

Local record stores report brisk sales following Shakur shooting

By Nichole Davis
Sentinel-Voice

The physical condition of rapper Tupac Shakur remains unchanged at a local hospital following a Saturday night shooting incident.

Death Row Records Chief Executive Officer Marion "Suge" Knight was also injured during the drive-by shooting which took place at the corner in front of the Maxim Hotel and Casino, 160 E. Flamingo Rd. He was treated and released early Sunday morning.

At least two Las Vegas record stores report that sales of Shakur's latest release, *All Eyez on Me*, have increased since his hospitalization.

Shakur

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bodyguards who were part of this entourage, and they can't even give us a description of the (suspect's) vehicle," Manning said at a Monday press conference.

They also told police no altercation had taken place prior to the shooting at the MGM Grand Hotel and Casino, but a low-quality videotape surfaced Tuesday proving an exchange had happened, Manning said.

"All we could do was call and ask if an altercation did occur. We (did that and) were told no," he said.

The incident has diminished the credibility of Shakur's entourage, police said.

"I'd believed that they weren't being 100 percent candid with us, and after seeing the tape I believe that even more," Manning said. Now, "we're trying to get a hold of some of these people," to ask more questions.

Police are not, however, searching for an officer who reportedly stopped Knight and Shakur nine minutes before the shooting.

"I was given that information that night on the scene," Manning said. But "I was unable to locate an event (record) or someone who said they had stopped them."

"There were over 50 officers identified that night. The whole area was blocked off."

Other people who were in the area contacted police after initial news media coverage of the event, but new information was not immediately uncovered.

"We have been receiving some calls, and maybe someone saw something," said Metro homicide Det. Brent Becker.

But "the information we're getting is the same we've had," Becker said. Basically, "nothing."

What is known is the victims and about 10 cars of associates and groupies were headed

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The double album, which has already sold more than 5 million copies, has been a top seller nationally since it's February release despite costing as much as \$20.99 for a CD locally.

But some local stores report the rapper's shooting has provided an appreciated shot in the arm for steady record sales.

"Yes, they (sales) have shot up," said Angie Flowers of the 811 W. Owens Ave. Sight and Sound record shop. "Today, I had to order more his latest singles. Yesterday, I had to order more of the full lengths," Flowers said.

She estimates that album sales have almost doubled at the West Las Vegas store since the weekend shooting.

The South Decatur Boulevard Warehouse store also reports increases in sales since the weekend shooting.

"I know we received a lot of stuff. We sold a little bit more than what we were doing, maybe 20 percent," said store clerk Cindy Auer.

"A lot of people are looking for some of his old stuff too, and everybody has a different story about what happened," she said.

Auer offered an explanation for the increased album sales. If Shakur doesn't recover from his injuries fans believe his releases could have some additional collector's value, she said.

"That was the implication we've gotten," Auer said. "But nobody has come right out and said it. It's as if by saying it, it would make (his risk of dying) more real."

But Odyssey Records located on the North of the Strip hasn't witnessed any noticeable sales increases, store officials said.

"Sales have stayed steady and the same. He's been in our top 20 since February, so we're seeing no big change," said Julie Mernin, sales director.

People have asked store officials if they know how he's doing, but they have no more information than customers do, Mernin added.

It's not clear whether local trends are being felt nationally.

Officials at Sound-Scan, the research firm which monitors sales of rap nationwide and compiles charts for Billboard magazine, would not release sales figures upon request.

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