

Argument leads to pursuit, crash, arrest

by Cheryl McDermott

An argument at a Bend skate park Saturday afternoon led to a call for help, a car chase, then a crash in southeast Bend sending four people to the hospital, culminating in the arrest of a driver charged with a dozen offenses.

Derek Groom, 21, of Bend, called 911 about 2:20 p.m. to report that he was being tail-gated by a vehicle with a passenger who was flashing a knife at him and yelling for him to pull over, Deschutes County deputies reported.

Groom told deputies he had argued with the occupants of the vehicle earlier at the skate park, Lt. Erik Utter said, and that he was in fear for his life.

Michael Lee Peterson — DCJ photo

Groom kept deputies advised of his location as the pursuit continued, first traveling eastbound on Highway 20 several miles out of Bend, then reversing direction and heading back into town. A deputy attempted to stop the vehicle chasing Groom as it turned south on Gosney Road, Utter said, but the car's driver, identified as 22-year old Michael Lee Peterson of Bend, sped off and a police pursuit ensued.

As the deputy chased the car, an Oregon State Police (OSP) trooper in the area joined the pursuit, the lieutenant reported. At the intersection of Arnold Market Road and Horse Butte Road, officers tried to puncture the suspect vehicle's tires with "stop sticks", but the car passed by before they were ready.

Bend Police officers set up stop sticks ahead of the vehicle and were successful in a second attempt to disable the vehicle's tires, Utter said. The vehicle drove on for another mile before Peterson lost control and left Arnold Market Road, crashed through a wooden fence, and rolled before coming to rest in a field.

Peterson was immediately taken into custody, said the lieutenant, and officers secured the scene and began rendering aid to the driver and his four passengers. Paramedics with Bend Fire also responded to the scene.

Officers identified 18-year old Brice Aiken of Bend as the suspect who allegedly menaced Groom with the knife. The knife was found in the vehicle, and a .22 rifle was also found in the trunk, Lt. Utter said.

The other passengers included Vincent Martin, 30, of Bend; and Prineville residents Amanda Polich, 18, and Clinton Perkins, 17.

Martin and Polich were transported by ambulance to Saint Charles Medical Center (SCMC) in Bend with non-life threatening injuries. A Deschutes County deputy drove Perkins to SCMC where his minor injuries were treated and he was released. Martin, Polich, and Perkins were not charged with any crimes, the lieutenant said.

Aiken was cited for menacing and released, and was given a courtesy ride to SCMC for treatment of minor injuries.

Peterson, the driver, was uninjured in the crash, arrested, and lodged in the Deschutes County Jail in lieu of \$47,500 bail. He is charged with being a felon in possession of a firearm, attempting to elude, reckless driving, four counts of recklessly endangering another, four counts of third-degree assault, and criminal mischief.

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