

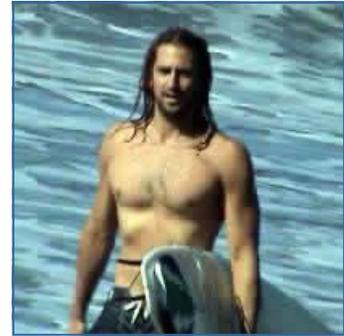
ACTIVITY: Surfing

CASE: GSAF 2003.09.21

DATE: September 21, 2003

LOCATION: The incident took place in the Atlantic Ocean just south of Ponce Inlet, New Smyrna Beach, Volusia County, Florida, USA.

29.1°N, 81.0°W



Jimmy Arnold

NAME: Laurie 'Jimmy' Arnold

DESCRIPTION: The surfer is a 21-year-old male from Green Cove Springs. He was wearing blue board shorts.

BACKGROUND

WEATHER: It was a warm, sunny day and there was an inshore breeze.

MOON PHASE: Waning Crescent, 24% of the moon's visible disk illuminated. New Moon, September 26, 2003

SEA CONDITIONS: The water was murky brown. The tide was going out through the inlet,

ENVIRONMENT: Baitfish were being swept out of the inlet by the tide.

DISTANCE FROM SHORE: 150 yards

DEPTH OF WATER: Four feet

TIME: 11h45

NARRATIVE: Earlier in the day Arnold had participated in a surfing contest and decided to spend the afternoon riding the waves down the shore. Surfers were scattered about, though not too far from each other. Arnold was lying prone on the board, waiting for a wave and paddling with his hands, his feet trailing along off the side of the board.

The shark bit his foot, holding it down in the water. (Arnold described the sensation as like having several cinder blocks tied to his leg.) Instinctively, he held onto his board, and the shark let go. Seconds later fish were jumping out of the water around his surfboard. Sharks were in the area, chasing anything that was moving. It took Jimmy a second to realize what had happened. He didn't immediately feel any pain but then he realized that his bloodied foot was still dangling in the water, and quickly pulled it out.

He yelled to some other surfers but they were too far away to hear over the sound over the wind and waves. He started to paddle to shore, but after a few strokes he saw another explosion of baitfish a few feet away and paused. A wave came along and pushed him toward shore. On the way back he alerted other surfers that a shark had bitten him. He reached shore without assistance.

INJURY: There were 25 lacerations on the dorsum and lateral left foot. The lacerations ranged from a half-inch to 1.5 inches in length.

FIRST AID: The beach patrol met him as he reached the shore. They wrapped his foot in a towel packed with ice.

TREATMENT: The surfer was taken in a private vehicle to a nearby hospital where his wounds were repaired with 50 sutures.

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SPECIES INVOLVED: Not identified

REPORTED BY: Daytona Beach News Journal, September 22, 2003, page 1C;
Underwater Times, November 3, 2003,
http://www.underwatertimes.com/news.php?article_id=10863094725

CASE INVESTIGATOR: Captain Scott Petersohn, GSAF

