

ACTIVITY: Surfing

CASE: [GSAF 2001.05.04](#)

DATE: Friday May 4, 2001

LOCATION: The incident took place north of Toukley at Lakes Beach, about 1.5 kilometers from Noraville, New South Wales, Australia.

NAME: Michael Valentine

DESCRIPTION: The surfer is a 37-year-old male from Buff Point. He has been surfing for 25 years.

BACKGROUND

MOON PHASE: Full Moon, May 7, 2001

SEA CONDITIONS: Lakes Beach is one of the area's better surfing beaches.

ENVIRONMENT: Valentine said he no longer had faith in the old sea yarn that where there are dolphins there are no sharks. "There were dolphins out there the night before and they scared me a bit," he said. "They were back again Friday night out at the reef so I thought 'Cool, no sharks' and that's the night I was attacked."

DISTANCE FROM SHORE: 60 to 70 metres

TIME: 17h40 (Dusk)



Valentine shows damage to his torso and board.

NARRATIVE: "I was paddling and I was just hit by this huge force," said Valentine. The surfer was hit from the side and dragged underwater. The bottom jaw of the shark closed around the bottom of his board, while the upper jaw clamped down on his shoulder blade. The shark released him and he resurfaced. "I came back up to see a chunk of my surfboard floating to the left of me and my board to the right. I thought the shark would come back for another go so I started thrashing my arms and legs, got my board and paddled in to shore." He spotted a boogie boarder on the beach and shouted to him, and he assisted the surfer to the beach. "He came in the water and I just kept paddling and didn't stop until hit the sand," said Valentine. "It was like an eternity. I just kept thinking the shark might come at me from behind."

INJURY: Valentine sustained 30-centimetre lacerations on his chest, back and side of his torso.

EQUIPMENT DAMAGE: Both the surfer's wetsuit and board were severely damaged. A chunk of his board was removed by the shark.

TREATMENT: The boogie boarder took Valentine to Wyong Hospital where he was treated

and released that night.

SPECIES INVOLVED: Unknown

REPORTED BY: Jason Bartlett, Newcastle Herald, 5 May 2001, page 7; Sunday Mail (Queensland) 6 May 2001, Section B, page 46