

Oshkosh youth drowns in quarry near Winchester

■ **The 14-year-old had been swimming with friends when he went under**

By Steve Wideman
Post-Crescent staff writer

WINCHESTER — A 14-year-old Oshkosh boy drowned shortly before 1 p.m. while swimming in an abandoned quarry a short distance from his father's home near here.

The body of Justin A. Eckstein was pulled from the quarry located near State 150 and County M about 4 p.m. by Winnebago County Sheriff's Department divers.

According to authorities, Eckstein was attempting to swim

from a rowboat to shore with Henry Mitchell, also 14, when he experienced unknown problems and went under. A rescue attempt by Mitchell failed.

Henry and his brothers James, 15, and John, 8, all of 8041 Evans Road, Larsen, went to a nearby house and told the occupants someone was drowning.

According to Sheriff Michael Brooks, Eckstein, who was visiting his father, Ted, had spent the night with the brothers and all four decided to go fishing Thursday in a small rowboat.

After about one hour, the boys decided to go swimming, but only had one life jacket, which they gave to the 8-year-old. The 15-year-old could not swim and remained in the boat.

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Winchester quarry

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Youth drowns in quarry

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Eckstein was formerly from the Winneconne area, but was living in Oshkosh with his mother, Kathy. He would have celebrated his 15th birthday June 26.

Divers recovered Eckstein's body in 15 to 20 feet of water near the center of the quarry.

Paramedics on the scene detected a weak pulse in the victim, so he was transported to Neenah's Theda Clark Medical Center by the Madison Med-Flight helicopter.

Med-Flight was called to the scene in anticipation of transporting the victim to University Hospitals in Madison for specialized treatment.

Eckstein was pronounced dead at 4:37 p.m. by an emergency room physician at Theda Clark.

Coroner Jane Van De Hey listed drowning as a preliminary cause of death and said an autopsy may be conducted today to determine the exact cause of death.

Authorities are investigating events leading up to the boy's death.

Van De Hey said there is no indication of foul play.

The quarry, owned by Tom Zillges, is closed and marked with "No Trespassing" signs.

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