

**ACTIVITY:** Sea disaster

**CASE:** GSAF 2000.08.10

**DATE:** Thursday August 10, 2000

**LOCATION:** Off the Florida Keys, Monroe County, Florida, USA.

**NAMES & DESCRIPTIONS:** Juan Carlos Rodríguez Bueno, 23-years-old, and Alex Rodríguez Bueno, 20-years-old.

**BACKGROUND**

**MOON PHASE:** Full Moon, August 15, 2000

**DISTANCE FROM SHORE:** 30 kilometres



**NARRATIVE:** On August 10, fishermen notified U.S. Coast Guard that they had seen the bodies of two men floating in the water in an area commonly used by Cubans attempting to raft to the United States. Authorities recovered the body of a Hispanic male who was wearing running shoes made in China and sold in Cuba. The other body was dragged underwater by a shark before it could be retrieved.

Four days later a news agency reported that the remains had been identified as one of two Cuban brothers, and an AP dispatch reported that the brothers had been trying to reach the US clandestinely by boat. The police reported that the shark-bitten body of Juan Bueno had been identified by relatives, and it was believed that the body taken by the shark was that of his brother Alex. There was no trace of any wreck debris in the area where the bodies were recovered.

There have also been reports out of Miami about two survivors hospitalized in Florida who told of the deaths of 10 Cubans in an immigrant smuggling operation. Theories are circulating that they were on a speedboat that collided with a boat belonging to the U.S. authorities, or that there was an accident with another boat.

Investigations carried out in Cuba revealed that the two Bueno brothers lived in the city of Colón, in the province of Matanzas. They had no known criminal records. Their father was on a temporary visit to Miami, where he has a son who arrived in the United States 20 years ago, and another named Eduardo, who emigrated to the United States illegally from Villa Clara in 1998. Both were taken in under the Cuban Adjustment Act.

What really happened is unknown. In smuggling operations the boats are often overcrowded.

**SOURCE:** Miami Herald, Tuesday August 15, 2000,  
<http://www.herald.com:80/content/wed/news/americas/carib/cuba/digdocs/080531.htm>