nichols' house after the bombing and said its serial

number matched the weapon he sold Moore in the fall of 1994.

"I recall no confusion about that serial number," said Hethcox, a Little Rock police helicopter pilot.

Hethcox said Moore told him shortly after the robbery that the gunman came from a wooded area near his house and fired at least one shot. In previous accounts, Moore hasn't mentioned a shot fired.

Also Thursday, a retiree testified that a Ryder truck was parked at a Kansas fishing lake the week before prosecutors say Nichols and McVeigh built the bomb.

The testimony was part of efforts by Nichols' lawyers to scuttle the prosecution's time frame for the construction of the bomb.

Nichols, 42, faces the death penalty if convicted of murder and conspiracy in the April 19, 1995, bombing of the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building. The blast killed 168 people. McVeigh is appealing his conviction and death sentence earlier this year on similar charges.

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