

U.S. Marine convicted in murder plot

by UPI

LOS ANGELES -- A U.S. Marine was convicted of unpremeditated murder in the kidnapping and execution of a suspected Iraqi insurgent in Hamandiya. Sgt. Lawrence Hutchins was charged with premeditated murder, which carried a mandatory life sentence, but a military jury downgraded the charge to unpremeditated murder, the Los Angeles Times said Thursday. Prosecutors said Hutchins, 23, of Plymouth, Mass., was the leader of an eight-man squad when he convinced the others to kill a suspected insurgent who had been repeatedly arrested and released. The killing, which occurred last year, was supposed to be a warning to other Iraqis not to attack Marines with roadside bombs or sniper shots, the newspaper said.

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