

ACTIVITY: Surfing

CASE: GSAF 2003.06.26

DATE: Thursday June 26, 2003

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

29.8°N, 81.3°W

NAME: Shelby Tostevin

DESCRIPTION: The surfer is a 15-year-old male from St. Augustine Beach.

BACKGROUND

WEATHER: The sky was clear and there was no wind. The air temperature at St. Augustine ranged from 68° to 69.8°F throughout the afternoon.

MOON PHASE: New Moon, June 29, 2003

SEA CONDITIONS: The water was murky.

ENVIRONMENT: More than 26,000 people enjoy St. Augustine Beach each day and, on average, there are about three bites per year along the beach, so three bites a year is not reason to stir fear into swimmers. St. Johns County Sheriff's Office said its helicopter pilots saw "lots of sharks" in coastal waters on Thursday. "You could literally see sharks right there among people, really at any given time, but humans are not part of their food chain...jelly fish and sting rays should be more feared since they hospitalize many more people each year with their stings."

DEPTH OF WATER: The incident took place in waist- to chest-deep water.

TIME: Afternoon

NARRATIVE: The surfer had paused, hands resting on his board, when he felt a sting on his ankle, looked down and saw the shark at his foot. He struck the shark with his fist and pushed it to get it off of him. Then he walked to a near-by surf shop and called his dad.

INJURY: The surfer's right ankle was lacerated. The wound was repaired with four stitches.

FIRST AID: Dave Williams of the St. Johns County Department of Recreation said they have seven trucks and 24 lifeguards patrolling their 42 miles of beaches. Williams said they didn't help Shelby because they never received a phone call. "Anytime there is a 911 call placed for any kind of situation on the beaches, lifeguards are notified and lifeguards respond," Williams said. Shelby said the closest lifeguards to him when he was bitten were at the Holiday Inn to the south and Anastasia State Park to the north, and so he called his dad instead of emergency services when he got to A Street because he only lived a couple of blocks away. His father drove him to Flagler Hospital.



TREATMENT: The surfer was treated in the emergency room at Flagler Hospital and was at home, getting around on crutches, by the afternoon.

SPECIES INVOLVED: Unknown. The incident involved a shark about 105 cm in length.

SOURCE: Local6.com, June 28, 2003