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Man killed after shooting at police

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Article Text:

COVINGTON - A 25-year-old Conyers man was killed by police after he opened fire on a Georgia State Patrol trooper and a Covington Police Officer on Wednesday night. Marvin Mercier of 1417 Oak Knoll Drive, Conyers, was shot multiple times when he fired a .38-caliber revolver at the two officers after fleeing from a GSP traffic stop, according to CPD spokesman Lt. Wendell Wagstaff.

"The Georgia State Patrol was running stationary radar on I-20 eastbound, about in the Belmont Baptist Church area," Wagstaff said. "A vehicle went by the trooper going about 94 mph. The trooper got behind him and initiated a traffic stop, but he did not stop."

Wagstaff said the GSP followed the suspect down Interstate 20 to Alcovy Road, Exit 92.

"We (the CPD) didn't join in the chase. We have a limited chase policy ... speeding, we wouldn't have gotten involved in it. We were notified of the chase coming our way," he said.

CPD officers converged on the location and were at the Alcovy exit where Mercier exited the interstate.

"He looked like he was going to turn right on Alcovy and come toward town, but he saw officers arriving and flipped back around and was attempting to go westbound in the eastbound lane of I-20 when more officers arrived. So he flipped back around and started going eastbound toward Wal-Mart on I-20," Wagstaff said. "Just before going under the bridge there on I-20 at Alcovy, the GSP initiated the PIT maneuver. It was successful and got him to stop ... with the vehicle perpendicular to the lanes and facing the median wall."

Wagstaff said the front of the trooper's car was up against the door of the suspect's vehicle, an older model Mercury sedan, and CPD officers were arriving at the location as backup. As one CPD officer exited his vehicle to assist the trooper, the suspect fired and the officer returned fire.

"The suspect immediately pulled a revolver and started shooting at the trooper," Wagstaff said, adding that the trooper was very fortunate that he wasn't shot. "Between the trooper and the officer, they both shot, and the threat was stopped."

Wagstaff said the suspect fired the first round and was still sitting in the vehicle when the two officers returned fire, shooting him multiple times. He said it is believed the trooper and the one CPD officer were the only officers on scene who fired.

A female was a passenger in the suspect's vehicle, but she was uninjured in the incident. She was questioned and released, and Wagstaff said there are no charges being made against her at this time.

The names of the trooper and the CPD officer involved in the shooting are being withheld pending the outcome of the investigation into the shooting. CPD Police Chief Stacey Cotton has requested the Georgia Bureau of Investigation to head up the investigation.

Both the trooper and the officer are on administrative leave pending the outcome of the investigation, which is normal protocol for an officer-involved shooting.

"We are fortunate none of our officers or any citizens were injured in this incident," Wagstaff said.

Mercier had an outstanding felony escape warrant out of Rockdale County, which may have been his motive for fleeing law enforcement. According to the Rockdale County Sheriff's Office, he had failed to return to court as ordered by Superior Court Judge David Irwin to face drug violation charges. He also was arrested in Rockdale County in 2004 for possession of marijuana and methamphetamine.

He also had a criminal history in Newton County on a laundry list of charges dating back to 2004 when he was charged with noise violation, giving false information to law enforcement officers, driving with a suspended license, possession of marijuana and possession of methamphetamine.

The drug charges in both Rockdale and Newton counties resulted in Mercier serving time in prison, according to the Georgia Department of Corrections Web site.

Caption:

Photo:

Marvin Mercier

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