

Couple chased through three counties enter not guilty pleas to charges

Written by George Browning
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The couple who failed to pay for \$75 worth of gas at a Scottsburg filling station on May 16 are currently being held at the Scott County Security Center in lieu of bond.

Christopher Brent Couch of Viper, Ky., is charged in Scott Circuit Court with one count of Class C felony criminal confinement and D felonies of theft and fleeing law enforcement. Korrie Rene Shockey of Hazard, Ky., is charged with three Class D felonies in Scott Superior Court, conspiracy to commit theft, aiding theft and theft.

The probable cause affidavit prepared by Chief Deputy Don Campbell against the defendants revealed a dangerous experience with a reckless driver.

After getting the dispatch about the fleeing truck, Deputy Rodney Rudder intercepted the truck as it neared the south side of Austin. The officer activated his lights and siren to conduct a traffic stop on the truck, and the pickup pulled over into a parking lot near the U.S. 31/State Road 256 intersection in Austin, but it then accelerated out of the lot and, disregarding the intersection's traffic signal, again headed north. Chief Deputy Campbell and deputies Joe Johnson and Joe Guarneri then joined the chase.

Chief Deputy Campbell's recount of the chase in the charging affidavit revealed that the Kentucky pickup truck traveled from lane to lane on U.S. 31 at times, apparently attempting to run Deputy Rudder off the road. The driver also threw something from the truck, which hit and damaged Chief Deputy Campbell's patrol car.

As the vehicle continued northbound into Jackson County, information on the fleeing vehicle attracted Jackson County deputies and Crothersville police.

Before the truck arrived at the U.S. 31/State Road 50 intersection on the east side of Seymour, Seymour police stopped traffic. Devices known as "stop sticks" were also placed on the pavement to damage the truck's tires so it had to stop.

That plan failed, and the pickup continued northbound into Bartholomew County. On the way, Chief Deputy Campbell said several vehicles were run off the road by the driver's antics behind the wheel, and the truck nearly hit a tractor-trailer rig coming south head-on. As it entered Bartholomew County, the truck hit the side of Campbell's patrol car as the driver reportedly tried to run him off the road.

The truck went a few miles into Bartholomew County before turning east onto County Road 850 South. It finally went off the road and entered a newly-planted cornfield, where the driver and passenger surrendered.

Couch, identified as the driver, reportedly stated that he "...was running because he didn't have a driver's license."

Couch had an initial hearing in Scott Circuit Court on Monday afternoon, May 20. At the hearing, he told Judge Roger Duvall that he owned property in Kentucky. Because of his statement, a public defender was not assigned to the case.

After a review of that matter was set in Circuit Court on Friday, May 24, a public defender was appointed to handle the defendant's motion for bond reduction.

Couch's bond is set at \$75,000 corporate surety/full cash.

Shockey's initial hearing was conducted by Superior Court Judge Marsha Owens Howser on Tuesday, May 21.

The woman was provided with a public defender, and her trial date is scheduled August 15. Shockey's bond is \$30,000 surety/10% cash.