

ACTIVITY: Snorkeling

CASE: GSAF 2007.05.07.b

DATE: Monday May 7, 2007

LOCATION: The incident took place in the Pacific Ocean at Keawakapu Beach in Kihei, Maui, USA. 20.7°N, 156.5°W

NAME: Peller Marion

DESCRIPTION: She is a 63-year-old female, a professor of psychology at Dominican University in San Rafael, California and the author of author of four books, including the nonfiction *Career Tune Up* and the fictional *Searching for the G Spot*. She was clad in a pink and purple swim suit and wore a mask, snorkel and swim fins.

BACKGROUND

WEATHER: At 08h54, Kihei recorded mostly cloudy skies and visibility of 10 miles [16.1 km]. The air temperature was 75.9°F [24.4°C], dew point 66°F [18.9°C], humidity 71%, sea level pressure 30.10 inches [1019.3 hPa] and wind direction was NE at 12.7 mph [20.4 km/h].

MOON PHASE: Last Quarter moon, May 9, 2007

SEA CONDITIONS: The water was “crystal clear”.

ENVIRONMENT: At 07h30, county officials received a report of a shark encountered by 47-year-old surfer Mark Jackson off Kamaole II Beach Park, about a mile and a half north of Keawakapu Beach. Jackson was on a stand-up paddleboard about 100 yards offshore when he encountered a large tiger shark. The shark pulled up parallel to his 14-foot board. “It came within two feet of my board, and from that view it was without a doubt a tiger shark,” said Jackson, referring to the species' distinctive markings. “You couldn't mistake it for anything else.” The shark swam beside him for five to 10 seconds before disappearing into the deep. Jackson, who just the day before had competed in the Starbucks Kaiwi Channel Relay from Moloka'i to O'ahu, said the animal was at least as long as his board. His first reaction was one of awe. “What I found most impressive was its girth. I just was impressed with the look of it, then 'This is not a good time to fall'. I was very surprised by my reaction. I was not as frightened as I thought my reaction would be,” he said. Nevertheless, Jackson was shaken enough to immediately head into Kama'ole Beach Park II to report the incident.

DISTANCE FROM SHORE: 25 yards

DEPTH OF WATER: The water depth was 10 to 14 feet, but the incident took place at the surface.

TIME: 08h00. The incident was reported at 08h34

NARRATIVE: Peller Marion was snorkeling, looking for sea turtles, when she felt something hit her right foot. “All of a sudden I felt the strangest feeling. It felt like something had clenched on my foot,” she said. Her swim fin popped off, and Marion said she thought a



Peller Marion

turtle had grabbed it, before realizing it was something much larger. "I turned around to look and saw this big gray thing and I thought, 'Oh, ----,' and started kicking and going in the other direction," she said. She said that she didn't get a good look at the shark, describing it simply as 'a big grey wall'. The shark released its grip, turned and swam away. Marion said she screamed 'Shark, shark!' and managed to swim 'lopsided' to shore.

After the incident a four-mile stretch of beach from Kalama Park to Wailea was closed and the area was monitored by lifeguards and state wildlife officials. State aquatic biologist Skippy Hau said lifeguards on watercraft saw no sharks during their patrol after the incident. The beaches reopened at 12h30 on May 8th after aerial surveillance reported no shark sightings.

INJURY: Lacerations to right foot and calf.

FIRST AID: Bystanders rendered first aid until Emergency Medical Technicians arrived who transported her to the hospital.

TREATMENT: Marion was treated at Maui Memorial Hospital. Her injuries were not considered life-threatening, but It was expected that she would spend three to five days in the hospital due to the possibility of infection.

SPECIES: It was thought the incident involved a tiger shark about 14-feet in length.

SOURCES: G. Kubota, Honolulu Star Bulletin, May 8, 2007
Honolulu Advertiser, May 9, 2007

