

ACTIVITY: Kayaking

CASE: [GSAF 1993.10.10](#)

DATE: Sunday October 10, 1993

LOCATION: The incident took place the Pacific Ocean near Goat Rock, located west of Arched Rock, about five kilometres from Jenner, Sonoma County, California, USA.

38°26.2'N; 123°08'W

NAME: Rosemary Johnson

DESCRIPTION: She was a 33-year-old female, and was wearing a black wetsuit.

KAYAK: A dark blue Frenzy ocean kayak, 275 cm in length.

BACKGROUND

WEATHER: The sky was overcast and the air temperature was 24°C.

MOON PHASE: Waning Crescent, 32% of the Moon's visible disk was illuminated. New Moon on October 15, 1993.

SEA CONDITIONS: The sea was calm and flat with 0.5 to one metre swells. The water temperature was 16°C and underwater visibility was less than a metre.

ENVIRONMENT: There were several pinnipeds seen in the area prior to the incident.

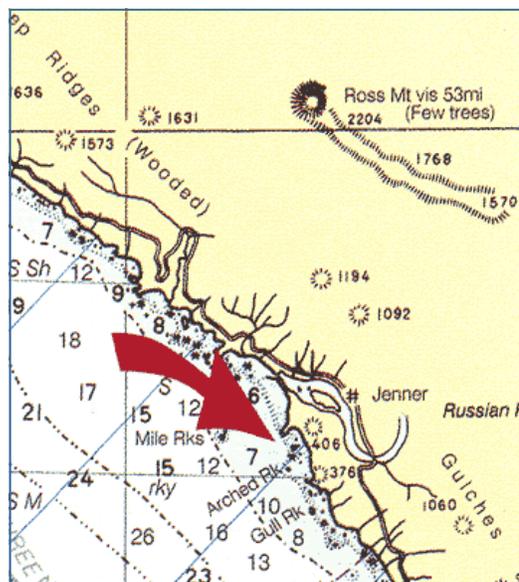
DISTANCE FROM SHORE: 0.4 kilometres

DEPTH OF WATER AT INCIDENT SITE: Thought to be about five fathoms

TIME: 14h30

NARRATIVE: Johnson, accompanied by Rick Larson, David Market and Mac Steiger, had paddled offshore about 0.4 km and 1.5 km south of the river inlet at Russian Gulch, the location of Rodney Orr's attack in 1990. Her companions were using a 336-cm-long white Scrambler, a 265-cm turquoise Kiwi and a 335-cm white gondola-shaped plastic ocean kayak. Johnson was between Arched Rock and Goat Rock inside the cove. Markel, Larson and Steiger were about 200 metres from her location. They had all been on the water for about 30 minutes. Johnson was apprehensive. She recalled, "There were many seagulls in the area that kept flying in and would hover near my kayak. I thought it was 'Hitchcockish', being so close to Bodega Bay and all." (Bodega Bay was the locale for Alfred Hitchcock's movie "The Birds").

Her friends were looking in her direction when a huge white shark lifted her kayak completely out of the water, ejecting Johnson from the cockpit. She explained, "I thought I had hit a rock, because I landed on 'something' when I struck the water. My head never went under, because I believe I landed on the shark. Whatever my feet landed on seem to give."



Johnson's companions began rapidly paddling toward her as she swam to retrieve her paddle. She had just climbed back into her kayak when her friends reached her. They informed her that a shark had struck her vessel, whereupon they unanimously agreed to head for shore. Johnson started paddling her kayak toward the beach, but it would not move and, within a few seconds, she was dumped into the water. She climbed back aboard and tried paddling toward the beach, but was ejected into the water a second time. On attempting a third time to paddle for shore, Johnson was tossed into the water as the kayak rolled over, exposing a large hole in the bottom. It was decided that she would board one of her companion's kayaks for the trip to the beach.

INJURY: Johnson was not injured by the shark.

SPECIES INVOLVED: The incident involved a white shark, estimated to be more than six metres in length.

SOURCE: Ralph Collier (2003), pages 143-144

CASE INVESTIGATOR: Ralph Collier