

Idaho Murders

BY DAVINA BELLINGER

IN THE EARLY MORNING OF November 13th, 2022, Idaho students Ethan Chapin, Madison Mogen, Xana Kernodle, and Kaylee Goncalves were found stabbed to death in the house that three of them shared with two other students. In late December, the police had caught suspect Bryan Kohberger, who attended a nearby college in Moscow, Idaho, and who had been charged with their murders. He was also a Ph.D. student studying criminology at Washington State University. By the time this story comes out, Kohberger could be charged with homicide and sentenced to either the death penalty or life in prison for a quadruple murder.

The two survivors of the homicide spoke to police about the night before the murders had occurred, saying that long-term couple Kernodle and Chapin had attended a fraternity party. At the same time, best friends Mogen and Goncalves went to a local bar and stopped for a late snack at a food truck on the way home. By 2 A.M., all four of the students went to

bed along with the two survivors, but by 4 A.M., one of the housemates, referred to by the police as “DM”, awoke to strange noises. DM heard one of the victims saying “There’s someone here,” followed by sounds of crying coming from Kernodle’s room and a male saying, “It’s okay; I’m going to help you.” DM did not say whether that was another man or Chapin coming from Kernodle’s room. By 4:17 A.M., a neighbor’s security camera picked up a distorted sound like a whimper followed by a loud thud as dogs barked over the student’s house. The last thing DM remembered was opening their door and seeing “a figure clad in black clothing and a mask that covered their nose and mouth” while walking towards her as DM closed and locked her door.

From the aftermath of the crime scene, police had gathered a litany of evidence, including a shoe print discovered just outside of DM’s bedroom on the path of the back door. According to the affidavit, a white sedan had passed the victims’ house three times after

3:29 A.M. before returning a fourth time at 4:04 A.M. and then speeding away by 4:20 A.M. The murder weapon was believed to have been a US Marines combat knife but was not located at the crime scene. The only part of it that was recovered was its sheath with the DNA of an unknown man. More information about the white sedan and the connection with Kohberger was confirmed by footage given to the forensic examiners, with the FBI matching the white sedan that the suspect had around the time of the murders.

During the court decision-making of deciding whether or not Kohberger was to have a speedy trial, the judge ordered that there be no bail on the five charges that Kohberger was to be convicted of. Kohberger waived his rights to a speedy trial and only gave the judge one-word answers. The preliminary hearing is set to be for June 26th and should take about five days to complete.

Chicago’s Not So Finest?

BY DEANNA HOLMES

IT ALL STARTED ON DECEMBER 31st, with the young ball players who represent Concordia University, Chicago, located in River Forest, Illinois. The team had recently returned from a road trip to California. However, it seems as if some of the young men were having too much fun and violated the set curfew hours. As a result of their collective decision, their coach, Steve Kollar, determined their fate as he pushed them to the limit with a HIIT workout as a direct consequence of their misbehavior. This caused more damage than discipline because five of the team members ended up hospitalized due to the extremities of the rigorous exercise.

The team members were asked to check into an emergency room if they were to experience any symptoms related to rhabdomyolysis, which is a condition where broken-down and worn-out muscle fibers begin to leak throughout the body and occur when damaged muscle tissue releases proteins and electrolytes into the blood, which can hurt the heart and kidneys, according to the U.S. Center for Disease Control and Prevention. The condition can cause permanent disability and death.

The athletic director Pete Gnan sent a letter to parents explaining what had happened, not forgetting to mention: “Our athletics program has zero tolerance for harassment or retaliatory actions of any kind, and reporting mechanisms are in place for students, coaches and related staff.” The hospitalizations were enough to remove Mr. Kollar as the head coach and temporarily suspend him from his duties. The DIII school also had to forfeit two games; they did not compete in the Northern Athletics Collegiate Conference, and they did not play the following

Tuesday and also had postponed Saturday’s game as a result of the workout. Assistant coach Rashaan Surlles will serve as the acting head coach when the team returns to play.

The game doesn’t stop there. According to CBS News Chicago, an article was written on January 13, 2023, declaring that coach Steve Kollar would get to keep his job. Many of those in the athletic training department were very unhappy about this decision as four of them have resigned from their current positions as a result of this news. “The school said there was no evidence Kollar intended to harm the students. The resignations are not believed to have an effect on practices or gameplay.” Pete Gnan continues in his letter, “The university and athletic administration has full confidence in Coach Kollar and believes that he has the best interests of our student-athletes in mind.” Coach Kollar was very well received concluding his short-term sabbatical, “The university declined to disclose additional details regarding Kollar’s absence, citing the situation as a private employment matter. It was stated in the letter, however, that no formal complaints had been lodged against Kollar prior to or in relation to the players being hospitalized.” The group of ball players has since then been discharged and has resumed physical activity, there may even be a new celebration since their team has been on a winning streak claiming four victories in a row which hasn’t been done since February 2012.

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Overall, Coach Kollar continues to have the overall support of his team and their parents, many of whom have voluntarily provided affirmation of their support during our recent inquiry,” Gnan’s letter states.

Photo Credit: Victor Freitas

