

Day County Sheriff's Office Shooting Summary Detailing Events That Took Place on June 2, 2020

On 6-2-20, the Division of Criminal Investigation (DCI) was requested by the Day County Sheriff's Office to investigate a shooting that occurred in Day County near the intersection of 427th Avenue and 136th Street. The shooting occurred when Michael Andreas Beckham discharged his weapon, firing a round at a Day County Law Enforcement Officer. The Primary Officer returned fire, shooting seven rounds from the Primary Officer's duty weapon. The following is a summary of the events that occurred, and the results of the investigation conducted by the DCI.

Synopsis

On 6-2-20, Michael Andreas Beckham called 911 from his cell phone. The call lasted from 2:14PM until 2:40PM when he told dispatchers the following statements:

- He thought he was being "drugged"
- Someone was "attacking" his email
- Cameras had been placed in his home that he did not put there
- He was going to end his life

Law enforcement was dispatched to the call. Law enforcement also recognized Beckham from previous dealings with him. The Webster Police Department did locate Beckham driving his gray 2012 Ford Focus with SD plate "NO FEAR". After locating the vehicle, Beckham was observed driving erratically, driving through a yard and speeding. A traffic stop was attempted to check on Beckham's well-being. Beckham refused to stop and the Day County Sheriff's Office, along with the Webster Police Department, pursued him. The pursuit continued west and north of Webster. In an attempt to end the pursuit, a Day County Officer was able to deploy a spike strip, but the pursuit continued northbound from Holmquist, South Dakota.

During the pursuit, law enforcement observed Beckham had a handgun pointed at his head on several occasions. Beckham stopped several times pointing the gun at his head and would continue driving. The Primary Officer later stated that Beckham also had pointed the gun away from his head and directly at one of the officers. Other officers also confirmed that Beckham pointed the gun toward one of the officers. When Beckham would stop for a short time, he was making statements saying, "Shoot me. Shoot me." and "Just fucking shoot me." and that this was "his last day".

The pursuit continued and Beckham eventually stopped near the intersection of 427th Avenue and 136th Street just north of Holmquist, South Dakota.

The Officers blocked the road with their patrol vehicles so Beckham could not continue driving and pointing his gun at law enforcement or endangering the public. The Primary Officer was concerned that Beckham might escape, putting local citizens in danger that were on the road. Beckham was stopped facing south on 427th Avenue facing the Primary Officer's vehicle. The Primary Officer gave loud verbal commands to Beckham repeatedly saying, "Michael don't." The Primary Officer also stated, "Hands." and "Let me see your hands."

Beckham remained in his vehicle and again pointed a handgun at his own head. Beckham then lowered the handgun, pointed it directly at the Primary Officer and fired at least one round. The Primary Officer then drew his duty weapon and returned fire.

Other officers on scene could not see when Beckham pointed the gun at the Primary Officer. The other officers on scene reported hearing a gunshot which appeared to have come from Beckham's vehicle. The Primary Officer was then observed drawing his duty weapon and returning fire.

Beckham was struck and eventually rolled out of his vehicle onto the gravel road. He was placed into handcuffs and given medical treatment. Beckham had injuries to his torso, head and arm. A handgun in plain view was recovered and secured from Beckham's vehicle.

Beckham was flown to Avera Hospital in Aberdeen for his gunshot wounds.

Shooting Scene Investigation

The shooting scene was processed by the DCI that produced items of evidentiary value and were corroborated by statements from Beckham and the Day County Officers.

Beckham's vehicle had seven bullet holes in the windshield. Two bullet holes appearing to be consistent with originating from inside of the vehicle traveling out. Five of the bullet holes appeared to be consistent originating from outside of the vehicle traveling in.

The hood of Beckham's vehicle had a bullet hole in it. A single projectile was recovered.

Seven spent 40 caliber casings were recovered from on and around the Primary Officer's patrol vehicle.

Three spent 9mm casings were recovered from inside Beckham's vehicle.

The South Dakota Highway Patrol mapped the crime scene. A copy of the crime scene map has been included with this report.

Interview with Michael Beckham

On 6-4-20, Beckham admitted to calling 911 and claimed he only wanted to hurt himself. Beckham admitted to pointing his pistol to his head at least once. He also stated that when he finally stopped facing south toward the Primary Officer that he had the gun pointed toward his head. Beckham then admitted to moving the gun from his head and pointing it toward the roof of his vehicle and firing one round. At that time, the Primary Officer returned fire. Beckham stated that he did not want to hurt anyone other than himself.

Beckham said he had recently been using marijuana and methamphetamine. Beckham said he is prescribed medications and on 6-2-20, he had taken handfuls of various medications at his house. Beckham would frequently talk about people getting into his house without his permission and drones watching over it. On a recent occasion, he had taken a rifle from his house and fired a round into his living room couch. Beckham fired the round because he thought he heard someone walking in his house and they would not identify themselves. He stated the weapon was still at his house and identified it as an "AK 74".

Video Evidence

Video footage from the Primary Officer's body camera and other officers' cameras show that Beckham was stopped facing south toward the Primary Officer. The Primary Officer is pleading with Beckham to show his hands. A gunshot is heard, and debris is seen discharging from Beckham's vehicle windshield toward the Primary Officer. The Primary Officer then draws their duty weapon and returns fire.

The video depicts the Primary Officer clearly telling Beckham to show his hands and to drop the gun. What sounds like a gunshot is heard coming from Beckham's vehicle and then the Primary Officer returning fire. At this time, seven rounds are seen being fired from the Primary Officer's duty weapon, which is consistent with the seven spent shell casings recovered at the scene.

A Search Warrant was granted for the vehicle and it was searched on 6/3/20. Three spent casings were located inside of the vehicle along with several projectiles and/or fragments.

South Dakota Forensic Lab Testing

The handgun fired by Beckham was compared to three spent casings found in his vehicle. Those casings were confirmed to have been fired from his weapon.

The handgun fired by the Primary Officer was compared to the seven spent casings found on and around the Primary Officer's vehicle. Those casings were confirmed to have been fired from the Primary Officer's duty weapon.

Medical Reports

The Primary Officer's bodily fluids were tested for drugs and alcohol. The Primary Officer was negative for any drugs or alcohol.

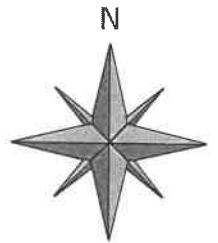
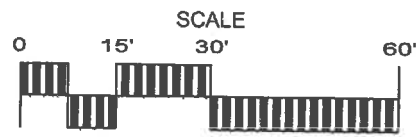
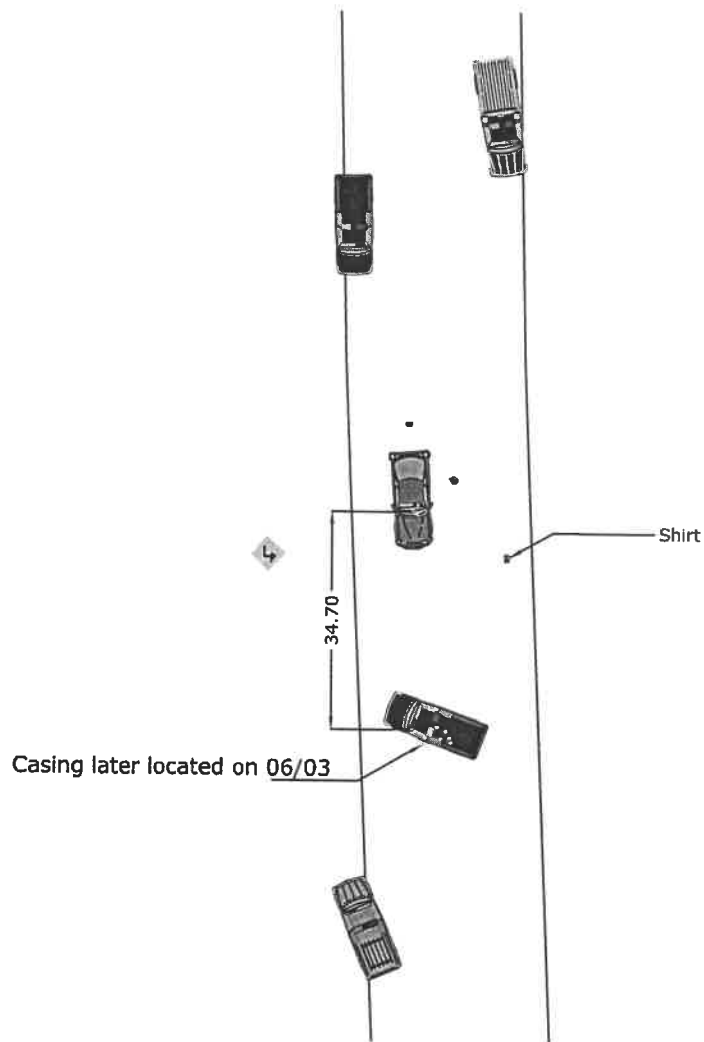
Michael Beckham's bodily fluids were tested for drugs and alcohol. He was positive for methamphetamine and negative for alcohol.

Conclusion

Based on the totality of the circumstances, a reasonable officer present at the scene utilized deadly force in a situation that was tense, uncertain and building. The Primary Officer observed what they knew was a deadly weapon directed at the Primary Officer and was justified in using deadly force. Michael Beckham had the means and opportunity to cause serious bodily injury or death to the Primary Officer, other officers and the community.

It is the conclusion of this report and the Attorney General that the Primary Officer was justified in firing their weapon and using deadly force on Michael Beckham.

All of this information is consistent with the described events based on the investigation conducted by the DCI, crime scene processing, mapping, law enforcement statements, suspect statements and lab results.



- Bullet fragment
- Bullet casing
- Bullet hole
- Blood



Webster PD vehicle



Day County SO vehicle