

ACTIVITY: Fishing

CASE: GSAF 2009.11.16.b

DATE: Monday November 16, 2009

LOCATION: The accident took place in the North Bay region of San Francisco Bay at Loch Lomond Harbor, San Rafael, Marin County, California, USA.

NAME: James White

DESCRIPTION: He is a 31-year-old male from San Rafael. He is 6'2" tall, weighs 250 pounds, and was wearing a dark sweater and shorts.

BACKGROUND

WEATHER: The skies were clear and the air temperature was 65°F, estimated.

WATER CONDITIONS: The water was calm, and it was low tide.

MOON PHASE: New Moon, November 16, 2009

ENVIRONMENT: No unusual marine species behavior was observed. The fisherman was catching smelt and mackerel.

DISTANCE FROM SHORE: Five feet

DEPTH OF WATER: Three feet.

TIME: 16h45

NARRATIVE: "I hooked another smelt, and as I was reeling it in my line became tangled under a rock a few feet out from shore," said White. "Seeing that the water was only three feet or so deep, I propped my right leg up on a rock for leverage and with my left hand I reached down into the water to free my line. Within 20 seconds of putting my hand in the water it felt as if my hand went into a vise full of crushed glass. I thought the rock had fallen on my hand when about six feet from my hand I saw a long tail and dorsal fin I knew it was a shark. I tried to free my hand but every move I made the shark tried to pull my hand out to sea. With my free hand I hit the shark on top of its head twice. The second time it broke its grip. Another fisherman saw what happened and helped me reel in my line. The smelt was bitten in half."

INJURY: White sustained seven puncture wounds and several lacerations/cuts to the dorsal surface of his left hand.

SPECIES: According to the fisherman, "The shark had a large eye, blue in color, short snout, medium size mouth, body length approximately 6 feet, with the tail being 50% of the length of the body." The shark's description is highly suggestive that a thresher shark (Alopiidae) was the causal species in this accident.

CASE INVESTIGATOR: Ralph Collier

