

ACTIVITY: Surfing

CASE: [GSAF 2007.06.17](#)

DATE: Sunday June 17, 2007

LOCATION: The incident took place in the Atlantic Ocean north of the St. Augustine Inlet at Vilano Beach (2800 block of Coastal Highway), St. Johns County, Florida, USA.



NAME: Kasey Schmidt

DESCRIPTION: She is a nine-year-old female from St. Johns County. She was tandem surfing with her mother when she was three, and has been surfing since she was four. She regularly surfs at Vilano Beach.



Kasey Schmidt

BACKGROUND

WEATHER: At 16h50, St. Augustine recorded visibility of 10 miles [16.1 km] and clear skies. The air temperature was 84.2°F [29°C], dew point 71.6°F [22°C], humidity 66%, sea level pressure 30.08 inches [1018.5 hPa], and wind direction was southeast at 11.5 mph [18.5 km/h].

MOON PHASE: New Moon, June 14, 2007, First Quarter, June 22, 2007.

TIME: 16h30 (4:30 pm)

NARRATIVE:

Kasey's mother was sitting on a surfboard waiting for a wave. Kasey had already caught her wave and headed toward the shore when she fell off her board. "I started tumbling in the waves, and I guess it just bit me then. It felt like a 20,000-pound saw hit me," Schmidt said.

INJURY: Injury to the medial aspect of the right thigh. Abrasions to the lower part of the leg may have been made when the rough skin of the shark.

FIRST AID / TREATMENT: Kasey's mother heard her scream and rushed to her daughter who was at the edge of the shore. She used a surfboard leash to tie a tourniquet. A beach walker carried Kasey up the steep steps in front of their house and put her atop the hot tub. St. Johns County Fire Rescue arrived and treated the girl, transporting her to Flagler Hospital. She was transferred to Wolfson Children's Hospital in Jacksonville later Sunday evening where surgeons repaired the injury, and she was expected to make a full recovery.

SPECIES: No shark was seen. "We've had a couple of other instances of bites [this year], but this is the first one that appeared to be a shark bite," said Jeremy Robshaw, department spokesman for St. Johns County Fire Rescue. However, Robshaw, after speaking with Dave Williams, head of St. St. Johns County's beach patrol, said, "We're not certain that it was a shark. While the shape of the wound could have been made by a shark, other expected signs aren't present. The wound could have been made by the fin of her surfboard. We have two or three incidents each year. With these types of incidents you never really know for sure," Robshaw said.

While teeth or tooth fragments of the shark are rarely present in a wound, it is possible to determine from the wound itself it was made by a shark. Unfortunately, in the absence of photographs of the wound prior to repair, no determination as to its cause can be made.

SOURCES: The Florida Times-Union, June 18, 2007
http://staugustine.com/stories/061807/news_4663392.shtml

Local 6 News, <http://www.local6.com/news/13519590/detail.html>

St. Augustine Record, June 19, 2007
http://staugustine.com/stories/061907/news_4665202.shtml

