

'Tried to kill me' Wife testifies against spouse

BEND, Ore. (AP) — The state concluded its case Friday after two days of testimony concerning a 45-year-old Redmond woman who contends her husband tried to kill her to get her money.

Roy Summers, 39, is on trial on charges of attempting to murder his wife, Ella Mae Kohler, last Oct. 28 at their home in Redmond.

The trial opened Thursday with Ms. Kohler telling the Deschutes County Circuit Court jury that she owns property and contracts in excess of \$400,000.

She said she and Summers were married in June 1979 and she retained her property in her name after the wedding.

She said her husband later asked her to put her property in his name, and she finally told him she would put it in joint ownership as his birthday present Oct. 27.

The next day, she said, after a trip to the grocery store Summers asked her to help change a flat tire on their car. She testified:

"Midway through changing the tire, he decided to go into the house for coffee. While I was sitting at the table he grabbed me and started choking me.

"Then he grabbed my arm and twisted it behind me. I heard and felt it snap...And then I passed out."

She said when she came to she was lying in the garage under the jacked-up car.

"Roy was holding me down and trying to kick the jack from under the car," she said.

A number of witnesses gave corroborating testimony Friday.

Mike Howard of the Oregon state crime lab in Portland said grease on her blouse was similar to that on the undercarriage of the automobile.

Roger Marsh, a tire repairman, said a hole in the tire could have been made by a knife or similar sharp instrument.

Defense attorney Craig Emerson will make his opening statement on behalf of Summers Monday morning.

Earlier this month, Summers was found innocent by a jury of kidnapping his former wife and threatening to kill her. He was accused of doing that Nov. 9 after Ms. Kohler was released from a hospital.

Summers also is charged with kidnapping his mother and threatening to kill her during the Nov. 9 incident.

He also faces a charge of murder in San Bernardino, Calif., in connection with the 1977 knife slaying of another former wife, Beverly Wise.