

Man's body found four miles from where he fell off dam

NEWARK (AP) — One of those low-head dams, often referred to as “drowning machines,” is being blamed for another death.

Searchers on Tuesday found the body of a Newark man more than four miles downstream from where he fell off a low-head dam on the North Fork Licking River.

An autopsy was planned today for Jeremiah Michalczak, 19, who was swept into the rain-swollen waters on the north side of Newark at about 9:30 p.m. Sunday as he tried to walk across the dam.

Members of the Licking County Rescue Dive Team using kayaks found the body in the Licking River. The North Fork Licking River is a tributary of the Licking River.

Authorities were unsure why Michalczak, who was with three

companions, decided to go out onto the dam at that hour with such fast-moving water.

Signs posted nearby warn of the dangers of low-head dams, which produce dangerous water force.

“We have some conflicting stories,” police Detective Sgt. Scott Snow said Tuesday. “Whether it was a dare or whether he was trying to show off, we don’t know. We may never know.”

Snow said police were awaiting the results of toxicology tests to determine if alcohol or drugs played a role in the accident.

Low-head dams “are basically referred to as drowning machines with the roll of the water,” said Newark Fire Battalion Chief Chris Keefe. “If you ever get out of there it would be a miracle.”