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KENTUCKY MAN KILLS HIMSELF AFTER CHASE

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Article Text:

A Louisville, Ky., man killed himself early Sunday on Interstate 64 in Warrick County after leading police on a chase through Southern Indiana, authorities said.

Michael Taurman, 37, died after shooting himself in the chest with a .44-caliber revolver as he sat in his car on the interstate, according to a report from the Warrick County Sheriff's Department. No other injuries were reported.

Police began looking for Taurman after Indiana State Police in Jasper received a 911 call from a cellular phone about an apparent case of "road rage" on I-64 in Perry County near the Tell City exit.

A motorist from St. Louis reported Taurman had pulled next to his pickup truck in a black Dodge and fired a handgun at him. The bullet hit the pickup's driver side door and went into the driver's seat.

Officers from Ferdinand, Ind., spotted the Dodge and pursued it into Warrick County, where officers placed "stop sticks" near the 33-mile marker on I-64. The sticks pierced a tire, and Taurman's Dodge stopped for a short time.

Warrick County sheriff's deputies moved in and began negotiating with Taurman to surrender, but he fired several shots and continued driving west about three miles.

Police closed down both lanes of I-64 for about an hour near Elberfeld as Taurman exited his vehicle and started talking with officers again.

After Taurman fired several more shots into the air, he returned to his car and shot himself in the chest, police said. Police left the scene around 4 a.m. Sunday.

Taurman reportedly had expressed suicidal feelings earlier Saturday, Warrick County Sheriff Marvin Heilman said.

"The Louisville Metro police were attempting to locate him after he left his home because his family members reported that he was suicidal," Heilman said in a statement.

Heilman credited police for attempting to negotiate with Taurman and for showing "great restraint" by not firing any shots throughout the chase.

"Sgt. (Brian) Waters and deputy (Brian) Wessel did an excellent job of protecting themselves as well as the public," Heilman said.

Authorities are continuing to investigate the death. An autopsy on Taurman's body was performed Sunday in Evansville, and authorities are awaiting the results.

"This was an extremely dangerous situation, not only for the motorist from St. Louis and the local officers, but for anyone along Mr. Taurman's path," Heilman said.

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