

ACTIVITY: Surf-skiing

CASE: [GSAF 1981.00.00.b](#)

DATE: 1981

LOCATIION: Byron Bay, New South Wales, Australia.

NAME: Warren Rowe

DESCRIPTION: He was a 27-year-old male.

BACKGROUND

WEATHER: The sky was overcast.

ENVIRONMENT: The winter whiting were running up the coast.

DISTANCE FROM SHORE: 20 metres

TIME: 07h00

NARRATIVE: Warren and Geoff Booth were surf-skiing when "this shape" flashed past Warren and then turned back towards him. The shark swam underneath Warren and grabbed the front of the surf ski throwing the man into the water. "That was the horrifying part, not knowing where the thing was in the water," Warren said.

The shark let go and turned again and came under Geoff's ski. He hit it on the head with his paddle.

The shark then disappeared and both men "raced like hell" for the beach.

INJURY: No injury

DAMAGE TO SKI: The shark took "a huge chunk" out of the ski.

SPECIES: A 2.5 m tiger shark

SOURCE: Sunday Mail (QLD), September 6, 1987, page 10

SHARK BITE KEEPS SURFER SHY

Shark bite keeps surfer shy Shark bite keeps surfer shy Whilst not bearing any bodily scars, Warren Rowe, confesses to being "once bitten and twice shy".

A 2.5m Tiger shark took a huge chunk of Warren's surf ski as he paddled ashore at Byron Bay in 1981.

Warren, of the Brisbane suburb of Sherwood, then 27, and his mate Geoff Booth, were surfing in overcast conditions at 7 a.m. when the shark attacked.

They were about 20 m from the beach when "this shape" flashed past Warren and then turned back towards him.

It swan underneath Warren and grabbed the front of the surf ski throwing Warren into the water. "That was the horrifying part, not knowing where the thing was in the water," Warren said.

The shark let go and turned again and came under Geoff's ski. He hit it on the head with his paddle. The shark then disappeared and both men "raced like hell" for the beach.

"You can write that I've never been back to Byron," Warren said.

"I guess you can call it a case of once bitten and twice shy.

"From what people have told me about sharks and what I've read since, we were definitely in the wrong place at the wrong time.

"It was overcast, early in the morning, we were surfing near a gutter and the winter whiting were running up the coast."

An experience to keep many of the most dedicated from ever again paddling their toes in the Pacific, Warren said he did not have too many problems re-entering the surf.

"It's just one of those things. If you worry about sharks every time you go to the beach you'll never have any fun.

"I don't hate them for what happened, if that's the right thing to say, but I'm not really keen on them either. I don't hang around if there's a chance."

Amazingly, since 1981, Warren has had another close encounter when what was thought to be a 2.5 m shark swam by while he was surfing at Mermaid Beach in 1985.

"After that I've often wondered just how many other times a shark has come close and I've never known," Warren said.

SOURCE Coast Sun, September 6, 1987, page 10