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INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

Hands Lost to Shark, Man Seeks New Extreme

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A man from the Far East who lost both hands in a shark attack in August has set his sights on the ski slopes, determined to overcome his debilitating handicap with help from sponsors back home.

Denis Udovenko, an active snowboarder before the gruesome attack, used money donated by the government, relatives and handful of well-wishers to buy a pair of rugged prosthetic arms designed to handle any outdoor adventure, RIA-Novosti reported.

The new pair of prostheses is simpler, more durable and less expensive than his first pair, which Udovenko plans to use at work and in everyday life. The two sets of prosthetic arms cost a combined 5 million rubles ($161,000).

Udovenko is currently undergoing physical therapy in Germany, where he's learning to use both sets of prostheses, and doctors say he's ahead of his training regimen and can eat and drink on his own.

Udovenko is relying on sponsors to cover the cost of treatment and rehabilitation.

The Primorye regional government paid for the trip to Germany, while authorities in Sakhalin — Udovenko's birthplace — gave 2 million rubles. Well-wishers donated another 3 million rubles, and tycoon Mikhail Prokhorov chipped in 2.4 million ruble when he was leading Right Cause's campaign for the State Duma.

At least three were injured in a string of shark attacks in the Far East this summer. Udovenko, who was 25 at the time of the attack in Telyakovsky Bay, originally underwent treatment in South Korea. Two others later suffered light injuries when they were attacked near Vladivostok.

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