

MEDIA RELEASE

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A 350 pound Bengal Tiger grabbed a 14 yr-old boy and attacked its handler at the St. Johns County Agricultural Fair, late Saturday night. Deputies arriving at the scene deployed their M-26 Advanced Tasers into the side of the tiger causing it to be immobilized and let go of the boy and the handler.

The incident occurred as the organization's second tiger was being walked past a crowd of people towards a transportation truck. When the tiger moved past the crowd, it became fixated on a 14 yr-old boy and grabbed him just below the waist, pulling him in and wrapping him up underneath it. Due to the location of the crowd and victims, deputies were unable to use their handguns to subdue the tiger. Deputy Jerry Montague fired his taser at the tiger, striking it in the side. The tiger's muscles were partially immobilized, causing it to fall over on its side and the boy was able to escape. The tiger became entangled in the taser wires, breaking them and it then began to attack the handler who had jumped in to assist the boy and regain control of it.

The tiger was able to get on top of the handler and had the man's head in its mouth when Deputy Kevin Kier fired his taser, striking the tiger again and completely immobilizing it so that the handler could free himself and regain control of the animal.

After some more wrestling and struggling, the animal was secured in the truck by its handler and medical assistance was summoned for the victims. The 14 yr-old boy was not injured, but the handler (Curtis Logiudice, 42, 1860 Stalratt Rd, Jacksonville, FL) suffered bite injuries to his head and neck. The handler chose not to be transported to the hospital from the scene, but instead transported the animals back to the sanctuary before transporting himself to the hospital for further treatment and stitches.

No charges have been filed at this time, but an investigation into the incident is ongoing and will likely involve numerous other agencies.

The animals were being displayed as part of an attraction from the Catty Shack Ranch and Animal Sanctuary out of Jacksonville, FL.

Deputy Greg Suchy, Public Information Officer
St. Johns County Sheriff's Office