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Gun found in pond may yield clues

Post staff report

Boone County Water Rescue searchers found a 9-mm automatic pistol Friday that they suspect was used in a Highland Heights robbery attempt last week in which the intended victim was shot nine times.

Highland Heights police did not disclose how they knew to search a pond behind the Cold Spring Roadhouse at 4210 Alexandria Pike. But a crew, wading into the pond with specialized cameras and metal detectors, had success in less than two hours Friday evening.

"I can tell you we found a weapon," confirmed Boone County Water Rescue Capt. Dale Appel. "We did find it in the lake behind the tavern there."

"It's a 9-mm handgun," said Highland Heights police Sgt. David Lawson. "It'll be sent out for comparison testing" to see whether it fired any of the shots in the May 2 attempted robbery of 26-year-old Covington resident Isaiah Young.

Despite gunshot wounds to his chest, stomach and legs, Young was released from the hospital this week.

Mistakenly released by University Hospital despite a warrant for his arrest on murder charges was James Payne, 31, of Cincinnati, who went to the hospital for wounds to his arm and leg. Payne remains at large.

Highland Heights Police Chief Carl Mullen said his department had the warrant, and had notified the hospital it was to be served on Payne before his release.

Mullen said Young was shot outside a basement apartment off Johns Hill Road during an elaborate robbery scheme carried out by four people.

Mullen said Young met 23-year-old Stephanie Hearn at a Cincinnati nightclub Thursday night. The two left together about 2:30 Friday morning, bound for an apartment belonging to a Hearn relative. But shortly after the pair arrived at the Meadowview apartment, police said three other men ambushed Young as part of a plot with Hearn to rob him.

Almost as soon as the couple came to the apartment, they were approached by Payne, who shot Young five times, Mullen said. "And then (Jerry) Endsley just started shooting."

Police said Endsley, 29, of Cincinnati, shot Young four more times in the legs and abdomen. Endsley also accidentally shot Payne in the arm and leg, and Hearn also was shot in the leg, police said.

Endsley, 29, was arrested Wednesday on charges of attempted murder and robbery and is being held in the Hamilton County Justice Center. Hearn, who is charged with complicity to robbery, turned herself in to Highland Heights police late Wednesday.

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