

New facts about the death of Sammy Baker

Sammy was shot and killed by Amsterdam police in August. His parents gave an interview that brings new light to the case.



Tuesday, December 15th 2020

What happened

On August 13, 2020, Sammy Baker was shot and killed by the Amsterdam police. Sammy was a German Influencer on Instagram. He had 170,000 followers. Sammy's parents gave an interview to Volkskrant and RTL Nieuws today. The story they tell does not agree in important points with the earlier Police statement.

Confused behavior

From the interviews it appears that Sammy Baker was not a person with confused behavior. He was a successful Influencer on Instagram, worked hard on his development and advised many people. They assume that he fell into psychosis under the influence of drug use - he celebrated his birthday in Amsterdam.

Escalation after police intervention

According to his parents, Sammy disappeared from the radar, whereupon his mother traveled to Amsterdam to find him. Sammy's friends helped in the process. The mother reported Sammy missing to the police.

Eventually, she found him himself in Amsterdam-West. The mother could not get him into the car; he kept getting out. A friend of Sammy's now told agents from afar that this was the missing boy everyone was looking for. When one of the officers went to the mother's car and asked if all was well, Sammy sprinted away. The police ran after him.

No threat to police

Sammy was in a backyard garden and pulled out a knife. Pictures show he was holding a small knife to his own throat. He moved calmly and made no sudden movements. The images do not show that he threatened the agents. There is no mention of an attack or threat on Sammy's part. A police officer with a police dog tried to stop him but failed because the dog got past Sammy. Then a fight broke out in which the police fired several times. Sammy died immediately.

A small knife

The family's lawyer says in de Volkskrant that Sammy had a small scout knife with a 7-cm blade. Police do not specify the size of the knife in their statement on the website. A journalist from Het Parool does. He wrote that Sammy had a "large

knife" with him. In August, the journalist told "Bild" newspaper in Germany that Sammy was carrying a 30-centimeter cooking knife. He had heard that from police, he said. A police spokesman said in a response that police never communicated about the size of the knife. The Het Parool journalist said in a response that he no longer knows from whom he received the information.

Not de-escalating tactics

The chairman of the Dutch Psychiatric Association, Elnathan Prinsen, previously said in an interview in Het Parool that the police had not acted in a de-escalating manner, that action had not been taken in accordance with the protocol of the police and crisis psychiatry and the current political decision does not benefit from dealing with people who show "confused behavior."

Our vision

According to the statement on the police website, agents shot Sammy because he had threatened himself and agents with a knife. This knife is much smaller than what was previously described in articles. Also, Sammy was not threatening the agents. He just needed help, and the agents were aware of that. The interview with the parents, combined with the pictures, therefore raises serious questions about the police statement.

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We call for full transparency and independent investigation of this event. We will continue to help his closest relatives and wish them much strength.

Death under the responsibility of the police

Sammy was the 10th person to die under police responsibility this year (2020). A total of 16 people died under arrest in 2020. Of the 16 people, 13 exhibited confused behavior. Half of the deceased had an immigrant background, just like Sammy. In all cases in 2020 where a person with confused behavior died, police were aware of the behavior before proceeding with the hitchhike / arrest. This underscores concern about how police deal with persons with confused behavior whom police perceive to be dangerous. We have also organized our previous annual meeting on CAD# 7 in December 2019 in the presence of, among others, two heads of units. See the vision of Frank Paauw (Amsterdam) here. Police chief Anja Schouten (North Holland), project manager Joris van 't Hof and sociologist Karlijn Roex also shared their concerns.