

ACTIVITY: Surfing

CASE: GSAF 2001.01.09

DATE: Tuesday January 9, 2001

LOCATION: The incident took place in the Pacific Ocean at Sunset Cliffs, Point Loma, San Diego, California, USA. Sunset Cliffs is at the end of Highway 8 in Pacific Beach off Garnet Avenue.



NAME: Larry McCash

DESCRIPTION: The surfer is a 27-year-old male. He was wearing a wetsuit and booties. This was his first time surfing, although he told Chief Lifeguard Chris Brewster that he was an avid river paddler.

BACKGROUND

MOON PHASE: Full Moon, January 9, 2001

SEA CONDITIONS: The surf was four- to six-feet. "It's surprising he made it out at all, 'cause it was fairly solid," said Brewster. "He could have been taken straight out by a rip." said Brewster.

DISTANCE FROM SHORE: 75 yards

NARRATIVE: McCash borrowed a board, and after a half-hour in the surf, he decided to call it a day. On his way in, he suddenly felt a violent tugging on his leash, and turned around and encountered a shark. He said that he went into survival mode and punched the shark three times in the side, and it swam away.

INJURY: The surfer's foot was bruised.

DAMAGE TO SURFBOARD: The board was already dinged, and the incident apparently resulted in another small "leash ding" in the board.

SPECIES INVOLVED: The surfer described the shark as a "black finned shark" about six to eight feet in length. Brewster said that he has "no reason not to believe" McCash's story and that "it did fit with the pattern of a white shark attack."

CASE INVESTIGATORS: M. Sanders; Ralph Collier