

**ACTIVITY:** Surfing

**CASE:** [GSAF 2001.04.12.d](#)

**DATE:** Thursday April 12, 2001

**LOCATION:** The incident took place in the Atlantic Ocean off the 2600 block of North Atlantic Avenue, New Smyrna Beach, Volusia County, Florida, USA.

29.0°N, 81.0°W

**NAME:** Richard Spence

**DESCRIPTION:** The surfer is a 38-year-old white male from Orlando, Florida. He was wearing grey and white swim trunks.

**BACKGROUND**

**MOON PHASE:** Waning Gibbous, 79% of the moon's visible disk illuminated. Last Quarter, April 15, 2001.

**SEA CONDITIONS:** The water was murky and underwater visibility was very poor.

**ENVIRONMENT:** Shark bites are common just south of Ponce de Leon Inlet because it is a prime site for fish spawning and schooling baitfish. It has been suggested that sharks may perceive the dangling feet and hands of surfers in the breaking surf and low visibility water for injured fish.

**TIME:** 16h45

**NARRATIVE:** Spence was paddling in when he felt a sharp pain in his foot and noticed he was bleeding.

**INJURY:** The surfer sustained a one-inch lacerations on his right foot.

**TREATMENT:** The surfer drove himself to Bert Fish Medical Center in New Smyrna Beach where he was treated and released.

**SPECIES INVOLVED:** Although there was initially some question whether the injury was caused by a shark, it was later believed that the incident involved a juvenile blacktip shark or a spinner shark.

**SOURCE:** Orlando Sentinel, April 14, 2001, page A1

**CASE INVESTIGATOR:** Captain Scott Petersohn

