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Deadly Force

Suspect dead in police shooting

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Article Text:

A Tulsa police officer shot and killed a man early Monday after a pursuit ended with the man telling police he had a gun and would not be taken alive.

A knife was found inside the truck the man was attempting to steal, but no gun was found, investigators said.

Tony Kris Richardson, 33, was shot by Officer Josh Martin, Officer Andy Phillips said.

Richardson was pronounced dead at the scene.

A Catoosa police officer began pursuing Richardson just before 4:30 a.m. after receiving a 911 call from a man reporting that he saw a thief breaking into his pickup, police said.

Catoosa police caught up with the stolen vehicle, and the pursuit went west on Interstate 44, Phillips said.

Tulsa police were asked to assist at 4:28 a.m., when the pursuit was at Interstate 44 and 161st East Avenue, Sgt. Mike Huff said.

The chase continued to 21st Street, where the fleeing vehicle left I-44 and drove east. Police chased Richardson to the American Village apartment complex, near 21st Street and Mingo Road, where he jumped out of the still-running pickup, Huff said.

"He ran to another vehicle and broke into that one. He had the (steering) column popped and was trying to steal that vehicle when police approached," Officer Scott Walton said.

The Catoosa officer was the first to find Richardson as he was trying to steal the truck, police said.

"The Catoosa officer ordered him out of the vehicle. The officer tried to break a window to get him out. The suspect stated that he was not going to be taken alive and that he had a gun," Huff said.

The Catoosa officer sprayed chemical spray through the window that Richardson had broken to get inside the truck.

"That apparently had no effect on the suspect," Huff said.

Phillips said Tulsa officers arrived to assist the Catoosa officer.

"He made more statements that he would not be taken alive, and he threatened officers,"

Phillips said of Richardson. "He screamed that he had a gun and was willing to use it."

Huff said witnesses at the complex said they heard the officers issue multiple commands telling

Richardson to show his hands and get out of the truck.

"The suspect was making rapid movements inside the vehicle, indicating that he most likely was armed," Huff said. "While he was making those movements, an officer fired two shots at the suspect."

The officer who shot Richardson had fatally shot another suspect last year. Martin shot Gerald Jeffrey Brandt, 23, once in the torso Aug. 30 after Brandt turned his gun toward police and bystanders, officials said.

The district attorney ruled the shooting justified based on police reports and multiple witness statements from neighbors at the apartment complex where the shooting occurred.

Several neighbors who witnessed Brandt's shooting at the Boulder Ridge Apartments, 3121 S. 145th East Ave., told investigators that shortly before police arrived, a "visibly angry" Brandt was walking around and waving a gun while saying he was "ready to die" and "might take one of these officers" with him, a prosecutor said previously.

Police officers had gone to the complex after receiving calls from several neighbors that Brandt had driven his car on the lawn around the buildings and parked in the courtyard outside his girlfriend's apartment, Tulsa World archives show.

Brandt and his girlfriend began to argue, and witnesses told police that he was waving a gun and put it inside his mouth several times, threatening suicide.

Police said they thought Brandt might have been suicidal and might have pointed his weapon at the officers with the intent of forcing them to shoot him.

In accordance with department policy on fatal shootings, Martin will remain on administrative leave with pay until the district attorney rules whether the shooting was justified.

Court records show that Richardson, whose last-known address was in Sand Springs, had a lengthy theft history. He has convictions in five Oklahoma counties dating back to 1990, Department of Corrections records show.

In December 1990, Richardson, then age 21, and two teens led deputies on a high-speed chase in a stolen car after a woman walked in while they were burglarizing her home, newspaper archives show.

The high-speed chase ended when the teenage driver crashed into a tree near Rogers State College in Claremore.

After the wreck, Richardson ran toward the college and was apprehended by two Rogers State students.

The teens were hospitalized with injuries they suffered in the crash, newspaper articles show. Rogers County deputies recovered several thousand dollars' worth of stereo equipment, VCRs, jewelry, guns and tools from the stolen 1990 Chevrolet Suburban the three were in when they were arrested.

Richardson was convicted in January 1991 of first-degree burglary, second-degree burglary and possession of a stolen vehicle.

In April 1991, he was convicted of three counts of second-degree burglary in Osage County.

In April 1993, Richardson was convicted of possession of stolen property in Mayes County, and in October 1993 he was convicted in Tulsa County of possession of a stolen vehicle, DOC records show.

Richardson also has a June 1994 Creek County conviction for escape from a penal institution,

records show.

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