

NAME: Maggie White

ACTIVITY: Standing

DATE: August 12, 2000

LOCATION: The incident took place at Vilano Beach, In St. Augustine, Florida, USA

DESCRIPTION: She was clad in a turquoise one-piece bathing suit. She was not wearing any jewelry, did not have her menstrual period, and had no injuries before entering the sea. She is an experienced ocean swimmer.

BACKGROUND WEATHER: The incident occurred a day after the moon was in its first quarter. The sky was clear and it was a hot day (temperature in the 90s).

SEA CONDITIONS: There was good surf with five- to six-foot waves. The water temperature was 28°C and it was “very clear”.

ENVIRONMENT: The incident took place on a sand shelf that drops off about 20 feet from the shore. The St. John’s River spills into the sea 3.5 miles south of the incident site, and the intercoastal waterway parallels the beach. No one was fishing in the vicinity, and no dolphins or baitfish were observed.

DISTANCE FROM SHORE: Ten feet

DEPTH OF WATER AT INCIDENT SITE: Four and a half feet

TIME: 16h45 [4:45 pm]

NARRATIVE: Maggie entered the water and exercised briefly, doing some leg lifts. She had been standing in the water about five minutes was facing seaward when the shark came from behind, engulfing her lower right leg in its mouth, pulling her up and backwards. “I stomped down, raised my arms over my head in one movement, and came up in a divers position; I jumped as if to dive,” said Maggie. She swung into a wave and body-surfed three to four feet, then stood up and shouted “Shark!”. Her neighbors witnessed the entire incident and said that there were three sharks present (including the one that bit Maggie). Aware that she was bleeding badly, Maggie didn’t panic or thrash the water as she went ashore

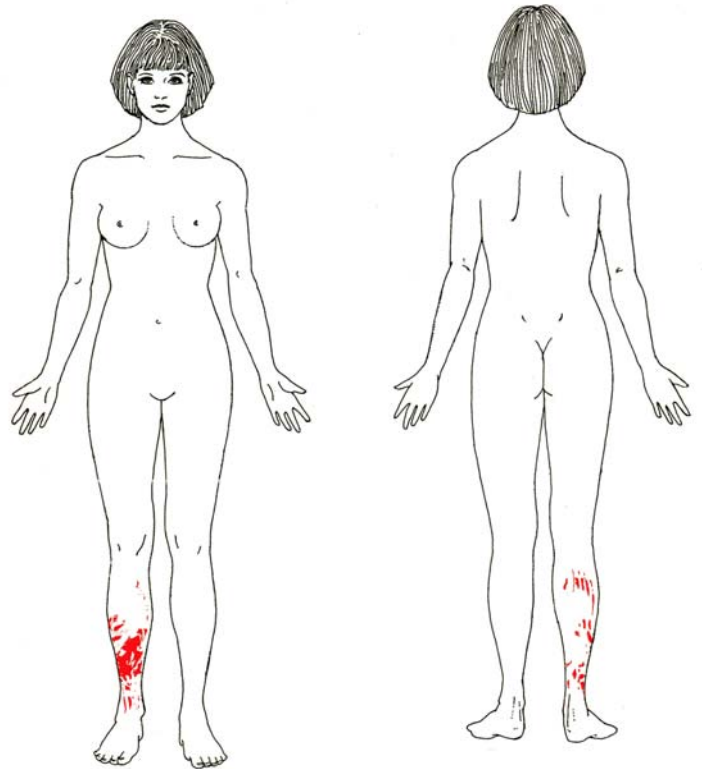
INJURY: Maggie’s lower right leg was severely bitten. The bite extended from 1.5 inches below the knee to her ankle.

FIRST AID: Christopher _____, a surfer who was about 30 feet away from Maggie when she was bitten, provided first aid. He wrapped her leg in a towel and called 911. “I was able to tell Christopher that I lived directly across the street and asked him to please tell my family.” said Maggie. “I have lived in the home directly across from my hit for 22 years.” While awaiting medical help she began to go into shock and remembers little until she woke up in the hospital after the initial four-hour surgical repair of her injury.

TREATMENT: She spent four days in Flagler Hospital.

Doctor Notes: “There were multiple traumatic lacerations of the right lower extremity. They were jagged with apparent tears versus clean cuts, although some of these appeared as clean but on close inspection these are not, especially at the distal right lower extremity where wounds are more jagged thin in nature and resulting from a tear.”

“Several of these wounds were approximated in a ligamentous manner. However no complete closure was done on the tears. Some are superficial, while several of these are deep to the bone anteriorly. Particular attention was paid to the right lower extremity with some concern for osteomyelitis. Total length of lacerations was 90-100 centimeters when added together. No amputation was done. There were no other lacerations although some debridement of devitalized tissue was done. The lower extremity reveals jagged lacerations compatible with that of a bite from a fish such as a shark. The aspect of the leg going both medially and laterally approximately 15 cm in length to the smallest width of these. The total amount in lacerations approached 100 cm. However, most of these are jagged. There is some concern for the right lower extremity, compatible with that of a shark bite.”



“The patient has been given antibiotics and tetanus toxoid. She will be taken to the operating room for debridement and irrigation of wounds and application of dressing. Some suturing is expected only to pull some of these edges together, however the patient has been warned well in advance that closure is not possible since the wounds are presumed to be contaminated.”

Maggie writes that she was subsequently seen by an infectious disease doctor and more dead tissue was removed from the devitalized tissue. “I used a cane for two years and have balance problems when putting too much pressure on my right leg,” she said.

SPECIES INVOLVED: Maggie and the ISAF believe the incident involved a bull shark, *Carcharhinus leucas*, eight to ten feet in length. Upon examination of the photographs of her injuries, Dr. Ritter concluded that it appears more likely that a large blacktip shark, *C. limbatus*, was involved.



1. 10/10/2018 10:30 AM



2. 10/10/2018 10:30 AM



3. 10/10/2018 10:30 AM
4. 10/10/2018 10:30 AM



5. 10/10/2018 10:30 AM
6. 10/10/2018 10:30 AM

In addition to keeping our 501 (3) Non Profit Organization status Maggie assist with finding and contacting other survivors she also is a major part of our Survivor Services. She also founded Sailors Remembrance Day a day to remember all those who have been lost at sea. She is a strong supporter of Shark Conservation and beach safety. All the details and pictures of this incident are the property of Maggie White.