

# The Columbus Dispatch

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## NEWS

# Former Kilbourne football star drowns after rafting accident

**Staff Writer** ThisWeek

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As a high school football star, Christian Hallam mowed down the opposition for his Worthington Kilbourne team.

But the brute force of one of the Olentangy River's low-head dams proved too strong for him on Saturday, when he downed while rafting with a Worthington friend.

Hallam, 20, a 2007 Kilbourne graduate and a student at Mount Union College, was pulled under by the whirlpool beneath the Fifth Avenue bridge as he and Greg Pollina, 19, shared a tandem raft.

The two had started their journey at Tuttle Park, near the Ohio State University campus, at about 6 a.m. on Saturday. The dual inner-tube raft cascaded over the dam. Pollina was thrown away from the dam and climbed to safety, but Hallam was pulled under.

His body was recovered shortly after 2 p.m. on Sunday.

Low-head dams along the Olentangy have been the sites of many drownings and near-drownings over the years. The city of Columbus had planned to remove the dam this year, but federal funds to pay for the project were not forthcoming.

According to The Columbus Dispatch, no signs warn rafters of the danger awaiting them as they approach the dam.

Water levels were high over the weekend because of recent rains.

Hallam was a linebacker on the Kilbourne football team, leading the team with 82 tackles during his senior season. He was named all-conference honorable mention.

He was also on the wrestling team at Kilbourne.

Hallam's mother, Christa Ansley, lives on the Northwest side of Columbus, near the high school.

Pollina's family also lives on the Northwest side.

The Columbus Dispatch *contributed to this story*.