

ACTIVITY: Wade fishing

CASE: GSAF 1996.08.11

DATE: Sunday August 11, 1996

LOCATION: The incident took place in the Gulf of Mexico off Georgia Avenue, Bayshore Gardens, Sarasota Bay, Sarasota County, Florida, USA.

27.4°N, 82.5°W

NAME: Jason King

DESCRIPTION: He is a 21-year-old male.

BACKGROUND

WEATHER: At 14h50 the sky was overcast and visibility was 10 miles [16 km]. The air temperature was 87.8°F [31°C], dew point was 78.8°F [26°C], humidity was 75%, sea level pressure was 30.01 inches [1016.1 hPa], the wind direction was WSW at 13.8 mph [22.2 km/h].

MOON PHASE: Waning Crescent, 7% of the moon was illuminated.

DISTANCE FROM SHORE: 100 yards

DEPTH OF WATER: Chest-deep

TIME: 14h00

NARRATIVE: Jason King and his 28-year-old brother, Brian Crawford, were wade-fishing in Sarasota Bay. After catching three trout and a redfish, King noticed a loggerhead turtle coming up to the surface nearby. Moments later a shark grabbed a 27-inch trout on stringer tied to King's waist. After the first shark ate all but the head of the trout, a second shark came from behind King and grabbed the remaining three fish, stringer, King and all. The shark towed King out to 10- to 15-foot-deep water. "I couldn't keep my head above water," said King. "I jerked on the knot on the stringer until I was able to untie it. It scared me worse than anything in my life".

King later said that he would never go fishing without a knife again. "I just want to give my advice to carry a knife," King said. Not for the shark, he said, but to cut off the stringer full of fish once it's gotten a shark's attention. "Thank God I got that knot untied."

INJURY: No injury. The only wound King suffered were to his pride for losing his prize 27-inch trout.

SPECIES: The incident involved a 1.8 m to 2.1 m [6' to 7'] hammerhead shark. Hammerheads, in the six- to eight-foot range (known as sub-adults) are found in lower Tampa Bay at this time of the year, according to Bob Hueter of Mote Labs. The sharks follow the scent of fish up-current; it wasn't an "attack" on the fisherman, just a shark responding to fish in the water.

SOURCE: Bradenton Herald, August 12, 1996, page L2

