

Gunshot kills Idaho defensive back McMillan

After sustaining a gunshot wound to the chest, the 19-year-old was pronounced dead early Monday

BY STEPHEN MILLER
SPORTS REPORTER

Idaho cornerback Eric McMillan of Murrieta Valley, Calif., was pronounced dead by an attending physician at Gritman Memorial Hospital early Monday morning after being shot on Sunday afternoon at his apartment in Moscow, Idaho.

According to law enforcement releases, brothers Matthew R. Wells II, 27, and James J. Wells, 25, of Seattle, were arrested Sunday evening after a high-speed pursuit concluded on Interstate 90, 150 miles west of Moscow. The suspects were booked into the Whitman County Jail. No motive has been

determined, but an investigation is under way.

McMillan, 19, walked downstairs after sustaining a gunshot wound to the chest and had a neighbor drive him to the hospital, a local news outlet reported.

"It's an unfortunate situation, and our heart goes out to the family involved," Idaho athletics director Rob Spear told The Associated Press. "Our first priority is to take care of the family and help them through this very difficult time."

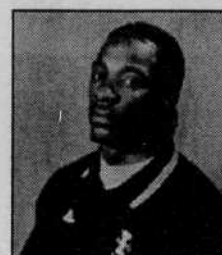
McMillan had 10 total tackles and one pass interception in three games this fall. He redshirted as a true freshman in 2003.

"We'll deal with this as a football family and get through this together," Idaho head coach Nick Holt told the AP after a team meeting Monday.

The Ducks football squad suffered a similar tragedy to one of its newly acquired family members last summer. On Aug. 12, incoming freshman line-backer Terrance Kelly, from De La Salle High School in Concord, Calif., was shot and killed outside the home of a family friend.

"I'm sure he (Holt) has a lot of things to deal with," Oregon head-coach Mike Bellotti said. "It's one of those things that is unfortunately becoming far too common and it's a terrible tragedy."

Bellotti said his team expressed its reactions with two sympathy cards



ERIC McMILLAN
IDAHO DEFENSIVE BACK

and will hold a moment of silence before Saturday's game to honor McMillan.

Idaho's defense now must rely even more on seniors Chris Nathan and J.R. Ruffin to anchor the cornerback position. Junior college transfers Lawrence Guynes and Herbert Cash, along with freshman Kyle Williams, will provide a

substantial amount of depth.

McMillan was honored as an all-league, All-Valley and All-California Interscholastic Federation athlete during his senior year at Murrieta Valley High School in California. He recorded four interceptions and broke up 10 passes that year.

The University of Idaho has established a memorial fund in McMillan's name. Donations can be made at any FirstBank location in Idaho, Oregon or Washington.

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Game of the week

Stanford attempts to break out of slump against No. 1 USC

The Trojans look to continue their dominance over their oldest rival while trying to slow down Trent Edwards

BY CLAYTON JONES
SPORTS EDITOR

On Saturday, the top-ranked Trojans of Southern California are putting their dominating show on the road for a test against their oldest rival, the surprisingly successful Stanford Cardinal, at Stanford Stadium.

This series dates back to 1905, and USC has had the upper hand, with a 55-24-3 record against the Cardinal. Recently, the Trojans have dominated the series, winning 21 of the past 27 contests.

The undefeated Cardinal (2-0 overall) are coming off two one-sided victories over San Jose State and Brigham Young, outscoring its opponents 80-13. The young offense, starting eight sophomores, is averaging more than 400

yards of offense per game. Sophomore quarterback Trent Edwards has led the Cardinal offense, averaging 242 yards through the air while throwing five touchdowns with no interceptions.

"He has done a nice job for us to date," Stanford head coach Buddy Teevens said. "He has emerged as our offensive line has emerged. So far, he has been making good decisions. He has the ability to continue to improve."

"He is experienced now, to the point where he can really carry a game," USC head coach Pete Carroll said of Edwards. "He is very well skilled throwing the ball. He runs well, and he's got guys around him that are capable of making plays so they have a very good looking offense."

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Roetman: Matson's quick talk matches his fast play

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how hard Matson could hit, they were laid to rest when he demolished Oregon State kick returner Harvey Whiten during the 2003 Civil War. The collision was so violent that it knocked Whiten cold and ended up on SportsCenter's "Top 10" plays of the day.

Now a senior, Matson's love of the game is more apparent than ever. His passion is evident on and off the field. Just talking about football causes the broad-shouldered run-stuffer to get excited.

"(Matson) plays the way he talks," Bellotti said. "When Jerry talks to you, he gets going faster, faster and faster; it's almost like he's a runaway train. By the end he can barely keep the words separate."

"But that's the excitement factor about his passion for football. He has been, for two years, one of the most respected players on the team."

With Oregon underachieving after

two games, Saturday's showdown with Idaho is a must-win for the Ducks. Matson's leadership qualities were evident when he said defeating the Vandals means more than just putting a "one" in the win column.

"We're hungry, and we're looking for a win," Matson said. "I want to get a win for us and show these people in the town (of Eugene) and the young guys on the team what it's like."

If Oregon is to turn its season around, Matson's over-achieving personality will need to rub off on the rest of the team. If the Ducks can maximize their talent, they can put the rough start behind them and focus on competing for a Pac-10 Conference title.

And it's up to Matson and the rest of Oregon's leaders to remind the team that a successful season turnaround starts with a win over Idaho.

"At this point," Matson said, "we refuse to go into the league at 0-3."

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