

ACTIVITY: Surfing

CASE: GSAF 1996.11.18

DATE: Monday November 18, 1996

LOCATION: The incident took place in the Atlantic Ocean at Coral Cove Park in Tequesta, Palm Beach County, Florida, USA.
27°N, 80.1°W

NAME: Adam Urban (or Urvan)

DESCRIPTION: He is a 26-year-old male from Dania. He works in sales, said he has been surfing for three years.



BACKGROUND

MOON PHASE: First Quarter, 55% of the Moon was illuminated.

SEA CONDITIONS: The waves were six to eight feet in height. "There was a lot of rough water in the area just south of Coral Cove Park."

DISTANCE FROM SHORE: 100 yards, Urban told paramedics he was "quite a way out," when he was bitten by the shark, said Tequesta Fire-Rescue Paramedic Dan Tilles.

TIME: Shortly before 17h00



NARRATIVE: Adam Urban drove north to surf the waves off Crescent and was surfing alone when he was bitten. He had been on the water for an hour. "I was done for the day when he got me," Urban said. He was paddling back to shore on his board when he felt a sharp pain in his foot as the shark barreled into him. "You just immediately panic because it comes out of the blue, and he came from behind. My first instinct was to get back on the board and get out of there," he said. "I didn't want to hang around and see if he was coming back for seconds." The surfer paddled in as quickly as he could.

INJURY: The surfer lost a portion of the dorsal surface of his right foot and had scratch marks on the bottom of his foot from the shark's teeth. Emergency room personnel at Jupiter Medical Center reported the marks on his right foot were consistent with that of a shark bite, said Tequesta Police Lt. Bob Garlo said. "The doctor said the shark had my whole [right] foot in his mouth because there were lacerations on top and bottom," said Urban.

FIRST AID / TREATMENT: Once ashore, the surfer wrapped his bleeding foot with his shirt and yelled for help on the deserted beach. "The biggest mistake I made was surfing alone, so there was nobody there to help me," Urban said. A woman at the nearby Tequesta Towers condominium spotted him from her balcony and called 911. Tequesta Fire-Rescue responded to the call and transported the surfer to Jupiter Medical Center for treatment. He remained at the hospital Monday night and was listed in good condition Tuesday morning.

Urban said that his surgeon believes he should regain full use of the foot, although tendons, ligaments and blood vessels were cut and there may be some nerve damage.

SPECIES: Not identified. The surfer said he never saw the shark.

SOURCES: Jupiter Courier, November 20, 1996, page A6
Palm Beach Post, November 20, 1996, page 1B.