

ACTIVITY: Snorkeling
CASE: [GSAF 2010.02.13](#)
DATE: Saturday February 13, 2010
LOCATION: Near Dent Island, Whitsunday Passage (Great Barrier Reef), Queensland, Australia.

NAME: Patricia Trumbull
DESCRIPTION: She is a 60-year-old female from Sydney.

BACKGROUND

MOON PHASE: New Moon, February 14, 2010

ENVIRONMENT: The Whitsundays are a collection of 74 islands off the coast of Mackay, Shute Harbour, Airlie Beach and Proserpine. Most of the islands are uninhabited national parks and only a handful have resort facilities. Hamilton Island is the most heavily developed island in the Whitsundays and has an international airport.

DISTANCE FROM SHORE: 15 metres
TIME: 13h30

NARRATIVE: Patricia Trumbull was snorkeling with her husband, Chris, and four other passengers of a charter sailing yacht when she was dragged under the water by a shark. “I then thought, ‘this shark isn’t going to get the better of me’ and I began punching it on the nose,” she said. “It got me under the water but not much because I started kicking at its neck and I came back up again and I’m punching it’s nose again, punching, punching, punching.”

INJURY: Severe lacerations to buttocks and thigh. She lost 40 percent of her blood volume.

FIRST AID / TREATMENT: Paradise Bay Resort manager Jason Johnstone*, who was about 10m away in a dinghy, dragged her out of the water and used his T-shirt to stem the flow of blood. She was taken by dive boat to nearby Hamilton Island, the nearest inhabited island with a medical centre and emergency response team on it. On Hamilton Island says a medical crew stabilized her, then she was airlifted by helicopter to the Mackay Base Hospital. She was subsequently transferred to a hospital in Sydney for further treatment.

SPECIES: According to Patricia Trumbull, the accident involved either a reef shark or a bronze whaler shark. “He was huge, he was at least two metres [in length],” she said. She



Patricia Trumbull



believes the incident involved a bull shark.

SOURCES: Sydney Morning Herald, ABC News, Herald Sun and MailOnline, February 14, 2010; Courier Mail, February 21, 2010

NOTE: Johnstone's actions in the rescue of Patricia Trumbull led to a Pride of Australia award nomination.



Paddy Trumbull, pictured with husband Chris and grandson Finn.