

ATTACK MAN JAILED FOR SIX MONTHS

By Ron Warrilow COURT REPORTER

A 48-YEAR-old "law-abiding" Midland man has been put behind bars for 15 months after he brutally battered his partner's Royal Navy mechanic son with a lump hammer.

Christopher Smith, described as a man of positive good character, lashed out because he felt Mitchell Hill was being abusive and threatening towards his mother.

Judge Michael Challinor said Smith had been subjected to provocation, adding: "There is a background to this offence that caused you to act in this way."

But he ruled only an immediate prison sentence could be imposed because it was an attack that could have left Mr Hill disabled or dead.

"He suffered a fractured vertebrae and the harm you caused could have damaged his prospects of promotion in the armed services," said the judge, at Wolverhampton Crown Court.

Smith, of Copse Road, Netherton, admit-

ted assault causing actual bodily harm. Prosecutor Hugh O'Brien-Quinn said Mr Hill, who was on leave at the time, had been involved in an argument with his girlfriend and, on his return home, tried to take his car. But his mother, knowing he had been drinking, stopped him and then a heated argument ensued, added Mr O'Brien-Quinn.

He told the court Mr Hill's brother went to get Smith and they started to argue. Smith then grabbed the lump hammer and attacked Mr Hill, striking him several times.

Smith went upstairs, but was chased by Mr Hill, who was again struck with the hammer causing him to topple down the stairs, suffering the fractured vertebrae.

Samantha Powis, defending, said Mr Hill, who helps repair helicopters bound for Afghanistan, had since returned to his unit and was once again on "full active service". She maintained that when Mr Hill chased Smith up the stairs, he had armed himself with a knife he took from the kitchen.



Backing the training scheme: Marc Albrighton and Ciaran Clark with Dan Berry, chief instructor, and cadets with the British Military Martial Arts scheme Myles Gray and Katy Stonehouse

Villa players pass on kits

VILLA stars Marc Albrighton and Ciaran Clark presented young fitness fanatics with new martial arts training robes after watching them be put through their paces.

The Premier League duo passed on the uniforms to about 45 pupils enrolled on the British Military Martial Arts training scheme delivered at New Oscott Primary School.

Launched in January, the sessions combine a martial arts syllabus, including boxing, karate, kung-fu, tae kwon do and ju-jitsu, in a fun yet structured environment.

The classes, led by trained fitness instructor Dan Berry, formerly of the Royal Green Jackets Reconnaissance Platoon, are designed to instil discipline, confidence

and fitness while also keeping youngsters focused and out of trouble. Clark, an Ireland U21 player, said: "We fully support it. It's the sort of programme that you will see a reflection in their behaviour at school and at home."

Albrighton, an U21 international with England, added: "It'll play a huge role."

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