

Media Release

For Immediate Release:

Friday, July 20, 2001

Subject:

Suspect Arrested in Courtney Sconce Murder

Text:

The Sacramento County Sheriff's Department, working in conjunction with the Sutter County Sheriff's Department, and the Federal Bureau of Investigation would like to announce that they have obtained a warrant for the arrest of 20 year old Justin Michael Weinberger (6-1-81) for the murder of Courtney Sconce.

On November 8, 2000, Courtney Sconce was last seen alive near her home at approximately 3:00 PM. At approximately 5:15 PM Courtney's body was found along the banks of the Feather River, near East Nicholas. An autopsy revealed that Courtney had been sexually assaulted.

A task force comprised of the Sacramento County Sheriff's Department, Sutter County Sheriff's Department, FBI-Sacramento Violent Crimes Squad, Sacramento County District Attorney's Office, Sacramento County Probation Office, Department of Justice, and DMV was formed to investigate the abduction and homicide.

Evidence recovered at the scene and thought to be associated with the suspect included, silver plastic sunglasses, a blue Adidas sun visor, and a pair of boxer shorts. DNA evidence from the suspect was also recovered. Witnesses also reported seeing a dark colored 300 series BMW near the area of the homicide.

An investigation was conducted to determine persons who purchased the "Adidas" sun visor in the Sacramento area. Justin Weinberger was found to have purchased the sun visor in October of 2000.

Additionally, Weinberger was the subject of a FBI and El Dorado County investigation for child pornography. Weinberger was indicted in Federal Court today on federal charges of advertising, transporting and possessing sexually explicit images of minors.

Further investigation revealed that Weinberger had access to a black BMW 325es, owned a pair of sunglasses consistent with the sunglasses found at the scene, and was known to be at a Rancho Cordova business, on the day of Courtney's disappearance. A DNA sample was obtained from Weinberger and submitted to the Department of Justice.

On July 19, 2001, the Department of Justice notified the Sacramento County Sheriff's Department the DNA sample from Weinberger matched the sample collected during the investigation, effectively linking Weinberger to Courtney's murder.

Weinberger is currently being held in Raton, New Mexico where he was arrested on unrelated charges.

-End Text-

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