

**ACTIVITY:** Surfing

**CASE:** GSAF 2004.07.31

**DATE:** Saturday July 31, 2004

**LOCATION:** The incident took place in the Atlantic Ocean at Cocoa Beach, Brevard County, Florida, USA. Cocoa Beach is located on a barrier island between the Atlantic Ocean and the Banana River.

28.319N, -80.607W



**NAME:** Kelly Getzfread

**DESCRIPTION:** The surfer, a 20-year-old female, is 5'4" tall and weighs 142 pounds. She was wearing a flowered green and purple bikini, a wooden-bead necklace and a black leash on her left ankle. She had her menstrual period, but had no injuries prior to the incident.

**SURFBOARD:** The surfer was using a seven-foot light oak-colored board.

### **BACKGROUND**

**WEATHER:** The air temperature was in the mid-80s (estimated). The sky was overcast with intermittent drizzle.

**MOON PHASE:** Full Moon, July 31, 2004

**SEA CONDITIONS:** The surf was good, but the water was murky. Mean low tide was at 14h00.

**ENVIRONMENT:** The surfer did not observe any baitfish or dolphins and was not aware of anyone fishing in the vicinity.

**DISTANCE FROM SHORE:** Less than 100 feet

**DEPTH OF WATER AT INCIDENT SITE:** "Neck deep" [four feet?]

**TIME:** 13h00 [1 p.m.]

**NARRATIVE:** Kelly was in the midst of a group of about 20 surfers. She was lying on her abdomen getting ready to catch a wave when she felt a turbulence "like another surfer" behind her. She turned and saw something come up behind her, then realized it was a shark. The shark clamped its jaws around her foot, and instinctively she kicked and shook the animal off. Concerned that the shark might make a second bite, she pointed her feet skyward and kept her arms on top of the board. After a few minutes, she began paddling shoreward. When she reached waist-deep water, she asked another surfer for assistance and was carried to the beach.

**INJURY:** The surfer's right foot was bitten. She believes the shark's lower jaw grasped the dorsum of her foot, the upper jaw biting down on her sole. She describes the injury on the sole as cuts, with most of the damage being inflicted on the dorsum.

**FIRST AID:** Surfers and bystanders rendered first aid and provided reassurance. One woman wrapped her foot in a sarong to slow the bleeding and limit contamination by sand, and another gave her water to drink. According to the press report, paramedics were on the scene in less than 10 minutes after the incident. They dressed the wounds, took the surfer's vitals, and transported her to Cape Canaveral Hospital (701 W. Cocoa Beach Causeway,

photographed prior to surgical repair and she was given a tetanus booster. Surgery was required to repair a ripped tendon. She was released from the hospital the following day. She has been to her doctor twice since returning home and the wound is apparently healing well. She is to stay off her foot as much as possible for the next two weeks (date: 8/9/2004)

**SPECIES INVOLVED:** Kelly was told that the incident involved either a blacktip shark, *Carcharhinus limbatus*, or a tiger shark, *Galeocerdo cuvier*. Since the tooth impressions of these two species differ considerably, species ID will have to wait until the photographs can be examined.

**SOURCES:** Interview with Kelly Getzfread; <http://abclocal.go.com/wpvi/news/8204-oddity-shark.html>

**CASE INVESTIGATOR:** Clay Creswell, Global Shark Accident File