

ACTIVITY: Spearfishing

CASE: GSAF 2015.04.03

DATE: Friday April 3, 2015

LOCATION: The incident took place in the Atlantic Ocean off the coast of Jupiter, Palm Beach County, Florida, USA.

NAME: Rick Neumann

DESCRIPTION: A 70-year-old male who has been spearfishing for 55 years. He was wearing a hooded wetsuit.

SUPPORT BOAT: 19- or 20-foot Contender



BACKGROUND.

WEATHER: The sky was partly cloudy with onshore winds, making underwater visibility poor.

MOON PHASE: Full Moon

SEA CONDITIONS: The sea surface temperature was 78°F and water was murky with five to 20-foot underwater visibility. The surf was one to two feet with a three- to four-foot NE swell. Mean high tide at Jupiter occurred at 08h04, mean low tide at 14h31.

DISTANCE FROM SHORE: Three miles

DEPTH OF WATER: 40 to 50 feet.

TIME: The boat with the injured diver arrived at Jupiter Inlet at 13h11.



Cobia, Rachycentron canadum

NARRATIVE: Rick Neumann was spearfishing with Julian Cru and his girlfriend. They were using sling-type spears.

“You usually work it one guy up and one guy down,” explained Neumann. Julian went first, came up with a 50-lb cobia. “So I dove down to 40 or 45 feet, and the next thing I know, something slams into my head and right shoulder. And I mean hard. Knocked my mask off. I turned and saw him swimming away. I probably dove right on top of him, and he was showing me who was boss in his kingdom down there. He bit through the wet suit, and part of me, then realized neither one was a fish and just went on his way. I think the shark got confused and just lashed out and hit me like a freight train on the right side of my shoulder and head,” Neumann said.

INJURY: The diver sustained lacerations to the right shoulder, neck and ear.

FIRST AID / TREATMENT: After a 40-minute ride the boat docked at the U-Tiki Beach restaurant in Jupiter Inlet where it was met by emergency responders. Then the patient was airlifted via Trauma Hawk helicopter to St. Mary's Medical Center in West Palm Beach where his injuries were repaired with 200 sutures and staples. The patient had to have part of his ear reattached, but should make a full recovery.

SPECIES: The diver identified the shark as a 10-foot bull shark weighing about 600-pounds.

SOURCES: Sun Sentinel, April 3, 2015

Palm Beach Post, April 3, 2015

ABC Action News, April 6, 2015

WPBF, April 7, 2015

<http://www.wpbf.com/news/man-needs-more-than-200-stitches-following-shark-bite-off-jupiter/32231254>

Field and Stream

<http://www.fieldandstream.com/articles/fishing/2015/07/bitten-when-a-bull-shark-strikes>