

Sources: FBI agents foiled suspects' plans for a kidnap

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Daily News Staff Writers

FBI agents were trying to prevent the robbery and kidnaping of a businessman-turned-drug-dealer last week when they stopped a car at a busy intersection on North Broad Street that ended in a fatal daylight gun battle.

The toll one dead suspect, two wounded suspects and two wounded FBI agents.

According to the law enforcement sources, agents knew that the suspects had left home heavily armed and that they were en route to commit the robbery and kidnaping. The suspects allegedly wanted to raise bail money to get an associate out of jail.

Four FBI agents, an FBI supervisor and a police detective were waiting on Broad Street at Bristol just a block and a half from the suspects' homes to intercept them and prevent the robbery.

As soon as the suspects' black Hyundai turned onto Broad Street, three FBI cars had it surrounded and all four cars stopped at the red light at Roosevelt Boulevard.

Law enforcement sources say the shooting began at 11:35 a.m., when the suspects opened fire after spotting the agents behind them.

Questions had been raised after the March 16 incident about why agents would have chosen such a heavily traveled street to stop armed suspects.

Sources close to the FBI, police and the district attorney's investigation into last Wednesday's incident were able to provide more details about what had happened and when.

They specifically denied earlier reports that the FBI had fired first, or that there had been a high-speed chase before the shooting.

FBI spokesman Jim Welch said he could not comment.

The suspects first noticed the FBI when the Hyundai turned onto Broad and stopped for the light at Roosevelt, according to law enforcement sources and an affidavit filed last week. According to those sources and affidavit, this is what happened.

"Five-0," yelled Melvin Williams, 19, who was sitting in the front passenger seat. Williams, of Hicks Street near Bristol, was warning three other occupants of the black Hyundai that FBI agents were behind them at a red light on Broad Street at Roosevelt Boulevard. "Five-0" is street jargon for law enforcement, referring to the old TV cop show, "Hawaii Five-0."

Agents in blue jackets with foot-high yellow letters that read "FBI" got out of the three unmarked cars in an attempt to apprehend the suspects at the light.

"FBI... stop," shouted agents Timothy Turck, 34, and Richard Macko, 44. "Put your hands up." "Get 'em," ordered Williams, according to the sources.

Law enforcement sources say the witness who claims FBI agents fired first was 200 feet away at a McDonald's restaurant and might not have seen that the suspects shot first.

According to the affidavit, Wayne Caldwell, the driver of the car, identified Williams as the one who ordered the others to open fire when the FBI agents approached. Caldwell said the suspects fired first.

Then, sources said, Jermaine Lipscomb, 23 of Hicks Street near Bristol, and Termaine Jackson, 28, of 15th Street near Bristol, both in the back seat, opened fire through the rear window of the Hyundai, shattering the glass.

One source said Williams also turned around in the front seat and fired through the back window.

In the affidavit, Williams denied that he had ordered the shooting or had fired a gun, but admitted he had a gun with him. Authorities said he had two guns.

According to the affidavit, Caldwell said he had no gun and did not shoot.

Immediately after the incident, a witness provided a different version of events to the Daily News.

Jose Castro, a cashier at a nearby fast-food restaurant, told the Daily News: "I saw three cops start shooting at the black car.

One guy in the black car got out of the passenger side and he was shot immediately, three or four times. They shot back at the cops, and the guy in the back seat got shot a couple times through the back window. He never got out of the car."

Law enforcement sources disputed that account, saying that the witness had been 200 feet away at a McDonald's restaurant and that he might not have been able to see the suspects shooting first through the rear window.

All six officers returned fire, the law enforcement sources said. Agent Turck, hit in the chest, fell on his back between the Hyundai and the FBI's gray Thunderbird. The bullet ricocheted off his bulletproof vest and lodged in his left wrist. Turck kept shooting until he passed out, a source said.

Police Detective Lamont Weston, 32, assigned to the Violent Traffickers Project, crouched down and grabbed the bleeding agent by the belt, pulling him to safety behind a car parked at the curb while emptying his sixshot .38 police service revolver at the suspects.

Macko was standing by a red Buick Skylark nearly two car lengths behind Turck when a sin-

gle slug pierced his chin and lodged precariously near the jugular vein in his neck. And then he went down.

More than two dozen rounds were fired during the quick blaze of gunfire, sources said. One suspect, Lipscomb, died, and two suspects and two agents were hospitalized with gunshot wounds. One suspect, Caldwell, was not injured.

Suspect Williams was treated for a gunshot wound of the abdomen, Jackson, for gunshot wounds of the arm, knee and thigh. Agent Macko was treated for a gunshot wound of the neck; Turck, of the wrist.

All but one of the law enforcement sources said that the four suspects remained in the black Hyundai during the shooting. One source thought all of the suspects had gotten out of the car during the gunfire. Witness Castro said one suspect got out of the car and was shot.

After the shooting stopped, a law enforcement source said, FBI agents opened the doors of the Hyundai and pulled out three suspects and handcuffed them. The dead suspect, Lipscomb, who had a lengthy criminal record, was slumped in the back seat and was pulled out of the car by the agents and put out on the street.

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Tue, Apr 9, 2019