

ACTIVITY: Fishing / filming

CASE: 1993.08.15.b

DATE: Sunday August 15, 1993

LOCATION: The incident took place in the Pacific Ocean off Santa Cruz Island, Santa Barbara County, California, USA.

34°05'N, 119°30'W

BOAT: The *Seabiscuit*, a 21-metre fiberglass sport fishing boat

OCCUPANTS: Captain Louie Abbott and more than 24 charter fishermen.



BACKGROUND

MOON PHASE: Waning Crescent, 7% of the Moon's visible disk was illuminated. New Moon, August 17, 1993

TIME: 11h30

NARRATIVE: The fishermen were returning home from Santa Cruz Island when they saw a large commotion on the surface. Abbott maneuvered his boat within six to 10 metres of the disturbance, whereupon a large white shark broke the surface of the water and took a huge bite out of a dead pinniped. Then the shark abandoned its feeding and began circling the boat. It circled the boat perhaps 15 times, close enough so that its occupants could have touched it. The shark then turned abruptly and charged the vessel, ramming it on the port side. The shark struck the boat three times, then surfaced and raised its head slightly above the water.

INJURIES: No injury to occupants.

DAMAGE TO BOAT: Minimal

SPECIES: All on board observed the shark for more than 30 minutes. Witnesses estimated the white shark's length at more than seven metres. Captain Abbott based his estimate on a comparison with his vessel's 6.3-metre width at the stern. According to Captain Abbott, the shark's tail extended beyond the starboard side of the stern as its head poked beyond the port side. "This thing was immense. It was just an awesome sight," Abbott said. "I've seen sharks before, but nothing like this."

CASE INVESTIGATOR: Ralph Collier