

ACTIVITY: Spearfishing

CASE: [GSAF 2004.03.22](#)

DATE: Monday March 22, 2004

LOCATION: The incident took place in the South Pacific Ocean off Te Arai Point, near Mangawhai, south of Whangarei, North Island, New Zealand.

NAMES: Marc Fraser and Blair Fraser (The divers are not related.)



Marc Fraser and Blair Fraser with the three-metre bronze whaler shark that they killed.

BACKGROUND

MOON PHASE: New Moon, February 20, 2004

DISTANCE FROM SHORE: 200 metres

TIME: 12h30

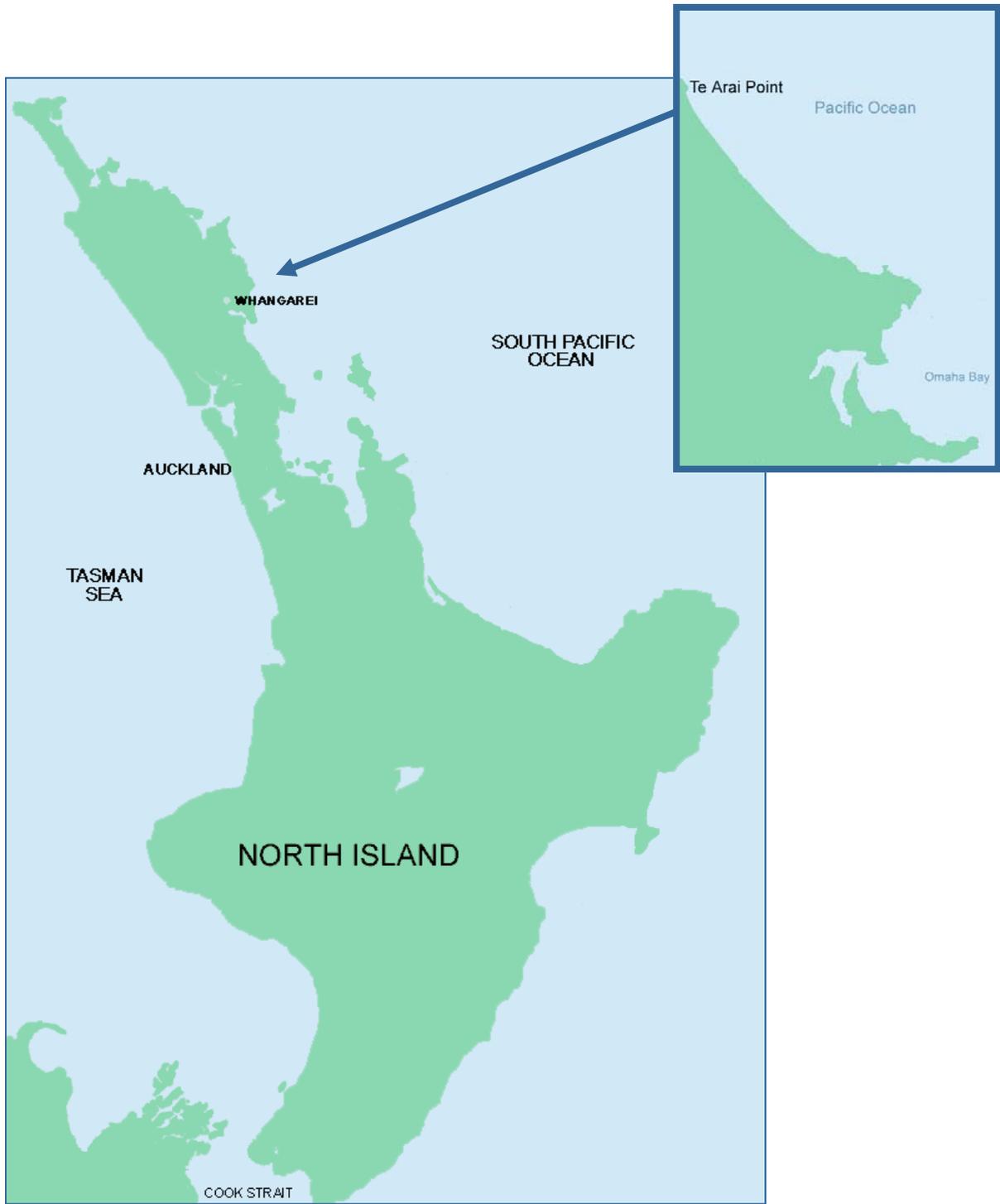
NARRATIVE: Marc Fraser was at a depth of 10 metres, stalking a kingfish, when a three-metre bronze whaler shark bit the buoy to which his line was attached and he was jerked backward through the water. "I'm six-feet, five-inches and 112 kilograms and it was dragging me back like a freight train," said Marc. When the line went slack, he tried to get to the rocks, yelling "shark, shark". Then Blair looked at his buoy and "there was this massive fin there." He looked around and saw another, bigger fin on his right, so he quickly made for the rocks, about 20m away. Marc also made it to the rocks. "I looked down and the shark was coming back up at us," said Marc. "I tried to poke it with my spear but it didn't work so I shot it. By then it was right at the end of my flippers." When Blair tried to shoot it to finish it off, he either missed or it ricocheted off, leaving his gear tangled about the shark. Marc stabbed the shark twice and the second time the handle snapped off the knife, leaving the blade in the shark's head, and killing it.

The divers dragged the dead shark out of the water onto a rock (3.5m by 3.5m) that is completely submerged at high tide. The tide was coming in and they saw other sharks circling. The divers tried to get the attention of people on shore, hoping a boat would come out to get them. When people on the beach saw them waving for help, they mistook the body of the shark for a diver in distress and called emergency services. The Northland Electricity rescue helicopter arrived with two pilots, paramedic Mark Going and Whangarei water rescue team member Dean Walford on board. Walford was winched down on to the rock, put straps on the two men, and waited on the rock while the divers were lifted ashore.

INJURY: The divers were bruised and their equipment was battered, but neither suffered any significant injury.

SPECIES: A bronze whaler shark

CASE INVESTIGATOR: Richard D. Weeks, Global Shark Accident File



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