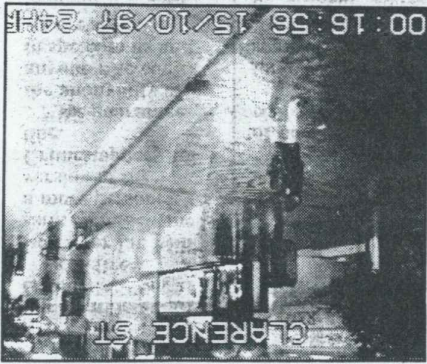


Reel family and cops in plea for witnesses

Do you know man in new CCTV film pictures?



TRACE HIM: Did you see this man?

CAMPAGNERS who claim Asian youngster Ricky Reel was murdered in Kingston held their first joint press conference with police chiefs this week.

The historic event, at New Scotland Yard on Tuesday, was held to mark the release by the police's new Racial and Violent Crime Unit of new CCTV pictures of a man in a hooded parka-style coat and light trousers.

The unit has stepped up the probe into the death of the 21-year-old student, who died in the Thames after a night out with friends in Kingston in October 1997.

Police say he fell in the river and drowned but his family and friends maintain that he was murdered. It is known that Ricky and friends had a violent row with white youths minutes before he was last seen alive - and the CCTV photo is believed to show one of the white gang.

Members of the Reel family and campaigners from the Justice for Ricky Reel campaign met with Deputy Assistant Commissioner John Greave and Detective Chief Inspector Sue Hill. DCI Hill, who is heading the investigation, said: "The release of these new pictures shows we are committed to carrying on our tireless investigation into the death of Ricky Reel."

"The team here has looked into every possible lead. We now hope the people in these pictures can help us unravel the truth."

"Everybody on the Racial & Violent Crimes Unit shares the same belief. It must be the worst thing in the world to lose a child, and we are trying to solve this crime as quickly as possible."

"We want the Reel family to know this."

The conference comes just weeks after the Reel family and their campaign supporters were told by Home Secretary Jack Straw that they were not to be allowed to release details of a Police Complaints Authority (PCA) report into the original handling of the case.

Ricky's mother Sukhdev said: "The police had a real opportunity to show they are willing to be more open in this and many other cases with the PCA report, but now that has gone."

"It has taken 20 months for us to get this press conference."

"We are determined to show that we are not going away - we want justice."

Hundreds of demonstrators took part in a protest outside New Scotland Yard day before the press conference.