

Man charged in car/motorcycle accident in which teenager's foot amputated

Written by Marty Randall

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An Austin man has pleaded not guilty to misdemeanor charges in Scott Superior Court filed after a wreck on Tuesday, June 4, in which two people were injured, one a teenager whose right foot was amputated.

Cecil W. White, 29, has been charged with Class A misdemeanors of criminal recklessness and false reporting or informing in connection with the accident involving a moving motorcycle and a parked car on Christie Road north of Austin.

The mishap occurred around 4:15 p.m. Deputies Joe Guaneri and Rodney Rudder were dispatched to the scene to assist Major/Detective Lonnie Noble and Patrolman Nathan Hall of the Austin Police Department.

Ptl. Hall told the deputies that both the male driver of the motorcycle and his female passenger were injured. From what he had been told, the Austin officer said that the couple's motorcycle struck the driver's door of a car parked on Christie Road. The car was out of gas, he advised. Jennings Township First Responders and Scott County EMS technicians were caring for the injured couple, identified as John M. Vest and Carolann L. Broadus, 17. Vest had head trauma, deputies learned, while Broadus had severe injuries to her right leg.

The teenager was air-lifted by Air Methods medical helicopter from the scene to University of Louisville Hospital. It was later learned that her foot above the ankle had been severed.

Vest was transported to Scott Memorial Hospital by Scott County EMS for additional treatment.

Apparently, the motorcycle was headed north on Christie Rd. when it struck the driver's door and front fender and continued on into an adjoining field, where it wrecked. White was with the car when the accident occurred. His two minor children were in the back seat. White had told Ptl. Hall and then Deputies Rudder and Guarneri that his mother had been driving the car north on Christie Rd. when it ran out of gas. He said he stayed with the car and children while his mother took the keys and went to get some fuel.

White said he was out of the car on its passenger side when the collision happened.

Deputy Guaneri observed the accident scene, noting that the motorcycle was west of Christie Rd. It had traveled between a utility pole and an old fence into a field. Glass apparently from the car door window was found in the roadway, and Deputy Guarneri noted that it appeared that the car had been moved back from the point of the impact.

While officers were still on the scene, White's mother was seen walking toward the accident. She did not have a gas can with her, Deputy Guarneri noted.

When asked if she was driving the car earlier when it ran out of fuel, the woman reportedly told the deputy that she had just got out of bed and noticed her car was gone. She went on to tell him that she did not know who had the car nor that it had run out of gas until she was contacted about the accident.

When White was asked about his earlier statement, he identified another man whom he said had been driving. The man left the scene with the keys to get more gas, White stated. He also said after the car had been hit, he moved it back to get it out of the roadway. White was placed under arrest for false informing. Deputy Guarneri took White to the Scott County Security Center in Scottsburg. When he arrived with the prisoner, Deputy Guarneri was contacted by Deputy Rudder. Rudder told him that a statement had been made by Vest's family that White was seen driving his mother's car just before the accident. Also, the family told him "...Cecil had been holding a grudge against John and they thought the accident was intentional."

The accident remains under investigation. At his initial court hearing on Monday, June 10,

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before Senior Judge Nicholas South, White entered a preliminary plea of not guilty against both misdemeanors. Judge South appointed a public defender to represent him and set a jury trial date of August 12.

The defendant's bond was reduced from \$15,000 corporate surety/10% cash to \$5,000 surety/10% cash.