

Motorcyclist's 100mph chase ends at backend of truck

By Kathryn Reed

Before crashing into a delivery van on Emerald Bay Road, a motorcyclist was clocked at more than 100mph and seen doing a wheelie on Tahoe Keys Boulevard at a speed of 80mph.

Mark Habel of the Carson Valley was booked into the El Dorado County jail in South Lake Tahoe on Thursday afternoon after being treated at Barton Memorial Hospital for leg pain.

“He was on the shoulder, splitting lanes, going down the center turn lane, running stop signs,” South Lake Tahoe police Officer Tony Broadfoot said. “He obviously had no regard for his safety, the construction workers, pedestrians or others.”

Douglas County sheriff's deputies first witnessed Habel allegedly driving more than twice the speed limit on Highway 50 near Zephyr Cove. They called their California colleagues at 2:11pm to be on the alert for the Honda sport bike.

South Lake Tahoe police officers located the suspect near Ski Run Boulevard. With traffic getting congested and lane closures near the Y, the suspect zipped in and out of traffic, while the police cars weren't able to maneuver as easily.

Broadfoot said it would not have mattered if a motorcycle officer had been on duty Thursday.

“We are not going to endanger anyone further by duplicating his actions,” Broadfoot said. “A big car with lights and sirens can warn the public that he is coming.”

The motorcyclist turned onto Tahoe Keys Boulevard. Apparently he was unaware he could get out another way because he turned

around.

South Lake officers spotted him again near Venice Boulevard.

He turned onto Highway 50 toward the Y, and then headed toward Camp Richardson on Highway 89 (Emerald Bay Road).

El Dorado County sheriff's deputies joined the pursuit then.

The chase ended when Habel plowed into the delivery van just beyond Brothers bar.

A driver not involved in the collision, but who slammed on her brakes to avoid hitting the suspect, was taken to Barton complaining of neck pain.

Habel was arrested on suspicion of reckless evasion, evasion causing injury, driving without a license and reckless driving.