

Video shows man had gun, but where he pointed it - Sacramento Bee, The (CA) - September 15, 2018 - page 1B

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In police video released Friday, Sacramento officers can be heard telling 19-year-old **Darell Richards** to drop his weapon before firing on him in a Curtis Park backyard, but the camera angles of officers' videos do not show Richards in the moments before the shooting.

Richards had a pellet gun, modeled after a 9mm handgun, and allegedly pointed it at officers during the incident on Sept. 6.

Two officers fired multiple shots in a rapid burst at Richards, but the body camera on one of them was turned off at the time of the shooting. Department spokesman Sgt. Vance Chandler said the camera had accidentally been deactivated earlier when the officer was searching a house. A barbecue grill obscures sight of Richards on the other officer's camera. In later footage, the pellet gun can be seen next to Richards' body.

More than two hours of video and audio show a methodical search of the neighborhood, with officers eventually releasing a K-9 in a backyard before following Richards into the dense and leafy area. Officers see Richards hiding amid lawn furniture and garden equipment under a staircase and say, "Show me your hands, show me your hands, put the gun down," before unleashing a volley of bullets.

While camera angles do not definitively show Richards pointing his pellet gun at officers, at least two officers say that he pointed the gun at them in conversation and radio communications.

Richards' sister, Marlena Lee, expressed outrage after the family viewed the video Friday at police headquarters on Freeport Blvd.

"They have no proof," she said. "They had no proof that my brother did anything, other than hide from them. Nowhere do these videos show that he pointed a gun."

Lee said police told the family that the camera that would have shown that image was "accidentally turned off," possibly after an officer "bumped into something."

"We thought that today we might get some closure," Lee said. "But we got nothing. I saw my brother shot dead in a pool of blood. In my mind, he was murdered."

In video, a SWAT officer can be seen removing the pellet gun from next to Richards' body and throwing it in the dirt. The officer then removes a knife from the body. He inspects Richards' body, saying "Got no gunshot wounds to the front of his chest. Got nothing on his back. I'm trying to figure out where his injuries are."

He then finds "cranial fractures" and blood coming from Richards' ear.

The incident began at 11:31 p.m. on Wednesday, Sept. 5, when a 911 caller reported that a man wearing a face mask had pointed a gun at him and was making his way up Broadway with a gun in his hand, according to a dispatch recording of the call. The man, wearing a black hoodie cinched around his face and a medical mask, pointed the gun at bystanders at Tower Cafe and Dimple Records, according to police radio communications recorded on Broadcastify, an online archive.

Patrol officers found him in the area of 20th Street and Broadway. He bolted on foot when they tried to talk to him, dropping his backpack as he ran. In it, officers found paperwork for **Darell Richards**, according to radio communications.

Richards ran south into Curtis Park, hiding in backyards of homes. Officers did not chase Richards on foot, but blocked off the streets, using K-9 officers and a California Highway Patrol airplane crew to find him.

Richards was shot more than three hours later by two SWAT officers when he was found crouching under a stairwell in the backyard of an occupied Curtis Park home, police said in a press release after the incident.

Officers performed CPR until fire personnel arrived and pronounced Richards dead at the scene.

Richards grew up in Elk Grove and, following altercations with a younger brother that resulted in criminal charges, had recently moved in with his grandparents in Oak Park. Interviews and court records show family members and friends believed Richards was mentally spiraling, showing signs of paranoia and aggression, a stark change from his mostly quiet and gentle past, they said.

"We worried about schizophrenia," Marlena Lee, Richard's older sister, told The Bee this week. "We were trying to get him help, but it came a little too late. It's heartbreaking."

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