

Official Report



Division of Forensic Sciences
Georgia Bureau of Investigation
State of Georgia

Central Regional Lab
DOFS Case #: 2012-4000655
Report Date: 04/27/2012

George Herrln, Jr., Ph.D.
Deputy Director

* NAME Accredited *



AUTHORIZED
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Requested Service: Autopsy

Agency: Dscatur Co. Coroner
Agency Ref#:
Requested by: P. Bruton

Case Individuals:

Victim (Juv.): REMINGTON COLE WALDEN

Evidence:

001 Decedent

Results and Conclusion?:

Evidence Submission: 001

In accordance with the Georgia Death investigation Act, an autopsy is performed on the body of Remington Walden at the Georgia Bureau of Investigation, Central Regional Medical Examiner's Office on 03/09/12. The autopsy is begun at 0800 and the prosecutor is Dr. Maryanne Gaffney-Kraft.

Cause of Death:

Thermal Injury In conjunction with a right femur fracture

Pathologic Diagnoses:

Thermal injury with predominant charring, 100% body surface area
Right femur fracture

Presentation of Body:

The body is received in a body bag. Body identification consists of an identification tag on the body bag; identification is made by the local coroner and law enforcement via witnesses and circumstances. The body is charred. The body is focally clothed in charred fragments of socks, pants and underwear. No personal belongings accompany the body. There is no evidence of medical intervention.

External Examination:

Body Condition: Charred
Length: 44 inches
Weight: 40.4 pounds
Body Heat: Cool
Rigor: Not assessable
Uvula: Not assessable
Hair: Not assessable
Eyes: Not assessable
Teeth: Natural in good condition, consistent with age
Fingernails: Not assessable
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The body is that of a white male child; the body appears compatible with the reported age. The body shows 100% body surface area thermal injury with predominant charring. The external genitalia are that of a normal male child. There are no readily identifying marks or scars.

Evidence of Injury:

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Thermal Injury:

The body shows 100% body surface area thermal injury with predominant charring; skin splitting and loss with exposure of the underlying musculature and bone are present; small areas of thermally injured non-charred skin are present on the right inguinal area-thigh and right foot. Thabranial skull shows extensive thermal injury with charring, crumbling-fragmentation and bone loss; the underlying brain is seared. Portions of the right lateral chest-abdominal soft tissue and bony wall and left posterior-lateral back are burned away exposing the underlying organs which show searing. The bilateral upper extremities show thermal contractures, left greater than right, with bone charring and fragmentation of the right wrist and hBnd and left humerus, radius, ulna, wrist and hand.

Blunt Force Injury:

There is fracture of the right mid femur with local surrounding soft tissue hemorrhage.

Additional Procedures:

Photographs: documentary photographs are obtained.
Radiographs: Postmortem x-rays are performed at autopsy.

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Evidence Collected:

The bloodstain card is collected as evidence. Postmortem blood, urine and liver are obtained at autopsy.

Personal Effects Disposition:

The charred fragments of clothing are released with the body.

Internal Examination-

Body Cavities:

A Y-shaped thoraco-abdominal incision is made and the organs are examined in-situ and eviscerated in the usual fashion. The bilateral pleural and peritoneal cavities contain no significant fluid. No significant adhesions are present. All body organs are present and in their normal anatomical positions; the organs show varying amounts of thermal injury.

Cardiovascular System:

The pericardial sac is free of significant fluid and adhesions. The heart weighs 100 grams and is structurally normal. The epicardium is smooth and glistening with minimal amounts of epicardial adipose tissue. The coronary arteries arise normally, follow the usual distribution and are widely patent, without evidence of abnormality. The chambers and valves bear the usual size-position relationships and are unremarkable. The myocardium is uniform and shows no evidence of acute or chronic ischemia, or focal lesion. The aorta and its major branches arise normally, follow the usual distribution and are without abnormality.

Neck:

A layered dissection of the anterior neck is performed. Examination of the soft tissues of the neck including the strap muscles and large vessels reveals no abnormalities. The hyoid bone and laryngeal cartilages are intact. The larynx is clear; no soot is present. The tongue, mucosa is intact; the underlying musculature is devoid of hemorrhage.

Respiratory System:

The right and left lungs weigh 200 and 160 grams respectively. The upper and lower airways are free of debris and foreign material; no soot is present; the surface mucosa is unremarkable. The pleural surfaces are smooth. The lungs are normally formed. The parenchyma of both lungs is without obvious consolidation or focal lesions. The pulmonary arteries are free of thrombi or emboli.

Gastrointestinal Tract:

The GI tract shows normal configuration and is intact throughout its length. The esophageal mucosa is unremarkable without focal lesions. The stomach contains a minimal amount of brown fluid; the mucosa is unremarkable. The small and large bowels are unremarkable and contain progressively formed stool. The appendix is present.

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Hepatobiliary System:

The liver weighs 680 grams. The capsule is intact and the parenchyma is red-brown and uniform without focal lesions. The gallbladder contains a small amount of bile; the mucosa is unremarkable. The extrahepatic biliary tree is patent.

Genitourinary System:

The right and left kidneys are of normal size and shape weighing 40 grams each. The capsules strip with ease from the underlying smooth cortical surfaces. The renal architecture is intact and is without focal lesions. The cortices are of normal thickness and the cortical-medullary junctions are sharp. The ureters are intact and unremarkable. The bladder contains a minimal amount of yellow clear urine; the mucosa is unremarkable. The prostate, seminal vesicles and testes are appropriate for age and without abnormality.

Endocrine System:

The thyroid and bilateral adrenal glands are unremarkable without focal lesions. The pancreas is of normal size, shape and consistency without focal lesions.

Immunologic System:

The spleen weighs 60 grams. The capsule is intact and the parenchyma is congested but without obvious focal lesions. The thymus weighs 30 grams and is unremarkable. No significant lymphadenopathy is identified.

Central Nervous System:

The dura mater and leptomeninges show thermal injury. The structures at the base of the brain including the vasculature and observed cranial nerves are normally formed and without abnormality. The brain weighs 1000 grams and shows thermal injury being in a semi-solid state; on sectioning, normal overall architecture is present without obvious focal lesions or abnormalities.

Musculoskeletal System:

Other than previously noted injuries, the bony framework, supporting musculature and soft tissues are unremarkable without obvious focal lesions.

Summary and Interpretation:

The decedent is a 4-year-old white male child who was the victim of a two vehicle accident with post-accident fire; per Investigative reports, the decedent was alive after the accident but could not escape the burning vehicle.

The significant findings at autopsy are 100% body surface area thermal injury with predominant charring and a right femur fracture. No airway soot is present.

Toxicological analysis of postmortem peripheral blood for ethyl alcohol is negative. Analysis of postmortem central blood for drug screen testing is negative for barbiturates, cannabinoids, certain benzodiazepines, cocaine/cocaine metabolites and common opiates. Analysis of postmortem central blood for drug confirmation testing is negative for a comprehensive drug screen. Analysis of postmortem central blood is negative for a significant quantity of carboxyhemoglobin.

Given the autopsy and investigative findings, it is my opinion the cause of death in this case is thermal injury in conjunction with a right femur fracture. The manner of death is best classified as accident.

Only those items discussed in the results above were analyzed for this report. The above represents the interpretations/opinions of the undersigned analyst. Evidence analyzed in this report will be returned to the submitting agency. Biological evidence (body fluids and tissues) and fire debris extracts will be destroyed after one year. This report may not be reproduced except in full without written permission of the laboratory.

Technical notes and data supporting the conclusions and findings in this report are maintained within the laboratory case records.

This case may contain evidence that must be preserved in accordance with O.C.G.A. § 17-5-56.

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Maryann Gaffney-Kraft
Regional Medical Examiner

Related Agencies:

- GSP-Post 14-Doraville
- South Georgia Judicial Circuit
- GSP-Accident Reporting
- Child Fatality Review Board
- GBI-Medical Examiner Central
- GSP-Team 5-SCRT Valdosta
- Decatur Co. District Attorney
- Child Abuse Protocol Committee-Decatur Co.

ACN: DR GAFFNEY-KRAFT
ACN: SCRT501012

End of Official Report