



**ACTIVITY:** Surfing

**CASE:** GSAF 1989.07.14

**DATE:** Friday July 14, 1989

**LOCATION:** The incident took place in the Atlantic Ocean at Cocoa Beach, Brevard County, Florida, USA.

**NAME:** John O'Brien

**DESCRIPTION:** He is an 16-year-old male from Maitland, a student at Winter Park High School.

#### **BACKGROUND**

**WEATHER:** There were scattered clouds and the air temperature during the afternoon ranged from 91.9 to 93.9°F. A thunderstorm rolled in at 17h00.

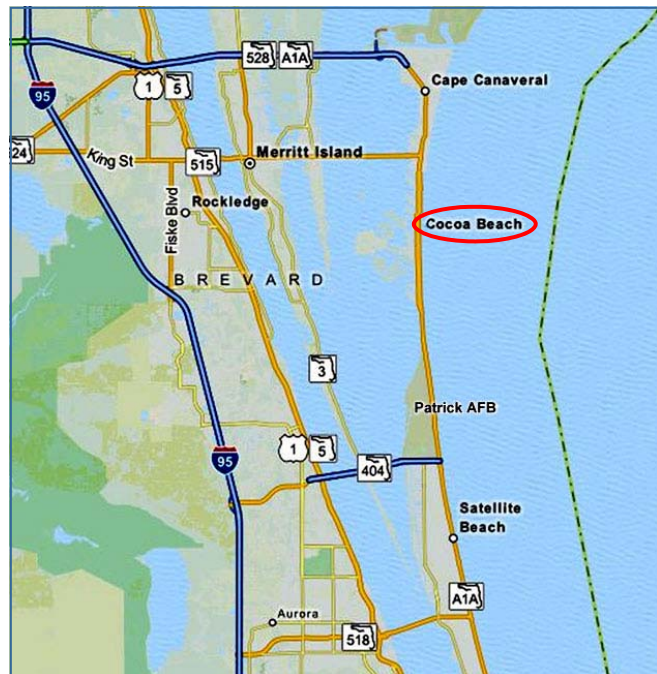
**MOON PHASE:** Waxing Gibbous, 82% of the Moon was illuminated. Full Moon, July 18, 1989.

**ENVIRONMENT:** Immediately prior to the incident John and his friend, 17-year-old Brett Oblinger, noticed an unusually high number of baitfish. "They were jumping all over the place but I didn't even think about it," said John.

**DISTANCE FROM SHORE:** 15 yards or 50 feet

**TIME:** Afternoon

**NARRATIVE:** "I was sitting on my board when I felt something go across my leg," said O'Brien. "It happened so quick that I didn't have time to look for a shark. When [the shark] hit me, I fell off the board. I reached down and knew I was cut, but I didn't think it was as bad as it was." He scrambled back on his board and paddled toward shore. "I got off my board in knee-deep water and I screamed to my friend Brett. Then I looked at my leg and started to pass out." John said he didn't feel any pain "until the doctor was poking it."



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**INJURY:** The patient sustained a 10 cm X 8 cm avulsion of the skin and subcutaneous tissue of the medial left calf.

**FIRST AID / TREATMENT:** The surfer underwent minor surgery at Winter Park Memorial Hospital the same evening to repair the wound.

**SPECIES INVOLVED:** Not identified

**SOURCES:** Lauren Ritchie, Orlando Sentinel, July 17, 1989, page B1; Palm Beach Post, July 16, 1989, page 16A.

Klontz KC, Mullen RC, Corbyons TM and Barnard WP (1993) **CASE REPORT Vibrio wound infections in humans following shark attack** *Journal of Wilderness Medicine* 4, 68-72 [https://www.wemjournal.org/article/S0953-9859\(93\)71161-4/pdf](https://www.wemjournal.org/article/S0953-9859(93)71161-4/pdf)