



**ACTIVITY:** Paddle boarding

**CASE:** [GSAF 2012.05.06](#)

**DATE:** Sunday May 6, 2012

**LOCATION:** The incident took place in the Pacific Ocean off a remote area approximately one mile north of Avalon, Catalina Island, Orange County, California, USA,

**NAME:** Rose McKereghan

**DESCRIPTION:** She is a 15-year-old female.

#### **BACKGROUND**

**WEATHER:** Avalon recorded clear skies.

**MOON PHASE:** Full Moon. The Moon was in perigee, the once-a-year event when the orbit of the moon brings it closest to earth (i.e. super moon).

**DISTANCE FROM SHORE:** 200 yards

**TIME:** Approximately 07h20

**NARRATIVE:** A group of teens — each with a paddleboard, paddle, and wearing a lifejacket — entered the water at approximately 06h30. Initially, many of them had difficulty maintaining their balance while standing on their boards and fell into the water. When the group became comfortable they started paddling toward a big rock they had visited earlier when snorkeling. A sea lion observed them and swam close to their boards. At 07h10, they headed back toward shore for breakfast. Rose and a friend lagged about 20 metres behind the group. Her friend was about 10 feet from her when they noticed a sea lion swim unusually close to them, then dart away. They continued paddling.

Rose describes what happened next:

“Suddenly out of nowhere a huge mouth comes shooting out of the water and attaches itself onto the front of my board. I then notice that there is a shark on the front of my board. I yell ‘What?!’ and somehow end up into the water.

“(From this point on I can’t quite recall the whole story, but little fragments pop up now and then) I remember being about 3ft from this shark, and seeing its mouth attached to my board, and its eyes being jet black. I then somehow swam far enough away from the shark, turned and watch it thrash my board around. I looked over at my friend as she was yelling for help. I just remember how scared I sounded yelling to her, and how scared she looked.

“I looked back to the shark but all that was left was the board and the paddle. I thought ‘Oh no, its going to come up under me thinking I am a seal.’ So I tried my best to stay still and not act like a seal. After a minute or so I started swimming to one of my friends boards and hopped on just to get out of the water. We swam to my board and just stared in awe at the bite marks on it. I jumped off and proceeded to get onto my board and start to paddle back to shore. We got to the beach and started heading inland at about 7:40 am.”

**INJURY:** No injury.

**DAMAGE TO PADDLEBOARD:**

After breakfast, the teens examined the paddleboard and recovered fragments of two shark teeth. Three distinct jaw dentition impressions are visible in the photograph of the board at right.

**SPECIES:** Rose reported, “After a while officials came around and examined the bite marks. Apparently he had taken three huge bites then noticed it wasn’t a yummy snack. They confirmed it was a juvenile great white shark.”



**SOURCES:** Ralph Collier, Al Brenneka and Rose Rose McKereghan and press reports: Orange County Register, May 7, 2012; LA Weekly, May 7, 2012; ABC News, May 7, 2012; [http://abclocal.go.com/kabc/story?section=news/local/los\\_angeles&id=8650841](http://abclocal.go.com/kabc/story?section=news/local/los_angeles&id=8650841)