

THE NEW ZEALAND BRAVERY STAR (N.Z.B.S.)

Damian Peter John KLAVS
Constable, New Zealand Police

Date of action: 16 June 1999

Date of award: 29 January 2005

Citation

On the evening of 16 June 1999, Constable Klavs was patrolling alone when he saw a van being driven erratically on Jackson Street, Petone. The van had previously been reported stolen. He stopped the van, which contained eight young people and approached the driver, asking for his driver's licence. The driver then presented a sawn-off shotgun at him, resting the weapon on the window sill only a foot or so from the Constable. The driver pulled the trigger, but the firearm did not discharge as the safety catch was on. Constable Klavs returned to his Police car and called for assistance. The van left the scene at speed and Constable Klavs followed while reporting on the direction of travel and requesting Police backup. In East Street, the van turned and drove back towards Constable Klavs, ramming his vehicle and pushing the driver's side into a concrete wall. The Constable was forced to leave the Police car via the passenger's door and, fearing for his life, left the scene on foot, now pursued by the van. The Constable took cover behind a trailer, while the van first passed him and then returned again. Constable Klavs left the trailer and ran along the street, pursued by the van with the occupants abusing him and threatening his life. The driver fired the shotgun at Constable Klavs, but missed him. The van then left the scene. The driver was subsequently convicted of attempting to murder Constable Klavs.