

MARK WEST CREEK

Another Girl Slain

The nude body of a young girl, hogtied and apparently strangled to death, was found Friday in Mark West Creek.

She was the sixth girl found murdered in Sonoma County in the last two years, the fourth in the Mark West-Franz Valley area.

Officers said she had been dead about a week.

The body was found about 2 p.m. by two youths, 18 and 19, from Santa Rosa and Eureka, who were boating down the rain-swollen creek.

It was half submerged under a log in a deep canyon about a half mile from the cul-de-sac of Michele Way west of Mark West Springs Road.

Sheriff's Lt. James Caulfield, Sgt. Butch Carstedt, Sgt. Ed Wilkinson, Deputy Oliver Del Ponte and Capt. John Hess, assisted by two jail trustees, took nearly two hours to reach the body, get it up out of the canyon and transport it by four-wheel drive vehicle to the paved roadway.

The victim had been hogtied, her arms and legs bound against her chest with a thin piece of clothesline rope.

There was no way of knowing for certain where her killer had put the body in the creek, but officers were relatively certain

no one had carried her very far along the 50 to 60-degree slopes on either side of the rushing water.

There are a half dozen or more spots on the road just west of Mark West Lodge where a car could have pulled off the pavement long enough for someone to throw her body 30 or 40 feet down into the muddy wa-

ters.

High-water marks along the banks indicate the water could have been six feet higher during the past week. Her body could have been carried several miles.

Sheriff Donald Striepeke said yesterday the preliminary autopsy performed on the victim's body indicated she had been

strangled to death.

Further examination will be conducted by the pathologist and Coroner's Office before a precise cause of death is established.

The Sheriff said the first thing is to identify the girl, then trace her whereabouts for the past two weeks.

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Woman Slain

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He said the best lead is that all her upper teeth are false.

She also had a gold crown on the lower right side of her mouth.

The victim was described as 18 to 25 years of age, possibly of Mexican-American descent, five feet five to seven inches, 125 pounds, with long dark hair, brown eyes and both ears pierced.

The remains of Yvonne Weber, 13, and Maureen Sterling, 12, were found in Franz Valley

on Dec. 28 last year and the body of Lori Lee Kursa, 13, was found on Dec. 14 off Calistoga Road.

A total \$5,500 in rewards have been offered through the Secret Witness program for information leading to the arrest and conviction of the person or persons responsible for the deaths of the girls.

Another \$1,000 is being offered for similar information in the slaying of the latest victim.

Anyone with information may send it to the Secret Witness, Box 569, Santa Rosa, 95402.