

ACTIVITY: Free diving / Spearfishing

CASE: [GSAF 1993.03.12](#)

DATE: Friday March 12, 1993

LOCATION: The incident took place the Pacific Ocean at Linda Mar Beach near Point San Pedro, close to Montara, San Mateo County, California, USA.

37°35.8'N; 122°31.2'W

NAME: Don Berry

DESCRIPTION: He is a 55-year-old male. He was wearing a black neoprene wetsuit with blue sleeves, a black hood, and swim fins, and utilized a 3.3-metre paddleboard for carrying additional equipment.

BACKGROUND

WEATHER: The sky was overcast and the air temperature was warmer than the water.

MOON PHASE: Waning Gibbous, 78% of the Moon's visible disk was illuminated. New Moon on March 23, 1993

SEA CONDITIONS: The sea surface was calm but the current was strong with the incoming tide. Underwater visibility was in excess of seven metres.

ENVIRONMENT: At this location there were several large rocks lying parallel to shore but, seaward of them, the bottom was mostly sandy. A lone California sea lion was observed by the diver prior to the incident.

DISTANCE FROM SHORE: 125 metres

DEPTH OF WATER AT INCIDENT SITE: Berry anchored his paddleboard in water 30 to 35 feet deep.

TIME: 14h30

NARRATIVE: Don Berry had been in the water for more than an hour and had speared a Cabezon, placing it on his board. He dived to the bottom and was returning to the surface when he felt something grab his left swim fin and push him forward through the water. He turned and jabbed the shark with the speargun he was holding in his right hand, causing the fish to release its grip. He watched the shark swim slowly away. Berry swam to his board, paddled out to warn two other divers in the area, then returned to the beach.

INJURY: The diver was not injured by the shark.

SPECIES INVOLVED: Berry described the shark as "a cream color which then changed over into a gunmetal gray on top." The punctures and scratches on the swimfin were examined by biologists Ken Goldman and John E. McCosker of the California Academy of Sciences on March 15, 1993. Both confirmed this incident involved a white shark of undetermined size.

CASE INVESTIGATOR: Ralph Collier

