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## State inmate fails at second escape attempt

By Stewart Smith / staff writer Feb 1, 2006



A former inmate of the East Mississippi Correctional Facility briefly escaped custody Tuesday morning in downtown Meridian — his second unsuccessful bid for freedom in the past four mont

At about 8:30 a.m., Christopher Roy, 24, who is serving a life sentence for a homicide in Jackson County, was being transported by the Mississippi Department of Corrections to the Lauderdale County Courthouse from the Mississippi State Penitentiary at Parchman.

Roy and Gregory Malone, 26, who is serving a life sentence for capital murder in Hinds County, headed for a circuit court hearing on their alleged escape from the East Mississippi Correctional Facility in October.

Tara Frazier, a spokeswoman for the Department of Corrections, said a preliminary investigation revealed Roy had removed his waist chains and leg irons before jumping out of the van he was once the door was opened by the transportation officer.

Lt. Dean Harper, a spokesman for the Meridian Police Department, said a brief chase ensued in downtown Meridian. Roy fled down Fifth Street to 22nd Avenue to Ninth Street, where he jumped the bed of a pickup truck near Joe's Sports Results. After changing out of his prison uniform into civilian clothes, Roy hopped out of the truck bed and was tackled by a Department of Correction officer, Harper said.

A single shot was fired at Roy by a Department of Corrections officer at the start of the chase.

"Thankfully, no one, or no thing, was hit," Harper said.

Harper said Roy was pursued by Department of Corrections officers on foot and by members of Lauderdale County Sheriff's Department and Meridian Police Department in vehicles.

An unidentified Department of Corrections officer was injured during the pursuit after he was struck by a car. Harper said the driver fled the scene after the incident. The officer was taken to a Meridian hospital, treated for his injuries and released later Tuesday.

Harper said the Meridian Police Department will pursue charges of felony escape against Roy.

Roy and Malone were taken back to Parchman following their hearing Tuesday.

While the incident remains under investigation by the Department of Corrections, the department may make changes in how it transports prisoners.

"Our agency's top priority is maintaining public safety," said MDOC Commissioner Christopher E. Malone. "We will be assessing our policies and procedures regarding the transportation of inmates and will make necessary adjustments based on this incident."

Roy's first alleged escape attempt took place Monday, Oct. 17, at the East Mississippi Correctional Facility, a private prison at Lost Gap owned by The Geo Group Inc. He was joined by Malone and was allegedly assisted by a correctional officer at the prison.

The two inmates managed to flee as far as Tuscaloosa, Ala., where U.S. marshals from Birmingham, Ala., arrested Roy and Malone at an Econo Lodge motel one day after their escape.

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