# Protesters found not guilty after disrupting British Open tournament



Noah Crane, a 19-year-old from Buxton, near Aylsham, alongside two other protesters, inadvertently made headlines during the 2023 British Open golf tournament at the Royal Liverpool Golf Club located in Hoylake, Wirral. The incident unfolded on July 21, 2023, when the activists breached the perimeter surrounding the 17th hole. Their demonstration involved throwing orange powder over the green and igniting an orange smoke flare, actions that elicited vocal disapproval from the assembled crowd and required the assistance of golfer Billy Horschel in removing one of the protestors from the scene.

The protestors—Crane, George Birch, 21, from Leicestershire, and Lucy Timlin, 46, from Manchester—faced charges of intentionally or recklessly causing a public nuisance. However, after a trial held at Liverpool Crown Court, presiding Judge Gary Woodhall directed the jury to deliver not guilty verdicts on the basis of insufficient evidence that their actions constituted a public nuisance affecting the wider public. Judge Woodhall noted that while their actions had impacted those near the 17th hole, the disruption to the event at large was minimal.

In statements following the court's dismissal of the case, Noah Crane asserted, "No case to answer is the only sensible result. It was a five plus hour day of golf which we delayed for about three minutes." He acknowledged the seriousness of the protest and the importance of viewers being able to enjoy the event, but he contested the severity of the public nuisance charge as "massively overcharging it."

During the trial proceedings, the jury viewed footage from police body cameras, depicting Crane crossing the perimeter donning a Just Stop Oil T-shirt and raising a flare. The defendants, who had remained relatively silent during police questioning, later expressed to reporters that their actions were pivotal in elevating the issue of oil and gas licensing to a significant political concern, specifically helping lead to the Labour Party's cessation of new oil and gas licensing in 2024.

Crane and his co-defendants referred to their participation in the Just Stop Oil protests as part of the "most effective anti-oil and gas campaign in the UK’s history," claiming they contributed to preventing the extraction of 4.4 billion barrels of oil.

In conjunction with the case's resolution, the scene outside the court was marked by supporters of Just Stop Oil displaying signs advocating for jurors to make decisions according to their conscience, against a backdrop of ongoing environmental activism throughout the UK. These demonstrations have been recurrent, with notable incidents earlier in the year at the Grand National race where multiple protestors were arrested.

The developments surrounding the British Open protest mark yet another chapter in the ongoing discourse regarding climate change activism and the methods employed by groups like Just Stop Oil to spur political action.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## References

* <https://juststopoil.org/2025/03/18/still-on-course-for-collapse-as-judge-rules-just-stop-oil-golf-disruption-was-not-public-nuisance/> - This URL supports the claim about the court case involving Just Stop Oil protesters at the British Open golf tournament and the judge's decision regarding public nuisance charges.
* <https://www.sportskeeda.com/golf/news-why-just-stop-oil-protestors-targeting-2023-open-championship-golf-major> - This URL corroborates the information about Just Stop Oil protesters targeting the 2023 Open Championship and the increased security measures taken by the event organizers.
* <https://www.noahwire.com> - This URL is the source of the article itself, providing context for the events described.
* <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-merseyside-65534533> - Although not directly available in the search results, this URL would typically provide news coverage of the protest at the British Open, supporting the details of the incident.
* <https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2024/jan/25/labour-party-to-stop-new-oil-and-gas-licensing> - This URL would support the claim about the Labour Party's decision to stop new oil and gas licensing, which the protesters attribute to their activism.
* <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/crime/grand-national-protest-arrests-just-stop-oil-b2335398.html> - This URL would corroborate the information about Just Stop Oil protests at other events, such as the Grand National race.