

ACTIVITY: Surfing

CASE: GSAF 2013.03.16.a

DATE: Saturday March 16, 2013

LOCATION: The incident took place in the Indian Ocean at Hawston Beach, Western Cape Province, South Africa.

NAME Troy Henri

DESCRIPTION: He is a male from Kenwyn.

BACKGROUND

MOON PHASE: Waxing Crescent, 21% of the Moon was illuminated. New Moon, March 11, 2013.

ENVIRONMENT: Hawston Beach lies between Fisherhaven and Onrus south of Hermanus and is regarded as the safest beach along the Western Cape coastline.

DISTANCE FROM SHORE: 60 metres

NARRATIVE: Troy Henri's friend, Rhomeez Petersen, had invited him and other friends to a beach birthday party. The two were surfing together.

Moments after he saw a black patch beneath the sea surface, a dark shape moved towards him, said the surfer. "As I paddled out, the shark turned and I saw how its dorsal became bigger and bigger," said Henri. "I screamed to Rhomeez 'there is shark in the water'. It swam about an arm's length past me and I just knew something was about to happen. The shark hit the underside of my board and threw me off. I landed on my back in the water and the shark went over me – its tail hitting my arm. Then I felt the pressure of the leash pulling me under water. The pressure was released when the leash snapped," said Henri.

His first reaction was get back to shore, but he couldn't see his board. "All I was thinking was that the shark would come back and my 14-year-old son, who was on the beach, must not see this," he said.

Petersen raised the alarm and lifeguards came to help. "That swim back to the beach was the longest swim I've ever done," said Henri. "I'm grateful to be alive. Somebody up there likes me."

INJURY: The surfer was not injured by the shark.

SPECIES: The widely-spaced toothmarks on the surfboard indicate the incident involved a white shark. The toothmarks spanned 32 cm.



Picture: COURTNEY AFRICA

Troy Henri shows bite marks on his surfboard.



Toothmarks on Troy Henri's board

NOTE: When Llewellyn Poole, a local surfer, was contacted about a board floating in the bay, he swam out and retrieved it. At the time he did not know it was Henri's board. Poole, later returned the board to the Henri – who was already back in Cape Town, but happy to drive back to fetch his 'lucky' board.

SOURCES: Cape Times, March 19, 2013,
<http://www.iol.co.za/news/south-africa/western-cape/surfer-tells-of-really-close-shave-with-shark-1.1488791>

Wavescape, March 20, 2013, <http://www.wavescape.co.za/news/breaking-news/shark-survival-101.html>



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