

ACTIVITY: Swimming
CASE: **GSAF 2002.08.17**
DATE: Saturday August 17, 2002
LOCATION: The attack took place in the Gulf of Mexico, 65 miles south of Mobile, Alabama, USA.

NAME: Kimberly McClain (or McLean)
DESCRIPTION: The swimmer is a 5'5" 28-year-old female from Mobile, Alabama.

BACKGROUND

MOON PHASE: First Quarter, August 15, 2002
WEATHER: It was a hot day.
TIME: Shortly before 17h00

NARRATIVE: McClain, her brother and five friends were returning from a fishing trip aboard the private motorboat *Gamester* when they decided to stop for a swim.

Swimmers climbing back onto the *Gamester* turned to see the shark attack McClain. The shark grabbed her lower body, but she fought back. She attempted to punch the shark in its snout, but lacerated her arm on its teeth. On the second try she hit the shark's snout and it released her.

INJURY: According to Enasco's paramedic Ted Adkins, the swimmer's legs, thighs, buttocks, arms and hands were severely lacerated. The bite mark extended from the back of the McClain's thighs to the middle of her back, according to Petty Officer 3rd Class Bret Fogle, the paramedic on the helicopter.

FIRST AID: McClain was pulled onboard the *Gamester*, and a Mayday call was sent out. Dr. Ken Miller of Tennessee, a cardiologist, was on another private boat nearby and boarded the *Gamester*. Dr. Miller packed McLean's injuries in ice and attempted to stop the bleeding, and the *Gamester* sped toward *ChevronTexaco's Petronius Platform*, four miles away.

Usually only one paramedic is stationed on a platform, but *Petronius* had two because, in addition to producing oil, it is fitted with a drilling rig operated by Enasco. While ChevronTexaco paramedic Randall Credeur began preparing the medical room, Enasco's paramedic Ted Adkins and ChevronTexaco emergency responder Roger Bourgeois met the *Gamester* as it arrived at the oil platform.

An immediate challenge was how to transfer McLean from the *Gamester* to the *Petronius*. Bourgeois and Adkins managed to move McLean from the cabin into a rescue basket, but there was no room on the small vessel for anyone to keep the basket steady while it was hoisted to the *Petronius*. The 150-foot crew boat *Ashley McCall* had been unloading at the rig and was maneuvered so it was stern-to-stern with the *Gamester*, enabling Bourgeois and Adkins to move McClain to the deck of the larger vessel. Then Andy Landry, operator of



The Petronius platform/rig stands in 1,754 feet of water 130 miles southeast of New Orleans, Louisiana, and 60 miles south of Mobile, Alabama.

Petronius' 40-ton crane, dropped a cage-like personnel basket to the *Ashley McCall*. McLean, flanked by Bourgeois and Adkins, was then lifted up to the helipad.

Roustabouts carried the rescue basket down a flight of stairs to the medical room. The two paramedics, assisted by other emergency responders (ChevronTexaco's Ferrell Martin and Paul Macuick) coordinated her care. While efforts to stop the bleeding continued, McClain received an IV, oxygen, and cardiac monitoring.

On the platform, some 160 feet above the water, Jim Stark, senior drill representative for ChevronTexaco, was closely monitoring the situation. "When I first heard the call, I imagined some fisherman injured himself when he pulled in a small shark and it was flipping around in the boat. But when the EMTs (emergency medical technicians) called up and said, 'Jim we need a medivac helicopter out here,' I knew we had a serious problem."

During the hour that it took for a Coast Guard helicopter to travel the 60 miles from Mobile, Alabama, to *Petronius Platform*, McClain remained conscious and was able to tell the paramedics her blood type, and talk about the incident.

The Coast Guard helicopter, piloted by Lt. J.G. David Potyok with paramedic Fogle onboard, transported the swimmer to the mainland.

TREATMENT: McClain was taken to University of South Alabama Medical Center in stable condition.

SPECIES INVOLVED: According to who witnesses, the shark was 12 to 15 feet in length.

REPORTED BY: James Eager, Scubaradio.com



Those most directly involved in the rescue include (left to right) Pat Campbell, Ensco offshore installation manager; Ted Adkins, rig medic; Jim Stark, senior drill representative of ChevronTexaco; and Janson Duncan, rig dispatcher of Walsh Offshore.



Crane crew members (left to right), Mike "Hoss" Wilson, deck foreman; Andy Landry, crane operator; and roustabouts Paul Credeur, Harvey Batiste and Heath Breaux.