



Bruins 3, Penguins 4, Final

More arrests, drug abuse detailed for man charged in N.H. crash that killed 7

By [Matt Rocheleau](#) and [Laura Crimaldi](#) Globe Staff, June 27, 2019, 7:47 p.m.

New details of past traffic and drug-related convictions for the man charged with killing seven motorcyclists in New Hampshire emerged Thursday, bringing to six the number of states in which the 23-year-old truck driver has been charged with impairment or traffic violations.

Records from Ohio show Volodymyr Zhukovskyy pleaded guilty there in 2014 to driving with a suspended license, speeding, providing false information, and possessing drug paraphernalia. At the time, his license was suspended in Massachusetts for drunk driving.

Records in the Ohio drug case include a notation that officials were “to notify Massachusetts” of Zhukovskyy’s troubles. However, details of the 2014 conviction don’t appear on his Massachusetts driving record, though it references an unspecified December 2016 matter from Ohio.

Ohio Bureau of Motor Vehicles spokeswoman Lindsey Bohrer said it appeared the agency notified Massachusetts electronically in 2014, though it no longer has such records.

Officials at the Massachusetts Registry of Motor Vehicles and Governor Charlie Baker's administration did not answer questions Thursday. Baker's office reissued a statement saying it was "deeply saddened by this horrific tragedy" and noted that a review of the registry's procedures was underway.

Zhukovskyy, now jailed in New Hampshire on negligent homicide charges, received his Massachusetts license in 2013 and a commercial license in 2018.

State-to-state notifications about driving violations have come under scrutiny this week as officials from Massachusetts and Connecticut sparred over a failure to suspend Zhukovskyy's license in May after he was stopped by police, refused a chemical test, and was arrested and charged with operating under the influence.

Massachusetts officials claimed that Connecticut officials "failed to provide sufficient information" about the arrest in East Windsor. Connecticut officials insisted they acted properly. The American Association of Motor Vehicle Administrators, which runs the national system that alerts agencies of driver violations, agreed.

Massachusetts registry officials acknowledged they failed to act when notified, and should have manually reviewed and suspended his license. The head of the registry, Erin Deveney, resigned Tuesday amid backlash.

"It's very important that the Registry of Motor Vehicles implement the law, implement the procedures that govern the public safety, and in this case there was a process that needed to be adhered to that was not," Lieutenant Governor Karyn Polito said Wednesday.

State authorities monitor commercial truck drivers via a national alert system. The Globe this week reached out to 35 states. Five states so far — Massachusetts, Ohio, Iowa, Connecticut, and Texas — reported having records of past arrests of Zhukovskyy. New Hampshire this week became the sixth state where he was arrested.

Zhukovskyy, 23, of West Springfield, pleaded not guilty to seven counts of negligent homicide in connection with last week's crash in Randolph, N.H.

His family is originally from Ukraine and federal authorities have issued an immigration detainer, planning to take him into custody once the legal proceedings conclude.

Zhukovskyy has struggled with alcohol, cocaine, and heroin abuse, said Yuriy Grishchenko, former director of a faith-based residential rehabilitation program in Bristol, Pa. Zhukovskyy enrolled in the program two years ago, and stayed with the group for three months, Grishchenko said.

He was working at the time in the trucking industry by keeping drivers company on long trips, said Grishchenko, who recalled that the young man had a passion for cars.

“He came really sad, really depressed, really confused,” he said. “After about a month, I saw color in his face. I saw life in his face. He wanted to get a job, get married, and have kids.”

About a year ago, Grishchenko said, Zhukovskyy told him he was drinking again, working as a truck driver, and spending his free time fishing with his father.

When Grishchenko learned of the New Hampshire crash, he said, he and members of his church prayed for the victims, Zhukovskyy, and his parents.

“I was shocked. I have no words,” said Grishchenko, now a church deacon in New Jersey.

The newest details to surface Thursday on Zhukovskyy's history centered on a 2014 incident late one night in Macedonia, Ohio. There, a police officer saw a white 2007 Chevrolet Impala “make an unusual lane change,” according

to a police report.

“The car slowed down and sped up several times while I followed it,” the officer wrote, adding that he clocked the driver going 75 miles per hour in a 60 zone.

When he tried to pull the car over, Zhukovskyy “swerved hard right almost off of the shoulder and into the grass,” the report said. “The car overcorrected and almost drove back into the right lane of traffic.”

Zhukovskyy handed the officer a Massachusetts license, but it had someone else’s name on it. Zhukovskyy didn’t have proof of insurance for the car, which had Ohio plates, the report said.

“The driver stated that he worked for a transport company called Nationwide Transport Inc. and they were transporting the car from Columbus, OH to Massachusetts,” the officer wrote. “The driver’s story did not make sense and he seemed very nervous.”

Inside the car, the officer reported that he found a short blue straw with a white powdery residue inside it.

A day later, Zhukovskyy pleaded guilty to driving with a suspended license, speeding, providing false information, and possessing drug paraphernalia. He paid several hundred dollars in fines, court records show.

Zhukovskyy in recent years racked up a lengthy list of driving infractions, crashes, and arrests in multiple states around the country.

In 2012, police in West Springfield charged Zhukovskyy with driving without a license, speeding, and negligent operation of a motor vehicle. In 2013, he was cited for a “miscellaneous” equipment violation in Springfield. Two days

later, he was arrested for drunken driving following an accident in Westfield, resulting in a one-year probation sentence and a 210-day license suspension.

Twice more in 2017, he was convicted in criminal cases, one for drug possession in West Springfield, the other for larceny in Connecticut.

In February, Zhukovskyy was arrested at a Denny's restaurant in Baytown, Texas, where police found him acting strangely and carrying a crack pipe. In a body camera video released by police Thursday, Zhukovskyy tells officers, "I'm a truck driver. My truck is parked outside."

About a week later, he received the improper lane violation in Iowa.

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