

NASCAR legend killed in Daytona 500

Race world mourns Earnhardt's death

by Al Pearce
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Knight-Ridder Tribune

The first fans arrived at Langley Speedway at 3 p.m., four hours before the start of Wednesday night's tribute to Dale Earnhardt. They had come from North Carolina to join thousands of others in mourning the loss of the biggest name in American motorsports.

And they kept coming. By 5:30, traffic was backed up for three blocks on North Armistead Avenue. By 6:45, the speedway's parking lots were filled. At 7:45, fully 15 minutes after the program, fans were streaming in and others were trying to leave.

They all had come with one thought in mind.

"I'm here looking for closure," said Barbara Woerner, a Hampton, Va., resident who began pulling for Earnhardt in the late 1980s at a Busch Series race near Charlotte. "To me, this has been like losing a member of

my family. I heard it might rain tonight, but I wouldn't have missed this for the world."

Apparently, neither would have more than 5,000 other fans. Most of the grandstand was filled and fans stood three-deep along the frontstretch walkway. They hooted and hollered and cheered every mention of the man they had come to know and love.

Langley's huge American flag flew at half-staff. All five positions on its scoreboard showed 3, the number Earnhardt made famous. Most of the fans queued up to sign one of the dozen or so sympathy books that will be sent to Earnhardt's family and that of team owner Richard Childress.

There were three look-alike Chevrolets, painted, lettered and numbered identical to the Intimidator's race car. A makeshift memorial had popped up near the front gate. Fans carefully laid flowers, cards, die-cast cars, checkered flags, signed photos, posters and Goodwrench No. 3 hats at the site.

"I've cried every night since it happened," said Susanne Pitsillides of Hampton. "I pulled for him for years, then sort of started pulling for Jeff Gordon because I liked how his car looked. But Dale has always been where my heart is. This has shaken me up worse than if it had happened to Gordon."

Pitsillides, her husband and a cousin had Turn 4 tickets at the 1999 and 2000 Daytona 500s. She's glad they missed last weekend's race. "We would have been right there, looking at it when they took him out of the car and covered it up," she said. "And we would have felt so helpless."

"Sunday night, we got calls from friends who knew what we were going through. The comfort of that was better than the 12-hour drive home, listening to the radio. It was fate that we weren't there. Looking back on the TV coverage, I think they knew he was dead. All the signs were there."

Valerie Liddycoat of Hampton knows a thing or two about the perils of racing. She's a noted American

Power Boat Association driver who's competed for years. She could tell by the look on Ken Schrader's face that Earnhardt was gravely injured.

"I watched the race at home, then we gathered around the news because we knew something was bad," she said. "When they talked to Schrader, I sort of began preparing myself. The TV people weren't acting quite right. When they announced it, I burst into tears."

There were tears Wednesday night, but there also were cheers and hugs and happy memories. The biggest cheer came when a long-time Earnhardt-watcher told the joke about the late Neil Bonnett watching a race in heaven.

Bonnett recognized the 7 of Alan Kulwicki, the 28 of Davey Allison, the 8 of Joe Weatherly and the 22 of Fireball Roberts. But he was puzzled about a black No. 3, and asked St. Peter if something dreadful had happened to Earnhardt.

"No," St. Peter told Bonnett, "that's just God. He thinks he's Earnhardt."



Dale Earnhardt sits on his car before his final Daytona 500. ESP

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Damage by alleged spy called 'extremely grave'

by Mike Dorning
February 21, 2001
Chicago Tribune

WASHINGTON -- A veteran FBI counterintelligence agent was charged Tuesday with spying for Moscow for 15 years, doing "extremely grave" damage to national security by exposing numerous sensitive U.S. intelligence operations and providing information that led to the executions of at least two American double agents in Russia.

Robert Philip Hanssen, a former Chicago police officer who has been an FBI agent since 1976, was arrested Sunday evening after allegedly leaving a package of classified documents for his Russian handlers at a designated drop point under a footbridge in a wooded park in suburban Virginia.



FBI PHOTO

Robert Philip Hanssen, 56, has been arrested and accused of spying for Russia and the former Soviet Union during his time as a counterintelligence officer for the FBI.

According to an affidavit filed in court against Hanssen, he volunteered to become a paid spy for the KGB during the Cold War and continued working for its successor agency, over the years earning at least \$1.4 million in cash, diamonds and foreign bank deposits for his services.

After his arrest, the FBI collected \$50,000 in a plastic trash bag -- allegedly for Hanssen -- at another drop site.

The affidavit also describes cloak-and-dagger intrigue, including the use of "dead drops" in public parks, signals passed by tape placed on public signs, numerical ciphers to disguise meeting dates and times, and communication through newspaper want ads.

Hanssen, 56, apparently operated undetected despite holding a series of highly sensitive positions in the FBI's Washington headquarters and in its New York field office, a hub of spying and counterespionage operations. He came under suspicion in the fall after U.S. intelligence agencies obtained Russian documents describing communications with an agent code-named "Ramon."

Excerpts from those communications quote Hanssen musing about his Chicago past, suggesting as the August 1991 Soviet coup was unfolding that the country's leaders could benefit from a "thorough study" of Mayor Richard J. Daley's management of Chicago. They also show a healthy ego, with Hanssen deriding the work of another FBI counterintelligence officer, and they suggest a teenage fascination with becoming a double agent for Russia.

According to the FBI, Hanssen drew on his counterintelligence experience to take extraordinary precautions to protect himself, never revealing his identity to his Russian handlers and refusing to meet with them.

He also was careful not to live beyond his means and did not appear to press for large payments, communications show. "I have little need or utility for more than 100,000 [dollars]. It merely provides a difficulty since I cannot spend it, store it or invest it easily. ... Eventually I would appreciate an escape plan," he wrote in a 1985 letter to his handlers after his first delivery to them.

The pattern of information contained in his communications to Moscow made him the leading suspect once the FBI analyzed the Russian documents.

FBI Director Louis Freeh said that although the agency was only beginning to assess the damage to national security, the information Hanssen provided to his handlers appeared to

have done "extremely grave" harm. Freeh said Hanssen's conduct "represents the most traitorous actions imaginable."

Speaking to reporters aboard Air Force One, President Bush said it was "a difficult day for those who love our country, and especially for those who serve our country in law enforcement and in the intelligence community."

But, he added, "to anyone who would betray its trust, I warn you: We'll find you and we'll bring you to justice."

Hanssen allegedly turned over more than 6,000 pages of highly sensitive documents, including long-range plans for U.S. intelligence-gathering and detailed information on electronic surveillance techniques and targets.

The information on surveillance can be especially damaging because the Soviets would have been able to use that knowledge to plant misleading information for U.S. intelligence agencies, espionage experts said.

Hanssen is charged with betraying "numerous" U.S. double agents working for the Soviet Union and Russia. The affidavit says one of his first acts was to name three moles who already had been revealed by CIA double agent Aldrich Ames.

With the corroboration from Hanssen, two of the moles who were working in the Soviet Embassy in Washington were called back and executed. The third, who had worked in San Francisco, was imprisoned by the KGB and released after the fall of the Soviet Union, according to the affidavit.

In 1989, Hanssen tipped off his handlers to an espionage investigation of U.S. diplomat Felix Bloch, compromising the case against the suspected Soviet spy, Freeh said. Bloch was fired by the State Department but never prosecuted.

Hanssen also is accused of identifying potential recruits within the U.S. government, including a military officer, not named in the affidavit, whom Hanssen allegedly knew in Chicago.

Hanssen may have nursed teenage dreams of espionage.

According to the affidavit, in a letter allegedly left for his Russian handler in March 2000, Hanssen wrote, "I decided on this course when

I was 14 years old. I'd read Philby's book [an apparent reference to notorious British double agent Harold "Kim" Philby, once head of the Soviet section of British Secret Intelligence]. Now, that is insane, eh? My only hesitations were my security concerns under uncertainty. I hate uncertainty. So far I have judged the edge correctly."

In another communication, he muses about what he considers to be the failings of the FBI's lead agent in the Bloch investigation, which he writes could have been successful if the FBI supervisor had acted more decisively.

The communications also show an agent well-aware of the serious consequences of his actions.

"Recent changes in U.S. law now attach the death penalty to my help to you. ... I know far better than most what minefields are laid and the risks," he writes in one letter quoted in the affidavit.

Hanssen used FBI computer systems to monitor whether he, his home or any of the drop sites he used had come under suspicion, Freeh said. Freeh also said Hanssen appeared to be working alone as a double agent. The FBI has identified several of his Russian handlers, but Freeh declined to comment on whether they would be expelled from the country or prosecuted.

Hanssen was arraigned Tuesday in federal court in Alexandria, Va., on charges of espionage and conspiracy to commit espionage. His attorney, Plato Cacheris, a prominent Washington defense attorney who also represented Ames, said Hanssen would plead not guilty "at this point."

Cacheris said law-enforcement authorities "always talk that they've got a great case. But we'll see."

Hanssen, he added, is "quite upset. He's just emotional."

Prosecutors have not decided whether to pursue capital charges.

Hanssen's modest split-level house in suburban Virginia was surrounded Tuesday by yellow police tape as FBI agents searched it.

Neighbors described Hanssen, his wife and their six children as a close family. His wife, Bernadette, teaches religion part-time at a Catholic school.

Napster offers to pay record companies \$1 billion

by Jon Healey and P.J. Huffstutter
Los Angeles Times

SAN FRANCISCO -- Trying to stave off extinction without driving off all its users, online music powerhouse Napster Inc. announced an offer Tuesday to pay record companies \$1 billion over five years for the right to include copyrighted music in a new, fee-based version of its music-swapping network.

Company executives and Thomas Middlehoff, chief of media conglomerate Bertelsmann, implored the labels to suspend their legal assault while all the parties worked out a deal.

The offer, which both fans and critics see as a desperate gamble, comes as the company and its users nervously await a preliminary injunction from U.S. District Judge Marilyn Hall Patel in San Francisco. That injunction could force Napster to block access to the most popular songs, eviscerating the current version of the service.

The major labels reacted coolly to Tuesday's offer, although they didn't rule out a deal with Napster if their concerns about unauthorized copying were met.

"We would not support a proposal that allows Napster to continue to operate in the current unlawful form while developing a business model," said Dick Parsons, chief operating officer of AOL Time Warner Inc. "They need to shut down, then we can talk."

Bob Bernstein, a spokesman for Vivendi Universal's Universal Music Group, said: "It is Napster's responsibility to come to the creative community with a legitimate business model and a system that protects our artists and copyrights. ... Nothing we have heard in the past and nothing we have heard today suggests they have yet been able to accomplish that task."

A spokeswoman for the record labels' trade association dismissed Napster's offer as a public-relations gimmick. "This is a strategy to put public pressure on the (record) companies, rather than have face-to-face meetings with the companies they're trying to deal with," said Amy Weiss of the Recording Industry Association of America.

Industry and legal experts questioned how Napster could raise the promised \$200 million a year, given that few of its current members are expected to sign up for the new version. Napster's model assumes that more than 98 percent of the 64 million registered users will abandon the service in the face of the new fees, which are tentatively set at \$3 to \$10 per month.

If Napster loses 98 percent of its current users, it will only have about a million people pay-

ing for the service, said Phil Leigh, an analyst at the Raymond James Associates Inc. investment bank in St. Petersburg, Fla.

"At \$10 a person, that's only \$120 million a year," said Leigh, assuming the monthly charge would be at the high end of \$10. "They're either going to have to convince more people to stay with the service or draw revenues from other sources."

The appeal of the new service will depend heavily on Napster's ability to attract the major label groups. None have signed on so far, although Bertelsmann-owned BMG has said it will work with the new Napster service if it meets BMG's criteria for security.

"For this to work, Napster has to have everything, from any MP3 file you want to terrific customer service," said Gene Hoffman, chief executive of EMusic.com, an online rival. "If it has everything, then people will pay. Right now, it doesn't have everything."

A hint of possible help came from EMI on Tuesday, which has struck more deals with online music companies than any other major label group.

"We're open to any and all models that help our artists make a living and help our bottom line," said Jay Samit, a senior vice president at EMI. "It sounds on the surface that at least somebody's thinking about ways of compensating everybody in the food chain."

Napster Chief Executive Hank Barry said the company will go out of business if it can't raise the \$200 million in promised payments.

But if the company succeeds wildly, the current offer still caps payments to the labels at \$200 million. That puts the labels in the awkward position of having their income from Napster capped but not the royalty payments they owe artists and songwriters, who typically collect each time a recording is reproduced.

Under the proposal, the five major label groups would divide an annual kitty of \$150 million, with independent labels and unsigned artists dividing an additional \$50 million a year. The deal would be the largest offer ever made for music licenses, Napster officials contended.

The new service, which Barry promised to have ready by July, would use new software on users' computers to add a layer of security to the system. Among other things, the software would restrict the fidelity of recordings and bar users from transferring song files to CDs or portable devices unless they paid extra fees.

Still to be resolved is whether users would lose the ability to play the files they download from each other if they stopped paying their monthly fees. Barry said he would not like to do that, but that issue is open for negotiation with the labels.

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