

Slipin' and Slidin'

Members of Squadron 3 get "grody" after rain turned Spence Park into a mud field. The event, which featured sophomores

against everybody, started out as football and ended up as an all-

Cocaine smuggler falls to his death

Parachutist crashes on driveway

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KNOXVILLE, Tenn. — A heavily armed parachutist, wearing a bullet-proof vest and carrying \$14 million worth of cocaine, fell to his death in a residential driveway Wednesday when his chute failed, police said.
"I got up to shave and looked out

my window and saw him," said Fred Myers, 85, who discovered the body Wednesday morning. "It looks like he jumped out with too heavy a load."

The victim was identified as Andrew Carter Thornton II, of Paris, Ky. Police had no further informa-tion about the man, who carried 35 kilograms of cocaine in an Army duffel bag, as well as two automatic weapons, several knives and rope, and was wearing night-vision gogRandall Pedigo said the parachutist appeared to have been dead for eight hours when the body was found at 8:45 a.m.

"He had bags attached every-where," said Ralph Johnson, 63, a neighbor of Myers who notified au-

"There was a trickle of blood from his nose that had dried on each cheek," Johnson said. "Other than that he looked OK. He was lying on his back with his knapsack half un-

Metro Narcotics Squad Lt. Jerry Day said the man was "aiming for this area and there was probably

someone supposed to meet him."

Detective Charles Coleman said the death appeared to be an acci-

"He had several IDs on him, all

different," Coleman said. "We're checking to see which one is his."

The victim's main parachute ap-

parently failed to open and the re-serve chute had been deployed, Coleman said.

Tony Acri, assistant special agent in the Atlanta office of the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration, said the mountain passes and clan-destine airstrips in Appalachia pro-vide good cover for smugglers hop-ing to beat a DEA crackdown on drug peddlers in Miami and other

Acri's office, which oversees activity in Tennessee, North Carolina, South Carolina and Georgia, said cocaine is "smuggled into the (Appalachian) area and picked up by Colombians and other groups, and distributed from there. It's a big problem.

He said the area's access to interstate highways appeals to smugglers looking for quick getaway and distri-

bution routes. He said each kilogram of cocaine is worth about \$40,000 wholesale, and 10 times that much on the

"It was just a matter of time until we had something like this," Day

The nearest airport is Downtown Island Airport, about three-quarters of a mile away, but a spokesman there said he already told police no

planes landed overnight. Parachuting expert Rick Snow of Knoxville, asked by police to help in the investigation, said the dead man appeared to be an expert jumper be-cause the chute was of an expensive

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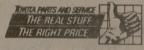
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