



Thug was run over by car he had taken

A Teenage thug who commandeered a car after threatening its young owner was run over by the vehicle before being arrested. Connor Gallagher had only just got out of prison for a string of violent robberies when he threatened to stab the victim if he didn't let his mate have a go driving. But the 18-year-old needed hospital treatment after the one-ton BMW 316 went over his leg as he helped push it off a grass verge, Swindon Crown Court heard. Colin Meeke, prosecuting, said Thomas Carr had been showing his new wheels to friends in the McDonald's car park at Greenbridge on Tuesday, March 25. He said the owner of the £500 P-reg car knew of Gallagher by reputation as he had carried out a number of muggings and was not long out of prison. When he asked Mr Carr to take him and a friend for a spin he reluctantly agreed, but soon after driving, Gallagher's mate said he wanted a go behind the wheel. Realising the other boy had been drinking the proud car owner refused, but relented when Gallagher snarled 'If you don't let him drive I'll stab you and all of your family'. "He got in the back seat and the car then shot off in a dangerous and frankly frightening manner," Mr Meeke said. "The vehicle was crashed into kerb stones, a number of parked cars and a garage door." It hit a parked car on Axbridge Close in the Parks and was then seen by a police officer in Whitbourne Avenue approaching a roundabout on Kingswood Avenue. The driver was struggling with the gears and steering and the car mounted a grass verge. But a few minutes later was seen on Leighton Avenue. The car eventually crashed at the junction of Cranmore Avenue and Whitbourne Avenue with reports of people running towards Cavendish Square. The defendant was arrested nearby and said he had been injured in the escapade and police took him to the hospital. Gallagher, of Crispin Close, Stratton, admitted aggravated vehicle taking without consent. The court heard he had previous convictions for robbery from 2011 and 2012 and had not been out of prison long before taking the car. Rob Ross, defending, said although he had not driven the car his client had been instrumental in it being taken. "The car got stuck at one point, they managed to push it out of some grass. During that this young man fell over and was run over by the car," he said. "That is what the police officer came upon and necessitated this young man going straight to hospital." He said he had been returned to custody after his early release licence was cancelled and will not now get out until next February. Passing sentence, Judge Douglas Field said: "You were actively assisting your co-defendant in taking this vehicle and indeed the dangerous driving that followed. "You threaten the driver at the time so that he had to move over and the other man took over. "You were passing a liquor bottle between yourselves." He jailed him for nine months and imposed a one year driving ban with an extended retest.

Extract from Evening Advertiser 3rd June 2014