

ACTIVITY: Spearfishing

CASE: GSAF 2009.01.25

DATE: Sunday January 25, 2009

LOCATION: The attack took place in the Caribbean Sea in Guantanamo Bay, Cuba.

NAME: John Emory

DESCRIPTION: He is a civil contractor and was working for the US government.

BACKGROUND

WEATHER: At 10h56. Guantanamo Bay NAS recorded mostly cloudy skies and 6.2-mile visibility. The air temperature was 81°F, dew point 66°F, humidity 60%, sea level pressure 30.06 inches (falling), and wind direction was NNE at 11.5 mph.

MOON PHASE: Waning Crescent, 0% of the Moon was illuminated. New Moon, January 26, 2009.

ENVIRONMENT: “A river flows out close to the place where I was attacked,” said the diver, “and there is also a meat-packing factory that dumps into the river where large numbers of bull sharks go to feed and breed. Had I known that, I would never have gone into those waters. Before going into the ocean, people need to know the area very well”.

DISTANCE FROM SHORE: 150 yards

DEPTH OF WATER: Three feet

TIME: 10h30



John Emory and Dr Martin Grossman

NARRATIVE: John Emory was spearfishing with a friend, a former Navy diver. Emory was close to shore when he felt a surge of water behind him. “I thought it was simply a sudden surge, when instantly I felt as if I had been hit by a car or struck by a baseball bat on the leg. That’s when I realized that a shark had attacked me and held my left leg between its jaws. I punched its head with all my might, but it was as if I’d hit concrete covered in sandpaper,” he says. The shark released the diver who reached a rock and climbed on top.

INJURY: Severe lacerations to lower left leg. The bite radius is seven inches.

FIRST AID: “After pushing [the shark] away, I was able to crawl up on a rock, some 150 yards from shore, and tied a tourniquet to my leg, in that I had a severed artery. The shark would not leave the area. After a long 30 minutes, my friend came back and got me, in spite of the shark.” With the help of his friend and others, the diver was retrieved from the water and transported by speedboat to the local military hospital.

TREATMENT: “I was stabilized at the hospital, but I thought I would lose my leg. The wound was very deep. They told me later that you could see my bone”, Emory remembers. “Luckily, I was transferred by jet to Fort Lauderdale, Florida where an ambulance drove me to the Aventura Hospital.”

TREATMENT: Dr Martin Grossman, the surgeon who operated on Emory, said the diver lost

one artery, but he was able to preserve the muscles and tendons. “We fixed his muscles underneath his leg, we reattached them to the bone, we fixed a couple of tendons, and we also sewed up his skin. It was like a jigsaw puzzle.

SPECIES: According to Mr. Emory, the attack involved a bull shark.

SOURCES: John Emory

Caribbean Net News, April 14, 2009, <http://www.caribbeannetnews.com/news-15674--42-42--.html>

