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By JOE HUTCHISON

## **Nightmarish final moments of wealthy student, 19, killed alongside two friends trapped in burning Tesla Cybertruck revealed**

By JOE HUTCHISON, US NEWS REPORTER

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A college student killed in a [Tesla](#) Cybertruck crash was trapped inside the vehicle as it burst into flames due to a design flaw involving its doors, a lawsuit has claimed.

Krysta Michelle Tsukahara, a sophomore at Savannah College of Art and Design, was [one of three who died following the crash in Piedmont, California](#), last November.

Her parents have alleged that Tesla, run by [Elon Musk](#), knew of the design flaw for years and could have fixed the problem but failed to do so.

Krysta, 19, along with friends Soren Dixon, 19, and Jack Nelson, 20, died in the crash after the vehicle hit a tree at high speed and [burst into flames](#). A fourth person was also injured.

Her parents Carl and Noelle Tsukahara originally filed a lawsuit going after the automaker in April, before filing an amended wrongful death suit this week.

The 36-page complaint claims that their daughter suffered minor injuries but when the vehicle's battery caught fire she died from burns and smoke inhalation.

The doors of the vehicle are battery powered and can fail if the vehicle loses power.

The suit says Krysta was unable to escape the inferno due to the manual release on the door being too difficult to find.



Krysta Michelle Tsukahara, a sophomore at Savannah College of Art and Design, was one of three who died following the crash last November in Piedmont



All three were recent graduates of Piedmont High School who had returned home for Thanksgiving break when the crash occurred

According to the suit, the teenager 'suffered unimaginable pain and emotional distress', due to being stuck in the rear of the vehicle as it burned.

Her father spoke with [The New York Times](#), who first reported on the suit, saying his daughter would still be alive had it not been so difficult to get out.

He also spoke with [KTVU Fox 2](#), adding: 'Krysta was a bright, kind, and accomplished young woman with her whole life ahead of her.

'We've had to endure not only the loss of our daughter, but the silence surrounding how this happened and why she couldn't get out.

'This company is worth a trillion dollars, how can you release a machine that's not safe in so many ways?'

Attorney for the family Roger Dreyer added: 'This lawsuit is about truth and accountability.

'The design of this vehicle failed Krysta. There was no functioning, accessible manual override or emergency release for her to escape. Her death was preventable.'

The Daily Mail has approached Tesla for comment on the allegations made in the suit.



Nelson, left, and Dixon, right, were stars on the Piedmont HS Lacrosse team, the two died in the collision



Investigators believe speed was a factor in the crash, but are still in the early stages of finding out exactly what happened

All three were recent graduates of Piedmont High School who had returned home for [Thanksgiving](#) break.

A fourth passenger, Jordan Miller, was the sole survivor after a witness managed to break a window using a tree branch and pull him from the burning wreckage.

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Dixon, who was behind the wheel when the crash occurred, had cocaine in his system and a blood alcohol concentration of 0.195, over twice the legal limit.

The California Highway Patrol's preliminary investigation concluded that a deadly combination of alcohol intoxication, drug impairment and unsafe speeds caused Dixon to lose control of the vehicle.

The lawsuit **follows several others that have claimed various safety problems with Tesla cars.**

In August, a Florida jury decided that the family of a dead college student who was killed by a runaway Tesla should be **awarded more than \$240 million in damages.**

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, which opened its stuck-door investigation last month, is looking into complaints by drivers that after exiting their cars, they couldn't open back doors to get their children out and, in some cases, had to break the window to reach them.