



**ACTIVITY:** Surfing

**CASE:** [GSAF 2013.10.20](#)

**DATE:** Sunday October 20, 2013

**LOCATION:** Pila'a Beach near Kilauea, Kaua'i, Hawaii, USA.

**NAME:** Jeff Horton

**DESCRIPTION:** He is a 25-year-old male.

**BOARD:** A seven-foot yellow triffin

#### **BACKGROUND**

**WEATHER:** It was a clear sunny morning.

**MOON PHASE:** Waning Gibbous, 96% of the Moon was illuminated. Full Moon, October 18, 2013.

**SEA CONDITIONS:** The water was clear.

**ENVIRONMENT:** Pila'a Beach is divided by a rocky point. The eastern section of the beach is sheltered by Kephuhu Point and a stream crosses the western section. A wide reef extends from Kephuhu Point to Kilauea Bay, two miles to the west. The outer section of the reef has a channel that is a major drainage point for the reef. A powerful rip current runs through the channel during periods of high surf. A tiger shark was spotted at nearby Rock Quarry Beach the previous week. About 20 minutes before this incident, surfers spotted a fin and tail in the water.



Photo by Neil Edmands

**DISTANCE FROM SHORE:** 200 yards  
**WATER DEPTH:** 20 feet, estimated  
**TIME:** 11h00

**NARRATIVE:** Horton had been surfing with 10 others for approximately three hours. He was sitting on his surfboard waiting to catch a wave, legs hanging in the water, when he looked down to his left and saw a large shape swimming very fast towards him. As Horton yanked up his left leg, the shark's jaws clamped down on his board. Horton rolled off his board and on to the shark. He held on to the shark's fin with one hand, punching the fish as hard as he could with the other. Horton, a former boxer, estimated he landed eight blows but it was when he jammed his knuckle into the shark's eye that the shark spit the board out. Horton was tossed a few feet into the air, and although stunned, he scrambled back on his board. With the help of another surfer, he caught a wave and paddled for shore. The shark followed, briefly, but didn't approach the surfer or his board again.

**INJURY:** The surfer was not injured

**DAMAGE:** Tooth impressions of the shark are visible in the surfboard.

**SPECIES:** The tooth impressions in the board suggest that a large tiger shark, approximately 12 feet in length, was involved in this incident.

**REPORTED BY:** Bill Buley, The Garden Island, Tuesday, October 22, 2013, [http://thegardenisland.com/news/local/man-fights-off-shark/article\\_c27550d8-3ade-11e3-b0e2-0019bb2963f4.html](http://thegardenisland.com/news/local/man-fights-off-shark/article_c27550d8-3ade-11e3-b0e2-0019bb2963f4.html)



Photo by Neil Edmonds

*Jeff Horton holds his surf board after his encounter with a shark Sunday morning at Pila'a.*

