

Ohio cop unleashes police dog to maul black truck driver with his hands up

Our reporter
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In a vicious attack that has provoked widespread outrage on social media since the video was released Sunday afternoon, an Ohio cop unleashed a K-9 dog to attack an unresisting truck driver who was surrendering to police and was on his knees with his hands up. The attack took place on July 4, but it took nearly three weeks for the body camera footage to be made public.

The driver was African American, while the cop, belonging to the Circleville, Ohio, police force, was white. Several Ohio state troopers, also white, shouted at the local cop not to release the dog, because the truck driver had pulled over after a lengthy chase, exited his semi-tractor truck and was now cooperating.

Circleville is a town of 14,000 residents 25 miles south of the state capital, Columbus.

The driver, identified as Jadarius Rose, 23, of Memphis, Tennessee, said that he initially refused to stop because the state troopers were pointing weapons at him and he feared being shot or otherwise harmed if he stopped. He said that there was no reason for them to stop his truck, since he was driving at a normal speed.

Initial press reports cited police claims that the state troopers had attempted to stop the truck because of one missing mudflap on a rear wheel—a trivial reason for launching a 30-minute pursuit that ultimately involved a half-dozen police cars.

While there are many questions still remaining about the circumstances of the lengthy pursuit, it is not in dispute that Rose was in fear for his life. He initially stopped his truck when first hearing the police siren. But when armed officers approached and demanded he get out of his truck, he drove off instead.

As he drove down US-35 and then onto US-23, he called 911 in two different counties as he drove through them, pleading with dispatchers to help him avoid being shot and killed. He was not acting as a fugitive

criminal, but as a young worker terrified at seeing a mob of heavily armed police pointing their weapons at him for no apparent reason.

A recording of a 911 call was released last week, in which Rose said to the dispatcher, “Right now I’m being chased by like 20 police officers and they all got their guns pointed directly to my truck ... So now I’m trying to figure out why they got their guns all pointed to me and they’re all white people.”

When he finally pulled over and stopped on US-23, Rose reluctantly got out of his truck with his hands up and followed the instructions of state troopers to move away from the vehicle. At that point, Circleville, Ohio, police, who had been called in as back-ups, intervened with the K-9 unit.

The state troopers told the K-9 officer, identified as Ryan Speakman, not to release his dog. The body camera video records a trooper shouting, “Do not release the dog with his hands up!”

Speakman nonetheless released the dog and it attacked Rose savagely as he screamed, “Get it off! Please! Please!” A state trooper yelled, “Get the dog off of him!”

Eventually, Speakman recalled the dog and Rose was taken to a hospital and treated for dog bites. He was released from the hospital and immediately arrested and charged with failure to comply. He was not finally released from police custody until July 7, three days after the initial mauling.

Rose has told the media that he cannot discuss the circumstances of the pursuit and his reasons for fleeing the state police, presumably on advice of his lawyer. But he told the *Columbus Dispatch* that he had seen the video. “I’m just glad that it was recorded,” he said. “What you saw is what, pretty much, happened.”

Details are being withheld by the police and state

troopers and appear even more confused because two separate counties are involved. Ross County is responsible for the case against Rose because his initial refusal to stop his truck took place there. Pickaway County is handling the investigation of the dog mauling because that is where Rose stopped his truck, got out of it following police orders and was then attacked.

Speakman was not even removed from active duty for two weeks and is now on paid administrative leave while the attack is investigated. He was reportedly investigated for another incident of misconduct two years ago. Circleville Mayor Don McIlroy and Police Chief G. Shawn Baer said in a joint statement July 21 that a review board would issue a report by the end of this month.

Whatever role racism may have played in Speakman's decision to sic his dog on Rose, this latest attack and the phenomenon police violence in general is ultimately a class issue as seen in the killing of Tyre Nichols in Memphis, Tennessee earlier this year and the fact that the victims of the police are overwhelmingly workers and poor of every race and ethnicity.



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