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One killed and five injured in Bellevue collision

UW junior dies in high-speed wreck

Monday, March 27, 2006

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P-I REPORTER

The BMW contained five people, friends from high school now in their early 20s.

Their car was struck by a Jeep Cherokee carrying six people of high school age.

The vehicles collided in a downtown Bellevue intersection at 11:30 on Saturday night, killing one and injuring five.

Robert Vasen, 20, was a former Bellevue High School student. He died Sunday night at Harborview Medical Center in Seattle.

He was a student at the University of Washington, a junior who had spent time earlier this school year studying in Spain.

He graduated in 2003 from Bellevue High School, where he had played on the basketball team after overcoming a staph infection in a leg that had been serious enough to require several operations.

Vasen was sitting in the BMW's back seat on the driver's side where the Jeep struck. He suffered head and neck injuries.

The Bellevue Fire Department said the collision occurred at a high rate of speed at the intersection of 108th Avenue Northeast and Northeast Second Street.

The Bellevue Police Department was still investigating Sunday to determine who was at fault.

The driver of the Jeep was arrested at the scene of the accident on suspicion of vehicular assault.

He was taken to Overlake Hospital with injuries that were not considered life-threatening. Once he was medically cleared, the Bellevue Police Department said he would be booked into King County Jail.

The driver of the BMW also was arrested on suspicion of vehicular assault.

"We suspect alcohol was involved with both drivers," said Officer Greg Grannis of the Bellevue Police Department.

That won't be known for certain, though, until after the results of tests.

Everyone in the BMW was injured. In addition to Vasen, one of the passengers suffered spleen and shoulder injuries. He also was taken to Harborview.

Three others suffered injuries that were not life-threatening and were treated at Overlake Hospital.

Of the six people in the Jeep, only the driver was hospitalized.

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