

ACTIVITY: Swimming

CASE: GSAF 2012.05.09

DATE: Wednesday May 9, 2012

LOCATION: The attack took place in the Atlantic Ocean opposite the Driftwood Resort north of Humiston Park in Vero Beach, Indian River County, Florida, USA.



NAME: Karin Ulrike Stei

DESCRIPTION: She is a 47-year-old female from Konstanz, Germany. She was wearing a black bathing suit.

BACKGROUND

WEATHER: At 11h53, Vero Beach recorded mostly cloudy skies and 10 mile visibility. The air temperature was 84°F, dew point 66.9°F, humidity 56%, sea level pressure 29.90 inches and wind direction was SW at 8.1 mph.

MOON PHASE: Waning Gibbous, 83% of the Moon was illuminated.

ENVIRONMENT: The Driftwood Resort is located at 3150 Ocean Drive in Vero Beach.

DISTANCE FROM SHORE: 30 yards

DEPTH OF WATER: Waist-deep

TIME: 11h30

NARRATIVE: Stei was about to head back to shore when she felt something hit her left leg. "It was so powerful and so big I knew it had to be a shark," she said. "I never saw it. It never surfaced." She raised her leg, saw the huge wound and knew she had to get back to the beach as quickly as possible. She raised her arm, yelled "Shark" and tried to paddle to the beach as fast as she was able.

Brigitte Schmid was 20 to 25 yards from the shore when Stei was bitten. She was not aware that her friend was in danger until she heard her yell "Shark."

Erik Toomsoo, the on-duty lifeguard at Humiston on was standing on the boardwalk steps when he heard Stei calling for help. He swam to her, yelling to people on shore to call 911. He brought the injured woman to the beach with the assistance of Michigan tourist, Dave Daniels. Lifeguards Jordan Farrow and off-duty lifeguard Shanna Beard, who is also a registered nurse, assisted Toomsoo as he reached shore. Construction worker Scott Weston, who had been working on an upper floor of the resort, also helped Toomsoo as he brought the woman ashore.

INJURY: The shark bite removed a large section of Stei's upper left thigh. The bite was 12-inches in diameter and extended to the femur.

FIRST AID: On the beach, Farrow began giving oxygen to the patient, Toomsoo used towels to apply pressure to stem blood loss, while Beard provided comfort and reassurance, and Vero Beach Police Officer Craig Urbanczyk used an umbrella to shade her from the sun. The hotel provided assistance, and police and Indian River County paramedics arrived quickly. A Martin County Fire Rescue LifeStar helicopter was in the area returning from an

operational visit at the Sebastian River Medical Center when one of the flight paramedics saw the trail of blood in the water and had the helicopter swing back around. The patient was airlifted to Lawnwood Medical Center and Heart Institute in Fort Pierce. "Everybody seemed to be in right place at the right time," Toomsoo said of rescuers.

TREATMENT: Stei was in surgery from 17h30 until about 19h00. The surgeon, Dr. Christian Schuetz, reported that she sustained massive soft-tissue damage. She returned to Germany where she underwent a series of operations. About 2.5 months later she was walking on crutches.

SPECIES: Not identified

SOURCES: News Channel 5, May 9, 2012, Bild.de, May 12, 2012, <http://www.bild.de/news/ausland/haiangriff/hai-zerfleischt-deutsche-urlauberin-24109456.bild.html>; TC Palm, July 20, 2012, <http://www.tcpalm.com/news/2012/jul/20/shark-victim-grateful-to-all-who-saved-her-life/>