

REGION

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Back-seat passenger charged in deadly crash

By TOM QUIGLEY
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BELVIDERE — Even the judge called it an unusual case.

Nineteen-year-old Nicholas Glosser is charged as an accomplice in the death of a Washington Township teen killed in a car crash last year.

Glosser, of Belvidere, was a back-seat passenger in the speeding car that skidded past a stop sign on Asbury-Anderson

Road in Washington Township and crashed into a stand of trees. Jason D. Lindner, 16, a front-seat passenger, was killed in the March 5, 1994 crash.

Authorities say Glosser "egged on" the driver of the car to go faster by demeaning the performance of the car.

A witness told investigators that Glosser said "If this car can't go 140 (mph), it's a piece of s—."

Glenn A. Howell Jr., 18, the driver of the car, was admitted

to a pretrial intervention program in June. If he successfully completes the requirements of the program, a death-by-auto charge against him could be dropped.

Glosser faces three to five years behind bars if he's convicted.

On Friday, Superior Court Judge John F. Kingfield denied the attorney's motion to have the charges against his client dismissed. Phillipsburg Attorney Len Artigliere, who repre-

sents Glosser, said he'll be back before the judge to argue again for a dismissal.

Artigliere said his client is charged with death by auto because he insulted a car.

He likened the case to someone getting into the back seat of a cab and telling the driver to step on it. If the cab driver runs a stop sign and kills somebody, he asked, then would the passenger be charged with death-by-auto?

"If that's the case, then we all

better watch out," Artigliere said.

He accused the prosecution of playing with children's lives by testing a "novel legal theory."

Artigliere said Glosser had never driven a car at the time the accident occurred and that he didn't even have a driver's license.

"And they're saying Glosser is criminally responsible for what the driver did," the attorney said.