

Shooting claims life of ex-Shamrock star

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Aaron was raised by his grandmother, V. Roberts, who was killed two years ago in a robbery.

"He came here (to CC) from the Monroe School for Boys," CC coach Tom Mach said. "His grandmother and aunt wanted him to have direction. They wanted him in a parochial school."

So Roberts enrolled at the campus on Breakfast Drive, a school which preached the motto, "Teach me goodness, discipline and knowledge."

Roberts not only was molded as a person, but also into the No. 1 college football recruit from this state during his senior year (1983-84). Arguably the greatest back ever to come out of Oberveland, Roberts helped CC to its first state Class A championship as a junior in 1979.

IN TWO SEASONS he rushed for 2,335 yards and scored 24 touchdowns.

"He had powerful thighs, but below the knees there was not much there," Mach recalls. "He was a great high school runner who combined power and speed. He was a game-breaking runner, never caught from behind."

"He was well-liked by everybody during the time he was at CC. We counted on Aaron a great deal."

Roberts averaged 6.7 yards per carry and gained 1,339 yards his senior year. He also excelled in track.

The 6-foot-1, 180-pound runner was sought after by several big-name schools including Michigan, Notre Dame, Ohio State, Miami of Florida and Oklahoma.

Michigan and ND appeared to be the front-runners, but in an 11th hour decision, Roberts stunned even his own coaches at CC by signing a national letter-of-intent with Michigan State following a last-minute pitch by head coach Muddy Waters. (Roberts apparently got scared off going to Michigan after the Wolverines signed Wayne Memorial's Rick Rogers and Cincinnati native Brian Mercer.)

Ed Pobur Sr., a Livonia car salesman whose son Ed Jr. was a teammate and close friend of Roberts at CC and later at MSU, helped set up the meeting with Waters.

"AARON WAS just like one of my sons," Ed Sr. said. "He was a good kid, and it just goes to show you all the sensesless bull... that goes on with guys. It's too bad, he was a good man and a helluva football player."

"Michigan's promising football career" at MSU started before it even got started.

In the 1981 season opener on a scorching hot September afternoon against Illinois, Roberts was injured on his first collegiate carry by Illinois linebacker Kelvin Atkins, losing several teeth.

"I was a senior when he was a freshman," recalled Jeff Wiska, a former CC standout and starting offensive lineman at the time for the Spartans. "Aaron was very soft-spoken and well-mannered."

"All I remember (of that play) is seeing him laying on the field and it looked like a bunch of popcorn kernels laying around. We didn't realize at the time that it was his teeth."

Roberts, however, returned to the starting lineup and led the 5-6 Spar-

ans in rushing with 461 total yards in 94 carries (4.9 average). He rushed for 132 yards on Oct. 31 in a 20-0 victory at Indiana.

In the spring game of 1982, Roberts shared offensive Green Team MVP honors, but a leg injury and a 2-9 MSU record during the fall clouded his sophomore year.

WATERS was fired during the winter of '83 and replaced by George Perles, who decided to go with JC transfer Carl Butler and Belleville's Keith Gates ahead of Roberts.

Roberts saw minimal time as a junior and tolled behind MSU's all-time leading rusher Lorenzo White during his senior year (1984).

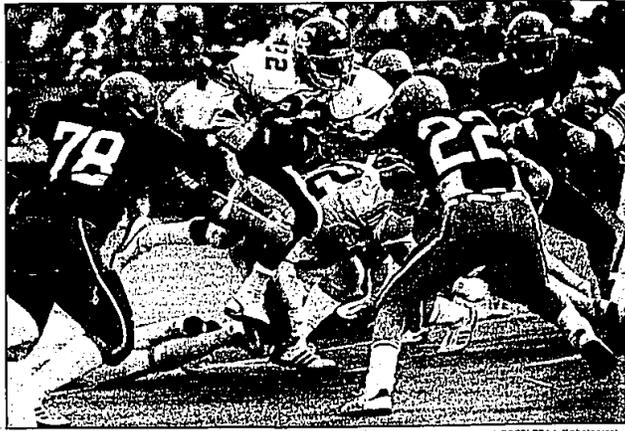
"Aaron was a very, very friendly, outgoing, unwavering type of guy, even though he wasn't getting, in his eyes, a fair shake in football," said Livonian Art Durvage, a former classmate of Roberts at MSU. "He maintained a real consistent, positive attitude. It was a real pleasure to be friends with him."

Ed Pobur, Jr., who lettered in '82 as a linebacker with the Spartans, said the hit Roberts took during the Illinois game (his freshman year) had a lingering effect.

"After Aaron got whacked I don't think he was ever the same," it stated him tremendously," he said. "He ran behind a decent line at CC and got hit, but not the same kind of hits he took in college."

"But as a high school player he probably showed the fastest speed and quickness than anybody I've ever seen. He had explosive speed."

"Aaron used to spend the night at my home before games. We were close then, but we kind of went our



BILL DRESBACH/Staff photographer

Former Catholic Central running back Aaron Roberts charges through the line during the 1979 Class A championship game against Escanaba in the Pontiac Silverdome.

separate ways.

"But the thing I always remember about Aaron is that he never complained about anything. Hard work never bothered him. He was always willing to work out."

ROBERTS had a brief tryout before getting cut by the Denver Broncos during the summer of '85. Shortly after, Roberts began to drift apart from his friends at CC.

He recently went back to school with hopes of earning a teaching certificate, according to Ed Pobur Jr., now a lease car manager for a Farmington Hills car dealer.

Roberts returned to Detroit where he worked at Cody High. He was also employed by Champs, a sporting goods outlet at Northland Center be-

fore taking a job in February as a security officer at a convalescent home in Detroit.

The former CC standout was recently married (wife Elaine) and had a 4½-month old daughter (Ariel).

"It was almost like we fell out of touch," said Troy insurance agent Paul Bobbitt, a Southfield-Lathrup High grad who was Roberts' former roommate and teammate at MSU. "His grandma passed away in the latter part of '89 or '90, and that really brought him down."

"He really didn't have an immediate family, I really haven't had that (family deaths) affect me, so I don't know how he felt."

"The only thing I could say is, 'if you need anything, don't hesitate to give me a call.' Everyone seemed to

lose touch with him, whether it was a result of him trying to find a different direction, or the passing of his grandma affected him to the point where he didn't want to talk to anyone."

"Visitation is 6-9 tonight at the Northwest Chapel of the James H. Cole Funeral home, 12631 Puritan Ave., Detroit. A wake will be held 7-8 p.m. Friday at United Congregational Christian Church on 19510 W. Chicago Road, Detroit. The funeral will be at 10 a.m. Saturday at the church, with burial being held at Detroit Memorial Park on 13 Mile and Ryan roads.

Contributions may be made to a fund set up for Roberts' daughter: The Aaron Roberts Memorial Fund, c/o Reardon Catholic Center, 14200 Brookhurst Dr., Redford 48226.

Salem goalkeeper will play senior year

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"If I feel I can't play I won't," she said. "I'm not going to put myself in that much danger. I'd rather live than play, but it's different now. I'll probably push myself more."

Emmett was diagnosed as having aplastic anemia last year, but she learned just before Christmas that what she actually had was myelodysplastic syndrome, also known as dysplasia—an early form of leukemia.

"The Emmetts had hoped Jenny's immune system would correct itself and rid her of the disease, or at best remain stable and allow her to play soccer this year. But the new medical discovery and the coinciding drop in her blood count precipitated the need for a transplant."

However, the specialist tending to Emmett's medical needs said it was possible to wait until after she grad-

uates June 5 to perform the transplant. "Things are in place now so we will be able to move any time," said Emmett's mother, Linda. "But the desirable thing is to let her walk through graduation with her classmates."

AND, IN THE meantime, Emmett will continue her passionate pursuit, which is playing soccer.

Emmett, twice an all-state goalkeeper, was selected as being ineligible to play as a senior, especially since the Rocks have a talented team that applies to great things.

"We're just awesome this year," she said. "If there is a year for us to do it, it's this year."

Salem coach Ken Johnson, who coached the Salem girls to the Class A title in 1987, said Emmett being allowed to play was good news.

"With nine returning starters and

an all-state goalie behind them, she could be the key, the link in the chain," he said. "In big games, we might need a big save which Jenny might give us."

"I heard some of the girls talking amongst themselves, saying 'If we have Jenny, we could go all the way.'"

When she plays, Emmett will wear a "stupid" helmet that resembles hockey headgear, extra padding in her jersey, long pants and knee pads.

"(Her teammates) kiss the helmet for good luck before we go on the field," she said. "(Opposing indoor players) look at me like 'I'm just something wrong with her.' I just look at them and smile."

"FOR THE Canton game and if we make the state final, we're going to dye my hair black and pull it out through the holes in the helmet."

The helmet and added protection is necessary since Emmett must

guard against collisions with charging forwards, because bruises or abrasions could drastically affect her condition or even be fatal.

But Emmett still exudes a gang-bro attitude. The extra protection gives her the confidence and courage she might not have under the circumstances.

"I feel less apt to be hurt," she said. "It makes me feel freer, like I can head-butt them. I don't feel like I have to be cautious all the time."

Her mother once suggested Emmett become the manager, but needless to say that didn't go over well with Jenny.

"If drive, will and desire have anything to do with it, she'll play," Linda Emmett said. "She has been hoping so intensely that she can't accept being part of the team in any other way."

But Emmett still won't be a full-time player like she was and will have to watch as sophomore Masha Chicon takes her place in some

games. "I'll definitely be a good sport and cheer everybody on and help the other goalkeeper as much as I can," Emmett said. "It was hard getting used to it, knowing she was going to play instead of me, but I've accepted it."

THE EMMETTS also know it's a calculated risk, first allowing Jenny to play and secondly putting off the transplant for three more months.

"When you begin to see missing numbers from chromosomes and cloning on blasts (in the blood), you know it's the onset of leukemia," Linda Emmett said. "We don't want to get to that point."

"We want to do it before something happens that would cause her to be transfused. As a result, the transplant would be achieved easier without complications or letting the blood count get so low."

Emmett has two suitable marrow donors — her younger sister and teammate Mackenzie and an older

brother — for the transplant to be performed at Harper Hospital prior to the transplant to eliminate her own bone marrow and will be hospitalized for at least a month afterward. She will then be homebound for six months to a year, putting her college plans on hold.

For now Emmett can put her health concerns on hold and enjoy playing soccer and the final months of her high school days.

"It's there; it's reality," she said of the impending transplant. "But now with soccer I don't, have to think about it as much."

"Before I didn't want the season to come, because I didn't think I'd be able to play. I would've had to tell myself 'I was sick. With it, I know I'm sick but I feel like everybody else.'"

CITY OF FARMINGTON COUNCIL PROCEEDINGS (Summary)

A regular meeting of the Farmington City Council was called to order by Mayor Pro Tem Campbell at 8:02 pm. on March 16, 1992, in Council Chambers, 23600 Liberty Street, Farmington, Michigan. Notice of the meeting was posted in compliance with Public Act 267-1974.

PRESENT: Campbell, McShane, Richardson, Tupper.

ABSENT: Hartsock.

OTHERS PRESENT: City Manager Deedman, Director Lauboff, Director Billing, Adm. Assistant Schultz, Acting City Clerk Murphy.

Minutes of the previous meeting of March 2, 1992, were approved as written.

Minutes of other boards were received and/or filed.

Council approved the closing of Grand River for the annual Founders Festival Parade on July 11, 1992.

Council issued a proclamation designating March 29 through April 4, 1992 as MICHIGAN TORNADO SAFETY WEEK.

Council authorized the following contractor payments and Change Order for the Sewer Improvement Project to:

- Posen Construction: Change Order No. 11, \$20,000.00 and Payment No. 16, \$175,961.22, Contract No. 1;
- Dun's Excavating, Inc. Payment No. 18, \$97,602.39, Contract No. 2;
- Black and Veatch, \$24,661.62.

Council approved the Resource Recovery and Recycling Authority of Southwest Oakland County, FY 1992-93 budget.

Council directed that a resolution objecting to the MDNR closed borders for solid waste policy be sent to the Governor, State Senator and Representative, and the MDNR Director.

Public comments and Council comments and announcements were heard.

Council received the Public Safety Department Annual Operations Report for December 1991.

Monthly bills were approved for payment.

Meeting adjourned at 9:05 pm.

ARNOLD T. CAMPBELL, Mayor Pro-Tem
CAROL A. MURPHY, Acting City Clerk

Public March 26, 1992

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CITY OF FARMINGTON 1992 DOG LICENSES

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE that Tuesday, March 31, 1992, is the Last Day to obtain City of Farmington 1992 Dog License Tags without penalty.

Beginning Wednesday, April 1, 1992, License Fees will increase from \$5.00 to \$8.00.

Pet owners must present a Certificate of Rabies Vaccination bearing a current effective date at the time of application.

Please apply during regular business hours, Monday through Friday from 8:30 to 5:00 pm. at the Farmington City Hall, 23600 Liberty Street, Farmington.

Public: March 26 and April 2, 1992

JOSEPHINE M. BUSHLEY, City Clerk

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