

Officer Critically Wounded But Unstoppable

Despite life-threatening injuries, K-9 Officer Malcom Thompson nabs suspect.

Doctors told his wife that he probably wouldn't survive from the four gunshot wounds he sustained by a suspect, but K-9 Officer Malcom Thompson proved everyone wrong.

Thompson, of the Kissimmee Police Department in Kissimmee, Fla., credits his survival to his doctors, whom he calls "the best in the country," and to his wife. The 27-year veteran says that if he hadn't

seen her before being rushed to the hospital by helicopter, he probably wouldn't have made it. "She's my hero. I knew if I saw her I'd be all right," he said.

It all began when Thompson responded to a suspicious person call. When he arrived at a local motel, where the complaint originated, he found no one. As he pulled into a shopping center across the street, he spotted a male who matched the description that had been given. He approached the cab the man was getting into and asked him to step out.

"I did a pat search and patted his front and back pockets, but didn't feel anything," he said. "I asked for identification." The name, Fealex Black, rang a bell.

Thompson was unaware that Black was wanted on several felony warrants and was being sought by the Osceola County Sheriff's Office in relation to two armed robberies that had occurred that same night, as well as a carjacking and a home invasion.

As radio communications informed Thompson about Black's outstanding warrants, the suspect pulled a gun he had hidden in his crotch and shot the officer.

"I remember the muzzle blast and the bright colors when he caught me in the temple," Thompson said.

Black took off running, with Thompson in

hot pursuit. The suspect shot him three more times, but Thompson was only focused on capturing Black. "I knew I had been shot, but I was more upset and the payback was coming," he said.

Black jumped back into the cab and Thompson didn't hesitate; he shot him through the taxi window, driving him out of the vehicle and fatally wounding him.

Only then did Thompson realize the extent of his injuries. Two rounds had struck his head, taking his left eye out in the process. Another round hit his neck, severing his carotid artery, and the other round went into his right chest area, collapsing his lung.

"A fellow officer showed up and told me I had killed Black," Thompson said. "I asked for my wife, and if my dog was OK."

Not only did Thompson survive his ordeal, he also left the hospital in a record 12 days. He credits his speedy recovery to his lifelong emphasis on physical fitness.

For his efforts, Thompson was recently awarded the TOP COP Award, presented yearly by the National Association of Police Organizations. Although he is proud of his accomplishment, he is quick to point out the efforts of others.

"It's not all about me," he said. "It's about people working and coming together when a crisis happens. Surviving and being able to talk about this is what makes me so proud." ■

Patricia Oropeza is an editorial assistant for POLICE.



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Malcom Thompson, left, is presented with NAPO's TOP COP award by Lynne Russell and Richard Belzer.