

**ACTIVITY:** Swimming

**CASE:** GSAF 1989.08.22.b

**DATE:** Tuesday August 22, 1989

**LOCATION:** The incident took place at St Augustine Beach, St. Johns County, Florida, USA.

**NAME:** Anthony McKnight

**DESCRIPTION:** The swimmer is a 21-year-old male. He was a student, a fifth-year senior majoring in history at the University of Florida.

**BACKGROUND**

**DEPTH OF WATER:** Three feet

**NARRATIVE:** McKnight was swimming when the shark lunged for his hand. "It was pulling my hand, and I slapped it," he said. "Then I bolted for the shore." Lifeguards kept swimmers out of the water for 30 minutes after the incident.

**INJURY:** There were three wounds on the swimmer's left hand.

**TREATMENT:** McKnight was treated at Flagler Hospital where six stitches were used to close the wounds on his hand.

**SPECIES INVOLVED:** Unknown. The incident involved a shark about four feet in length.

**SOURCES:** Orlando Sentinel, August 24, 1989, page B.1; St. Petersburg Times, August 24, 1989, page 21



# Swimmer slaps shark to free his bitten hand

**Associated Press**

**ST. AUGUSTINE BEACH —** A University of Florida student says he feels very lucky to have escaped with only cuts after he pulled his left hand from the clutches of a small shark.

Anthony Michael McKnight said he was swimming off this North Florida beach in about 3 feet of water Tuesday when a 4-foot shark lunged for his hand.

"It was pulling my hand, and I slapped it," he said. "Then I bolted for the shore. I never swam so fast in my life."

McKnight, 21, ran to shore scared and bleeding profusely. Friends quickly found a sheriff's

deputy, who radioed for help. McKnight received six stitches at Flagler Hospital to close three wounds on his left hand.

"If the shark had been bigger, it would have been all she wrote for me," said McKnight.

Although swimmers were kept out of the water for about half an hour Tuesday as a precaution, Bubba Williams, director of lifeguards, said the danger of another attack was no greater than at any other time.

"There are sharks here all the time," Williams said. "If people flew over the water, they would be surprised to see the number of sharks feeding along the shore."

*St. Petersburg Times, August 24, 1989, page 21*