

# On the edge

Nearly a third of police officers have been threatened by a knife, according to a survey carried out by the Police Federation this year. Syreeta Lund speaks to one officer who faced a horrifying knife attack as he carried out his routine duties.

PC John Griffiths, a dog handler from Cambridgeshire Constabulary, only had half an hour before he was due to go off shift on the afternoon of November 27, 2004. Little did he know that a routine job would end in him being stabbed twelve times.

A colleague had contacted him to say a vehicle was being driven suspiciously not far from PC Griffiths.

"I saw the vehicle about four cars in front of mine. The cars in between us pulled off at a junction and so I was behind the suspect vehicle.

"I could see the driver and he kept looking nervously through the rear view mirror but they then turned off at the next junction."

The car was driven into a car park and PC Griffiths followed them and pulled in behind them to stop them reversing out.

"I opened the carriage in the back of the van to let the dog through into the main body of the car, ready to stop them."

But before PC Griffiths could let out his German Shepherd, Tod, the driver of the car got out and started accusing him of being racist for stopping him, (the driver was black and the passenger was a white male).

PC Griffiths said: "I told him I did not know him and that and it was nothing to do with harassment."

Meanwhile, the passenger of the vehicle had got out of the car and moved from PC Griffith's vision. The officer took the name and address of the driver and asked for the passenger's details.

"I contacted the control room and carried out a check on the driver and passenger details but they both came back as 'not known'. This obviously aroused suspicion and I was getting the impression that the details they had given me were false."

It was at this point he was told by the control room the name and address of the person the car was registered to, and a colleague overheard the details

and called the officer to say the individual was 'known' to the police.

"The officer gave me a really good description of the driver who was wanted in connection with a crime and I went forward to arrest him," he explains.

But before this could happen, the driver threw a punch at PC Griffiths and they ended up in a tussle.

"I tried to go back to the vehicle to let my dog out but I heard the driver shout to the passenger 'get him'. I was trying to get into the driver's side of my van but all the time I was being punched in the head and neck."

It was only later that PC Griffiths found out he was actually being stabbed in the head and neck by a knife. In fact, two knives were later recovered covered in PC Griffith's blood.

"I eventually managed to turn and saw the knives and the next thing I remember is laying at the side of the car kicking out at them. I managed to get around to the side of the van, as I

