

ACTIVITY: Surf skiing

CASE: GSAF 1997.10.28.b

DATE: Tuesday October 28, 1997

LOCATION: The incident took place at Cottesloe Beach, five kilometres [three miles] south of Perth, Western Australia.

NAME: Brian Sierakowski

DESCRIPTION: He is a 51-year-old barrister.

SKI: The surf ski was a two-seater craft, a cross between a kayak and a surfboard.

BACKGROUND

MOON PHASE: New Moon, October 31, 1997

DISTANCE FROM SHORE: 200 meters [220 yards]

TIME: Early morning.

NARRATIVE: Brian Sierakowski and Barney Hanrahan, a plastic surgeon, were paddling when the shark bit their fiberglass surf ski. "He missed my feet by about one foot," said Sierakowski. "As we attempted to maintain balance he kept chewing into the ski, and chewed it in half. Then his tail hit me across the head," he said.

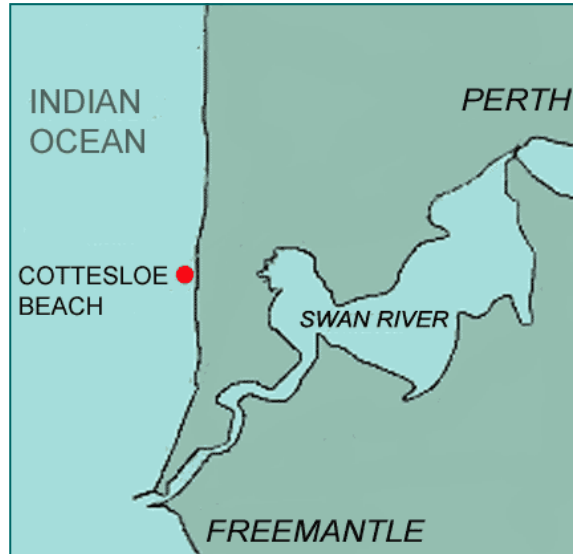
They were rescued by a prominent Perth lawyer and his wife who were paddling nearby on another surf ski.

INJURY: Sierakowski sustained minor facial injuries. Hanrahan was not injured.

SPECIES INVOLVED: The incident involved a white shark, about five metres [16.5'] in length.

COMMENT: Police said the shark, which was seen twice after the incident, appeared to be in an aggressive mood and on Sunday it attacked a sea lion not far from shore. Beach inspector Stephen Hopkins warned beachgoers to stay out of the water and said the incident should cause Perth swimmers to "show sharks more respect."

CASE INVESTIGATOR: Terry Peake, GSAF



Brian Sierakowski's facial injuries sustained during the incident.