



Long-time college coach identified as driver in fatal crash

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INDIANOLA, Iowa -

A long-time college coach has been identified as the driver killed in a single-vehicle crash near Indianola on Memorial Day.

Troopers said it happened just after 8 p.m. at Highway G36 and 150th Street.

The Iowa State Patrol said 65-year-old Joe Franklin Blake, of Indianola, entered a curve and lost control.

The vehicle rolled and Blake was ejected and killed.

Troopers said Blake was not wearing a seat belt.

Simpson College officials confirmed that Joe is the father of Simpson baseball coach Ben Blake and baseball player Casey Blake. Joe was the longtime pitching coach at Simpson.

The college released a statement on the death on Tuesday:

"The thoughts and prayers of the Simpson College community go out to the family and loved ones of Joe Blake, Sr., who passed away Monday, May 25.

"Blake was the long-time pitching coach for the Simpson baseball team and was the father of current head coach, Ben Blake. Blake was a 1971 graduate of Simpson College, where he was a two-sport star in football and baseball. He was inducted into the school's athletic hall of fame in 1981.

"Simpson athletics has lost a friend, a hall of famer and an icon," Director of Athletics Brian Niemuth said. "Joe Blake represented the best of Simpson College. He had the right attitude, a competitive spirit, a tireless work ethic and above all, was a great person. Joe will be sorely missed by all of us."

"The Blake family's ties to Simpson run deep and Joe's contributions to the college and the athletic program go well beyond the baseball diamond."

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