

Massachusetts State Police, K-9 'Zigo', track down stolen vehicle and suspects after pursuit

"At approximately 2:40 AM on Monday, April 29, 2024, Acton Police requested that Massachusetts State Police patrols out of the Concord Barracks to be on the lookout for a black Audi that had been stolen in their town. Subsequently, Concord Police observed the stolen Audi pull into a parking lot in their town and saw three occupants get out of that vehicle and enter a gray BMW and speed away. Concord Officers pursued the BMW for a short distance before terminating their pursuit.

Meanwhile, Trooper Markery Flerisma, who was on patrol on the midnight shift out of the State Police-Concord Barracks, observed a gray car pass his cruiser at a very high rate of speed on Route 2 east. Trooper Flerisma attempted to catch up to the BMW, which took Exit 127A onto Interstate 95 south. Trooper Flerisma caught up to the vehicle and determined that it was a gray BMW sedan bearing a Massachusetts plate. The Trooper queried that plate and learned that it belonged to a 2008 Honda Pilot SUV, not to the BMW.

Trooper Flerisma activated his lights and siren and attempted to stop the BMW. The operator of the BMW refused to stop and continued to flee at high speed. State Police Troop A Headquarters authorized pursuit of the suspect vehicle and assumed command and control. The pursuit crossed to MSP Troop A into MSP Troop H. Troop H Headquarters took command and control and multiple MSP cruisers began to converge on the area.

A Trooper ahead of the pursuit route deployed stop sticks,

which the BMW struck, causing damage to its front driver-side tire. The suspects nonetheless continued to flee on I-95 south before exiting at Exit 23.

When the BMW took the exit, Trooper Flerisma terminated pursuit but moments later observed the suspect vehicle in the median strip, near Neponset Street, where it had come to a stop after striking multiple traffic signs. The three male occupants of the BMW ran from the vehicle into nearby woods.

Multiple MSP and Norwood Police patrols established a perimeter around the wood line and an adjacent residential neighborhood. MSP K9 Unit Trooper Benjamin Siok and his partner Zigo responded to the area to assist in searching for the suspects.

Trooper Siok deployed Zigo from the the off-ramp and the dog soon acquired a scent and tracked up an embankment to the tree line where the suspects had fled. Zigo's intensity increased the farther up the hill he tracked, and then he continued to pull intensely along a deer fence. Zigo stopped suddenly at a point along the fence that bordered a backyard on Ledgeview Drive and showed intense interest in the backyard. Trooper Siok and Zigo, along with Trooper James Curtain, entered the backyard, and Zigo immediately pulled to a gazebo, which connected to a swimming pool deck, and pressed his nose against the trim along the gazebo floor.

Troopers shined a flashlight on a small crawlspace between the ground and the gazebo floor and observed two of the suspects hiding in that space. Trooper Siok issued commands to surrender or face apprehension by Zigo. Both suspects came out of their hiding space and were taken into custody without incident. They were identified as MICHAEL GONZALEZ, 33, of New Bedford, who was driving the BMW, and ANGEL RODRIGUEZ, 50, of Fall River, one of the passengers.

Zigo was not done yet.

A few moments later, Trooper Siok learned that Ring camera footage from another home in the neighborhood showed another man who tried to enter a motor vehicle parked in the driveway and, when he couldn't get in, then ran across the street into a stretch of backyards.

Zigo was deployed again and began working those backyards. In one yard he showed a change in behavior and increased excitement as he pulled toward two air conditioning units on the ground between two large bushes. As Zigo approached, a rabbit ran out from one the bushes. Showing great discipline, Zigo paid no attention to the rabbit and remained focused on the bushes and the A/C units. He showed a proximity alert, and Trooper Siok located the third suspect almost completely concealed within one of the bushes.

With Zigo providing cover, Troopers removed that suspect from the bush and took him into custody. That suspect initially gave Troopers a fake name but was eventually identified as YOVANIELL SOSTRE, 29, of Providence. He was the second passenger in the BMW.

The BMW was towed to the State Police-Concord Barracks and inventoried. Troopers located multiple tools, a crowbar, and a black mask inside the car.

The arrestees were booked at State Police-Concord on the following charges.

MICHAEL GONZALEZ:

1. Failure to Stop for Police;
2. Negligent Operation of a Motor Vehicle;
3. Attaching Plates;
4. Operating a Motor Vehicle with a Suspended License, Subsequent Offense;
5. Resisting Arrest;
6. Speeding;
7. Leaving the Scene of a Crash that Caused Property Damage;

8. Disorderly Conduct; and
9. Possession of Burglarious Tools.

ANGEL RODRIGUEZ:

1. Resisting Arrest;
2. Disorderly Conduct; and
3. Possession of Burglarious Tools;

YOVANIELL SOSTRE:

1. Resisting Arrest;
2. Disorderly Conduct;
3. Possession of Burglarious Tools; and
4. Providing a False Name to Police.

The men were arraigned on those charges in Waltham District Court.

The investigation confirmed that the arrestees were the same men who entered the BMW in Concord after exiting and abandoning the stolen black Audi. Acton Police will seek their own charges related to the theft of the Audi and their initial pursuit of it. The registered owner of the BMW is a Rhode Island woman. It does not appear that that vehicle was stolen. A photo of Zigo and the three suspects' booking photos are included with this post."-Massachusetts State Police.