

ACTIVITY: Snorkeling

CASE: GSAF 1983.08.13.a

DATE: Saturday August 13, 1983

LOCATION: The attack took place in the Atlantic Ocean about six miles south of Boca Chica Key, Monroe County, Florida, USA.

NAME: Jackie Lynn

DESCRIPTION: A 22-year-old female from Key Haven.

BACKGROUND

SEA CONDITIONS: The water was clear.

ENVIRONMENT: Boca Chica Key is an island in the lower Florida Keys, approximately three miles east of the island of Key West.

TIME: Morning.

NARRATIVE: Jackie Lynn was diving with Timothy Hampson of Islamorada near West Sambo's Reef when she was bitten. Hampson fought off the shark, shielded the woman, administered first aid and raced her to shore in the boat.

INJURY: Her right leg was severely bitten.

TREATMENT: She was listed in less-than-stable condition later the same day after extensive surgery on her right leg, a hospital spokeswoman said.

SPECIES: According to Sgt. Lee Pinder of the Monroe County Sheriff's Office the incident involved a six- to eight-foot bull shark.

NOTE: A year after the attack Timothy Hampson received the U.S. Coast Guard's highest civilian award for heroism.

SOURCES: Miami Herald, August 14, 1983, page 1D and August 25, 1984, page 1D. Pacific Stars and Stripes, August 28, 1984, page 8.



Coast Guard, Cupid honor hero

KEY WEST, Fla. (UPI) — The Coast Guard has given its highest civilian heroism award to a man who fought off a shark that attacked his woman companion on a skin diving trip in the Florida Keys.

Timothy R. Hampson, with tears rolling down his cheeks, became the 650th person to receive the Coast Guard's 24 karat "Gold Lifesaving Medal" since it was established by Congress in 1974.

The medal citation praised Hampson "for extreme and heroic daring . . . unselfish action and valiant service and exceptional bravery and presence of mind in the face of extreme danger."

The 23-year-old Lower Matecumbe Key resident fought off a large shark that had attacked Jackie Lynn, 22, of Key West while the two were snorkeling near West Sambo's Reef, off the Florida Keys, a year ago.

After shielding Lynn from further attacks, Hampson got her into the boat they were using, administered first aid and raced her to shore.

Rear Adm. Richard Cueroni, commander of the 7th Coast Guard District, called Hampson "a genuine hero."

Cueroni said the couple had been snorkeling about five miles offshore when Hampson heard Lynn scream and saw the clear water turn suddenly red. He said Lynn had been attacked by a shark that inflicted "a massive wound to her right leg."

Hampson swam between the shark and Lynn to allow her to swim back to the boat, Cueroni said, and held the shark off with a speargun as it attempted two more attacks.

Hampson finally scrambled on to the boat and pulled Lynn to safety. He treated her wound skillfully, Cueroni said, then handled the boat in unfamiliar seas — all of which contributed to her survival.

Hampson said that Lynn "is the real hero in my eyes," and Cueroni told the crowd at the award ceremony that the rescue led to romance and the couple plan to get married in October.

Pacific Stars and Stripes (Tokyo, Japan), August 28, 1984, page 8