

ACTIVITY: Surfing

CASE: [GSAF 2001.09.15.a](#)

DATE: Saturday September 15, 2001

LOCATION: The incident took place in the Atlantic Ocean at the northern end of Topsail Beach in Onslow County, North Carolina, USA.
34.5°N, 77.5°W



NAME: Dale Fulcher, Jr.

DESCRIPTION: He is a 16-year-old male from Sneads Ferry.

BACKGROUND

WEATHER: At 13h56, New River MCAS recorded mostly cloudy skies and seven-mile visibility. The air temperature was 72°F [22.2°C], dew point 55.9°F [13.3°C], humidity 57%, sea level pressure 30.04 inches [1017.2 hPa], and wind direction was North.

MOON PHASE: New Moon, September 17, 2001.

TIME: 13h45

NARRATIVE: “I was just beyond the breakers, laying on my board and paddling, when I felt a huge tug on my foot. It came up real fast — splash! — and then it was gone. I knew I was hurt right away,” said Fulcher. Although the surfer never saw the shark, the splash from the fish was very large. “I paddled back to shore as fast as I could,” he said.

INJURY: George Moore of the NTB Volunteer Fire and Rescue Squad said, “When I looked at [the wound] and saw the bite marks, I thought the bite was probably from a shark due to the curvature of the bite and the wound.”

FIRST AID: Bleeding profusely, Fulcher ran to the house of a friend on Oyster Lane, Dan LeDuc Jr. and they called another neighborhood youth to help. Joel Collins said, “They yelled over and asked if I was a Boy Scout and said ‘he’s been bitten by a shark’”. Although thinking they were joking, Collins went over to help. Fulcher had wrapped his leash around his ankle as a tourniquet; Collins removed it and used direct pressure to stop the bleeding. Then he got his father, Rev. Dwayne Collins, and 911 was called. The Rescue Squad treated the surfer until paramedics arrived.

TREATMENT: Fulcher underwent surgery the same day to repair torn tendons in his big toe.

SPECIES INVOLVED: Not identified.

SOURCE: Topsail Voice, September 19, 2001

CASE INVESTIGATOR: Clay Creswell, Global Shark Accident File