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Bigfoot Hoax: "Body" Is Rubber Suit

Ker Than for National Geographic News August 20, 2008

As far as Bigfoot hoaxes go, it was short-lived one.

Only days after Georgia residents Matt Whitton and Rick Dyer told reporters at a press conference on Friday that they had a dead Bigfoot body, their evidence has been exposed as a rubber ape costume.



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The deception was made public by the very company Whitton and Dyer teamed up with to announce their supposed find.

In a statement posted on the Web site of Searching for Bigfoot Inc., "Sasquatch Detective" Steve Kulls said he realized the Bigfoot "corpse" was a fake when the frozen body began to thaw—after the press conference had already taken place.

(See "Bigfoot Discovery Declared a Hoax" [August 18, 2008].)

Ominous Signs

Kulls wrote that he and a colleague plucked a few hairs from the defrosting body and burned them for analysis, but became suspicious when they "melted into a ball uncharacteristic of hair."

More ominous signs emerged as the ice encasing the body began to melt away.

"Within the next hour of thaw, a break appeared up near the feet area," Kulls wrote. "As the team and I began examining this area near the feet, I observed the foot, which looked unnatural, reached in and confirmed it was a rubber foot."

Kulls wrote that he immediately informed Searching for Bigfoot CEO Tom Biscardi about the discovery. Upon confrontation, Whitton and Dyer reportedly admitted to the hoax.

However, many elements of Kulls's account sharply contradict earlier statements made by Biscardi, who stood alongside Whitton and Dyer at the press conference in Palo Alto, California, last Friday.

At the conference, Biscardi said he had flown to Georgia and had actually seen, touched, and prodded the body and was satisfied it "was not a mask sewn on a bear hide."

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Furthermore, Biscardi said Friday that Whitton and Dyer had already given him the Bigfoot body and that it was being kept at an undisclosed location.

But according to Kulls, the body was not delivered to Searching for Bigfoot Inc. or examined in detail until after the press conference.

Biscardi did not return calls for comment.

Hoax a Crime?

"It's probably a crime, what they're doing," said Matthew Moneymaker, president of the Bigfoot Field Researchers Organization (BFRO), an international network of Bigfoot investigators.

BFRO is pushing for Biscardi, Whitton, and Dyer to be prosecuted for fraud.

"Warrants need to be issued immediately before Biscardi leaves the country," according to a statement on the BFRO Web site.

Shortly after the Bigfoot press conference last week, a message appeared on the Searching for Bigfoot Web site offering viewers a chance to see more photographs of the body for U.S. \$2.

"Millions of people around the world wanted to see the photos, and Biscardi may have raked in a tidy sum," the BFRO site states.

Agent Dan Ryan of the Palo Alto police department remembers Biscardi as being part of another Bigfoot hoax a few years ago.

He told National Geographic News that the recent scam might be considered a crime—if it is discovered the group profited from it.

"If it's over the Internet, anyone could [prosecute] it, whether Georgia or here or wherever," Ryan said.

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