

Dancing driver hams it up for DUI stop

By Lori Kurtzman

THE COLUMBUS DISPATCH

You've never seen such a joyous field sobriety test.

Dale Bentley swiveled his pelvis. He kicked his legs in the air. He told a dirty story about a woman he'd just met in a bar.

"Come on, man, " he said to the Gahanna police officer watching a man sink himself. "If you want me to make your job really easy, I'll be like boop ... what? Boop!"

The boops, naturally, punctuated his dance moves.

Bentley, 39, was rewarded for his performance with a pair of handcuffs and an OVI charge. Gahanna police said the **Columbus** resident blew a 0.24 percent blood-alcohol level. In Ohio, a person is driving drunk at 0.08 percent.

It all started early Sunday, about 1 a.m., when Officer Reuben Hendon clocked Bentley's car at 40 in a 25 mph zone on Granville Street. Bentley apparently didn't notice the flashing lights behind him. He sat through a red light until it turned green. Hendon was finally able to stop him on Havens Corner Road, in front of the high-school football stadium.

According to a police report, Hendon told Bentley to get out of his car. "Dale looked like a confused deer in headlights, " Hendon wrote.

Bentley failed the walk-and-turn. He failed the one-legged stand. Then came the dancing. Bentley seemed to ham it up for the cruiser camera.

"It appeared as if Dale felt the whole encounter with police was funny and a real good time, " Hendon wrote.

That video is what caught the attention of local media. It's what elevated a routine stop to something worth watching. Even Gahanna Sgt. Ethan Moffitt, who has seen it all, hadn't seen this.

"The behavior he displayed was rather unique, " he said. "Some might say comical."

The police aren't saying that, though. They were just happy to get Bentley -- who's charged with drunken driving, speeding and not complying with an officer -- off the road.

Bentley was released on \$164 bond. Police took his license. His wife picked him up. A few days later, WBNS-TV (Channel 10) knocked on his door. Bentley refused an interview, but he did answer one question.

"Do you remember dancing?" the reporter asked.

"No, " Bentley said.