



O'Shea: Monday morning in the weight room

See Page 6

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Suicide ends Autzen siege

By Mike Sims
Of the Emerald

University wrestler Rick O'Shea felt well enough Monday night to discuss the morning's Autzen Stadium sniping incident, which left two men dead and sent O'Shea into surgery with shrapnel wounds.

"I thought it was some kind of joke or a prank," O'Shea said during a press conference at Sacred Heart General Hospital.

The four-hour standoff between Eugene police and a sniper armed with two rifles ended with the alleged sniper taking his own life and with police removing the body of former University and Olympic sprinter, Chris Brathwaite from a nearby jogging path.

The body of alleged sniper Michael Feher, 19, a psychology major from Everett, Wash., was found by police tactical squad members just after noon in the south-side bleachers near the top of the stands.

O'Shea, a 22-year-old senior from Harrisburg, was in good condition at the hospital Monday evening after undergoing surgery for shrapnel wounds to the neck, buttocks and calf. He was injured inside the stadium at the onset of the incident, about 8:30 a.m.

The body of Brathwaite, 34, was found by a retired University professor on Pre's Trail about 300 yards south of the stadium, just before 11 a.m. Brathwaite was a two-year (1975-76) University letter winner and two-time (1976, 1980) Olympic competitor from Trinidad. He was pronounced dead at the scene by police and paramedics.

Brathwaite's body was removed by mid-afternoon and taken to Sacred Heart Hospital, where an autopsy is scheduled for today to determine the exact cause of death.

Feher had sustained a self-inflicted gunshot wound to the head. He was lying face down in the aisle with a weapon in his hand.

No shots were fired by Eugene police or the EPD tactical squad deployed inside the stadium.

Two weapons were recovered by police: an AR-15 rifle and a Ruger Mini-14 rifle, both of which fire .223-caliber bullets. Eugene police Sgt. Eric Mellgren said that the Ruger had been stolen during a pre-dawn burglary at Anderson's Sporting Goods, 199 W.

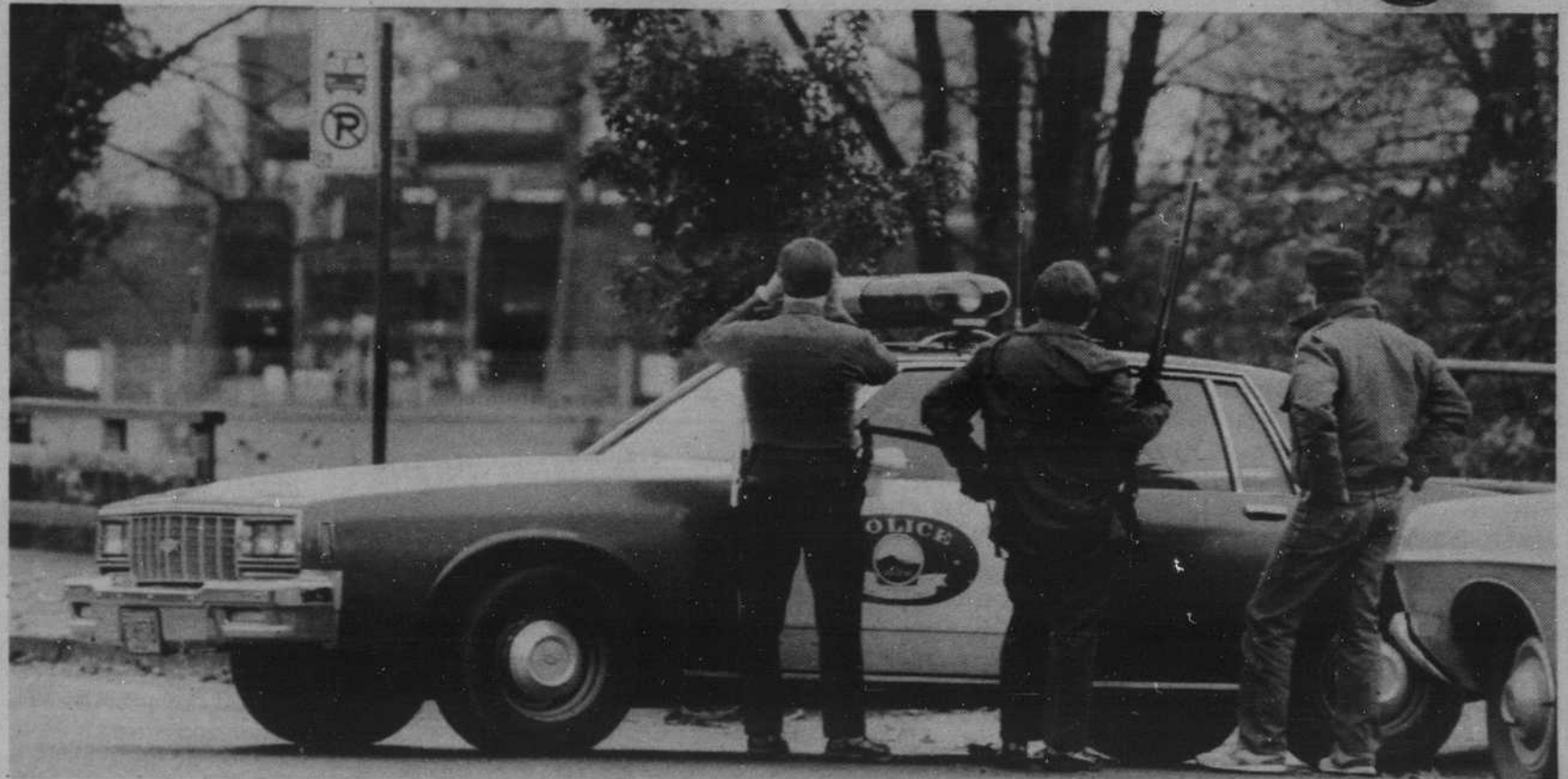


Photo by Michael Clapp

Eugene police sealed off the area around Autzen Stadium Monday morning while tactical squad members searched the stadium for a gunman who had already injured a University wrestler.

8th Ave.

Police were alerted by a burglar alarm inside the store at 4:10 a.m. Monday. The weapon was valued at \$1,500, Mellgren said.

Brathwaite, a member of the Oregon International Track Club, received a master's degree in corrections from the University in 1977. He was employed as a counselor at Skipworth Juvenile Corrections Center. He is survived by his wife Sharon and his 5-year-old son Sean, both of Eugene.

Brathwaite's body was found by Marshall Wattles, professor emeritus of economics. Wattles was jogging past the stadium when he saw a man, clad in jogging gear, lying face down on the trail.

"I got down by his ear and yelled at him," Wattles said. "He didn't respond and I didn't stick around too long." Wattles notified a nearby campus security officer and showed him the location of the body.

The security officer notified police, who arrived at the scene at about 11:20 a.m. After Brathwaite was pronounced dead, authorities decided not to risk

removing the body until the situation inside the stadium was stabilized.

Wattles said he had heard earlier reports of the sniper situation in the stadium area, but he assumed that the incident was over and decided to go jogging.

Feher was a member of Delta Tau Delta fraternity. University Vice Provost Dick Hill said at a Monday afternoon press conference that Feher was not currently enrolled at the University but was in the process of re-enrolling in school prior to the tragedy.

Nine other persons besides O'Shea were in the weight room during the four-hour standoff. They were identified by police as assistant golf coach Scott Krieger; golfer Paul Weinhold; wrestlers Keith Beutler, Bill Beutler, Glenn Jarrett and Derek Phillips; assistant wrestling coach John Kotmel; runner Gretchen Nelson; and football player Ray Wheatley.

The nine remained in the weight room after O'Shea was removed under heavy tactical guard and taken to the hospital by police and paramedics, at 11:08 a.m.

"That weight room is the best place they could be right now," Mellgren said just before noon, explaining how the bunker-like room beneath the concrete grandstand afforded protection from sniper fire.

According to Mellgren, the others remained in the weight room until mid-afternoon.

Wheatley, a senior offensive guard, said he was confronted by a gunman as he walked down the tunnel toward the weight area just before 8:30 a.m. According to Wheatley, the man displayed a weapon and ordered him to freeze. He then put the barrel of his weapon to Wheatley's back, directed him down the tunnel toward the weight room and asked for a telephone.

The gunman also ordered Wheatley to not look behind him, saying, "See that red spot on your back? I pull the trigger and you're dead."

Wheatley was ordered into the weight room, where Kotmel was at the door. The gunman asked for a room supervisor

Continued on Page 8



Photo by Brian Erb

Officers waited until the situation in the stadium was secured before removing the body of former University sprinter Chris Brathwaite from the jogging trail.

Uncertainties beset 'easygoing' student

By Paul Ertelt
Of the Emerald

Friends and acquaintances of Michael Evan Feher considered the University student pleasant and easygoing, so his rampage in Autzen Stadium Monday morning seemed all the more shocking to them.

But despite his apparent happiness, Feher did have problems serious enough to prompt a previous suicide attempt, the president of his fraternity said Monday night.

One day in July, 19-year-old Feher went to Autzen Stadium and slit his right wrist after writing an impromptu will, said

Jim Stewart, president of the Delta Tau Delta fraternity, where Feher had been an active member since January.

"Michael had a problem dealing with problems we would consider trivial," Stewart said, noting that Feher often was disorganized, had trouble budgeting his finances and worried about his grades.

"Most people see life as a set of obstacles to be overcome in order to achieve goals," Stewart said. "He saw life as a set of obstacles that led to nothing."

After his suicide attempt,

Continued on Page 3