Hanger practitioner featured on ABC’s Good Morning America

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Hanger practitioner Dan Strzempka, CPO from Sarasota, Florida was featured on ABC's *Good Morning America* on Wednesday, June 11, 2008 for his clinical work with a young dolphin who lost her tail fluke. Strzempka has volunteered his nights and weekends alongside Hanger's Vice President of Prosthetics Kevin Carroll, CP, FAAOP over the past two years to a young dolphin named Winter at the Clearwater Marine Aquarium.

Click here to watch the *Good Morning America* segment featuring Strzempka called "Dolphin's New Tail Offers New Direction".

A two-and-a-half year old Atlantic bottlenose dolphin, Winter was stranded near Cape Canaveral in December 2005 after being caught in a crab trap when she was just three months old. Her tail fluke eventually came off, as it was severely damaged by the trap's rope entanglement. After being transferred to Clearwater Marine Aquarium, Winter received round-the-clock medical attention in an effort to save her life. Having survived, she then adapted to a less efficient and damaging side-to-side swimming style, as there was no tail fluke to give her thrust.

Carroll was chosen in 2006 by the Aquarium from a select pool of international prosthetic experts to develop and fit the baby dolphin's tail. Strzempka was brought onto the project soon after and they have collaborated as a team for many months on this unique case. This is the first time a dolphin's entire tail fluke has been replaced by a prosthetic device.

To date, Carroll and Strzempka have delivered five prototype tails, including 50 iterations within those five prototypes to accommodate for growth and development. Winter is successfully swimming twice a day, for 30 minutes at a time, with her current prosthetic tail. Thanks to her prosthetic tail and physical therapy, there are no longer signs of the debilitating curvature that was once in her spine. The veterinarians and trainers plan to steadily increase the amount of time Winter uses her tail as she grows.

Many new human amputees, including young children and veterans of the Wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, have benefitted from the clinical research around this unique patient case, as well as from the inspiration from this young, engaging mammal. A new gel liner for amputees with severe skin sensitivities and irritations was created through the work with Winter. Carroll and Strzempka have learned much about skin irritations, forces within a prosthetic socket, and critical non-verbal patient communication.

For more information on Winter, please visit: www.seewinter.com.