

Criminal Traffic Charges To OPP Constable Left to Public's Speculation

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It has been over three months since an OPP cruiser was involved in a collision at the intersection of Colonel Talbot Road and Glanworth Drive on October 1, 2011 south west of London Ontario. Only now have the media reported that Constable James Morrow has been charged with dangerous driving causing bodily harm as a result of an investigation of that collision. No further information accompanied the news. This has left the public in the London area wondering and speculating about what took place and if some further police misdeeds were involved.

While we cannot shed much light on the events we can certainly display several photographs of the site taken on the accident date.

First, based on the available evidence it would appear that the collision involved two vehicles, one was likely headed south on Colonel Talbot Road while the second was travelling westbound on Glanworth Drive. Below is a photo looking south along Colonel Talbot Road toward the subject intersection.



1 - View looking south along Colonel Talbot Road

After the two vehicles collided it would appear that at least one of the vehicles travelled toward the south west and into a ditch. The orange cones on the south-west portion of

the intersection in the above photo shows the general location where the vehicle exited the road.

Below is another view, looking south along Colonel Talbot Road and this view is taken just from the north edge of the intersection.



2 - View looking south at north edge of intersection with Glanworth Drive

In the extreme upper right of the above photo you can see a little more clearly where a vehicle travelled off the roadway. If you look at the line of bushes you will see a small area where the bushes are missing and this is the location where a vehicle plowed through those bushes. The actual impact between the two vehicles occurred in the middle of the intersection as evidenced by a tire mark indicating that the tire was scuffing or sliding. A photo of that tire mark is shown on the following page.

Such a short, scuffing tire mark is often produced in a scenario where two vehicles meet in an intersection collision. The angle of that tire mark would suggest that the vehicles were headed south and west. But the lack of physical evidence relating to the post impact travel of a second vehicle is somewhat unusual. Typically the post-impact travel of both vehicles is clearly visible as various curved yaw marks and fluid trails would be created. Yet only the single, short tire mark was visible in the present case. As one of the vehicles reached the curb at the southwest quadrant of the intersection there was more typical evidence of the vehicle's motion into the ditch.



3 - View, looking northeast at tire mark at the point of impact



4-View, looking southwest toward the exit location where one of the vehicles entered the ditch

An interesting set of tire marks existed on the back side of the ditch where the vehicle produced some sliding tire marks in the wet earth. The photo below shows this evidence from a distance and then the following photos show closer views of that evidence.



5 - View, looking northeast at the tire marks of one of the vehicles after it passed through the bushes to its final rest position



6 - View of tire marks indicating that the vehicle was sliding



7 - View of sliding character of tire marks

Judging by the tread imprint along side of the sliding marks it would suggest that the sliding evidence might have occurred after the tread marks were created and that

perhaps the sliding evidence is related to towing. Regardless, the evidence is not typical.

The best explanation for this evidence is that the OPP cruiser was westbound and that it likely exited Highway 401 via the exit ramp as it approached the intersection. The news media claim that another officer who was a passenger sustained serious injuries although it was not directly indicated that the passenger was in Constable Morrow's cruiser. But the result would be explainable if the cruiser was struck in the right side by a southbound vehicle.

There is insufficient information available to be certain of these facts but this gives you better information than was originally provided in by the official news agencies.

UPDATE: JANUARY 12, 2012, 2230 HOURS

Video was shown by London's CTV News from the day of the collision and it showed a police cruiser in the noted field with it front end pointing away from the road. So it would confirm that the police cruiser was likely dragged backwards from the direction it came. This is unusual and not recommended because normally police investigators would want to view the characteristics of the tire marks as the cruise moved towards its rest position so that a speed estimate could be made. This is not as crucial in present times because often the speed of a police cruiser is documented by its event data recorder ("Black Box"). Never-the-less the destruction of evidence in this manner is unusual.

The CTV News video also showed a typical passenger car lying within the ditch so it confirms what we indicated earlier about the probably travel directions of the vehicles.

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