

**ACTIVITY:** Swimming

**CASE:** GSAF 2004.09.04

**DATE:** Saturday September 4, 2004

**LOCATION:** The incident took place in the Atlantic Ocean at Myrtle Beach, Horry County, South Carolina, USA. 33.8°N, 78.8°W

**NAME:** Meagan Durham

**DESCRIPTION:** She is a 17-year-old female from Roanoke, Virginia. She is 5'4" and weighs 94 pounds. She had no injuries prior to the incident and did not have her menstrual period. She was wearing a bikini: the top was pink with strawberries, the bottom was checkered red and white, and a gold watch on her left wrist. (Her left arm was in the water when the incident took place.)



## BACKGROUND

**WEATHER:** It was a sunny day and the air temperature was in the low 80s. Myrtle Beach recorded air temperatures from 72° to 82°F.

**MOON PHASE:** Last Quarter, September 6, 2004

**SEA CONDITIONS:** The water was rough, brown and murky. Underwater visibility was about two feet. The water temperature was 79° to 85°F, "cooler than normal," according to Dr. Lark. The tide was falling; High tide was at 12h10 / the next Low tide was at 18h28.

**ENVIRONMENT:** Apache fishing pier is approximately a half-mile south of the incident site. No dolphins were seen and no one was fishing in the immediate vicinity. However, fish were in the area and Megan observed pelicans diving throughout the day in the area.

**DISTANCE FROM SHORE:** 50 to 75 feet

**DEPTH OF WATER AT INCIDENT SITE:** Four feet

**TIME:** 15h40



*Aerial view of Apache Pier, the longest pier on the East Coast of the USA*

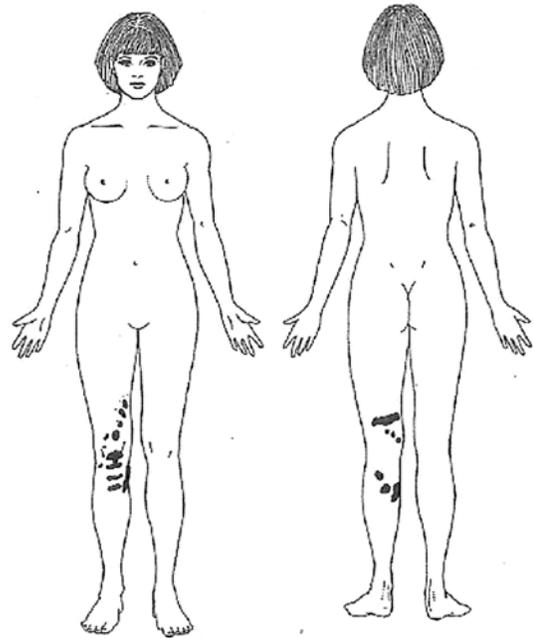
**NARRATIVE:** There were about 80 to 100 people on the beach, and approximately 20 people in the water when the incident took place. There was one older man about five feet to the right of Megan. He was standing, facing seaward. Megan had been in the water for 20 minutes and was also facing seaward. She had just jumped a wave, and was in between that wave and the approaching wave when the shark approached from her right (south). Her right foot was touching the sand and she was stepping down with her left foot when the shark struck. The shark bit her once and then let go.

**INJURY:** The bite mark extended above and below her left knee, and consisted of four to five lacerations across her left knee, and two large cuts, one on the posterior upper thigh, and one below the knee. The gashes on the back of her knee run up and down parallel with

her leg, and the ones on the front run across her knee.

**FIRST AID:** On the beach, lifeguards from the Horry County Police Department cleaned the wounds with peroxide and dressed them. Megan reports that she felt no pain until she left the water and laid down on a towel. She was transported to the hospital by ambulance, arriving 30 to 40 minutes after she was bitten.

**TREATMENT:** She was treated at Grand Strand Regional Medical Center and released. Doctors said the injury was minor for a shark bite. On X-ray, a foreign object was seen in Megan's knee that may have been a tooth fragment from the shark. However, Dr. Lark was unable to retrieve the object, and believes that it may have fallen out before it could be recovered.



**SPECIES INVOLVED:** According to Dr. Lark, the bite was consistent with that of a shark about eight feet in length.

**CASE INVESTIGATOR:** Clay Creswell, GSAF

