

ACTIVITY: Kayaking

CASE: GSAF 1992.11.14

DATE: Saturday November 14, 1992

LOCATION: The incident took place in the Pacific Ocean 0.8 kilometres north of Año Nuevo Island, San Mateo County, California, USA.

37°07.3'N, 122°20.8'W

NAME: Ken Kelton

DESCRIPTION: A 46-year-old male wearing a black wetsuit.

KAYAK: A 3.6-metre red kayak

BACKGROUND

WEATHER: The sky was clear and there was a warm breeze.

MOON PHASE: Waning Gibbous, 81% of the Moon's visible disk was illuminated. New Moon on November 24, 1992

SEA CONDITIONS: There was a light ground swell of a metre or less and underwater visibility was two to three metres.

ENVIRONMENT: The seafloor was primarily sand with a few scattered kelp plants. A group of about 40 harbor seals were observed on the beach.

DISTANCE FROM SHORE: 150 metres

DEPTH OF WATER AT INCIDENT SITE: Two to three fathoms

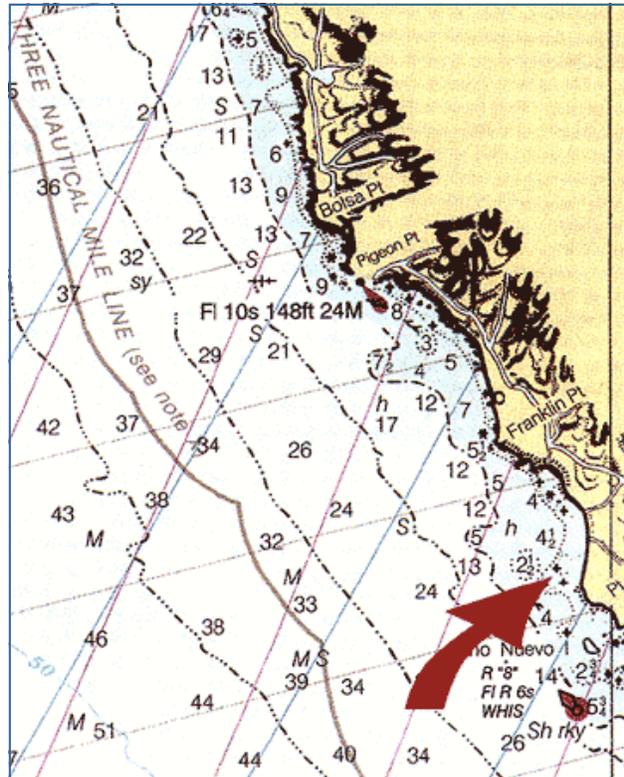
TIME: 12h50

NARRATIVE: Kelton had been on the water for about three hours, accompanied by fellow kayaker Mike Chin. "I was paddling about 150 metres from the beach, near a relatively deep channel located off a small seal colony," said Kelton. "I was inside of Chin, closer to the shore, and he was about six metres from my location."

A large white shark broke the surface, striking the right side of the kayak just behind the cockpit in the area of the stern. The shark mouthed the kayak for several seconds before lunging up out of the water. Chin thought the second impact was extremely violent, with almost two-thirds of the shark's body coming out of the water.

The shark shook the kayak from side to side and up and down, raising the bow completely out of the water. The incident lasted about 10 seconds, with Kelton somehow remaining inside the kayak. At one point Chin lost sight of his friend due to the shark's immense girth

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and dorsal fin, and the amount of water that was being sprayed in the air.

The shark released the kayak, submerged, and was not seen again. Although the kayak was flooded and difficult to maneuver, it was structurally sound, allowing Kelton to safely paddle in to shore.

INJURY: No injury to kayaker

SPECIES INVOLVED: The incident involved a white shark, five to six metres in length. Measurements of the bite on the kayak indicated the jaw diameter of the shark was 43 centimetres, thus corroborating Kelton and Chin's estimates of the shark's size.

CASE INVESTIGATOR: Ralph Collier

NOTE: This is the second recurring incident at this location.