ACTIVITY: Surfing
CASE: GSAF 2005.08.012
DATE: Friday August 12, 2005
LOCATION: The incident took place in the Atlantic Ocean ff Texas Avenue at Carolina Beach, New Hanover County, North Carolina, USA.
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NAME: Chris O'Connor
DESCRIPTION: He is a 16-year-old male from Carolina Beach. He is 5'7", weighs 116 pounds and was wearing green and blue baggie board shorts, and wore a black leash on his left ankle. The surfer was not wearing any jewelry and had no injuries prior to the incident.
SURFBOARD: A 6'2" Greenroom twinfin surfboard. The upper surface is blue, the under surface and fins are white.

BACKGROUND
WEATHER: It was a sunny hazy day. There was no wind and visibility was about five miles. The air temperature was 80ºF [27ºC], Dew Point was 73ºF [23ºC], relative humidity was 78% and the pressure (altimeter) was 30.07 in Hg (1018 hPa).
MOON PHASE: First quarter.
SEA CONDITIONS: There was a brownish tinge to the water and was "not too clear".

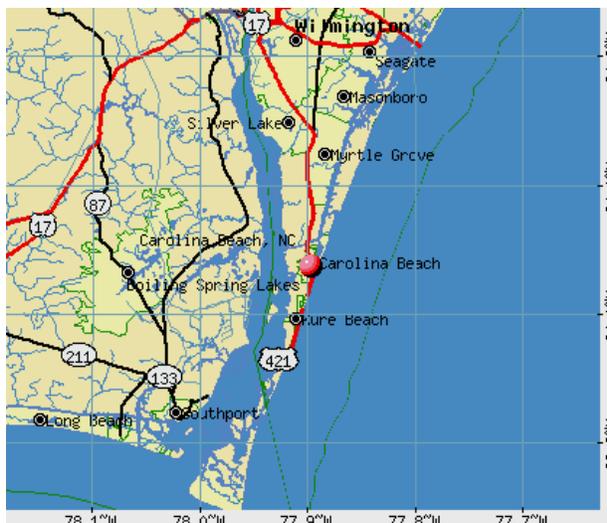The sea surface was calm and the estimated water temperature was 85º to 88ºF. High tide was at 13h17.
ENVIRONMENT: There may be a sandbar in the area where the incident took place, but there were no rocks or pier in the area. The surfer does not remember if there was any fishing activity near the incident site and no dolphins were seen in the area. The surfer noted an unusual amount of schooling "minnow-sized" fish where he was surfing and jellyfish, "a species with tentacles".
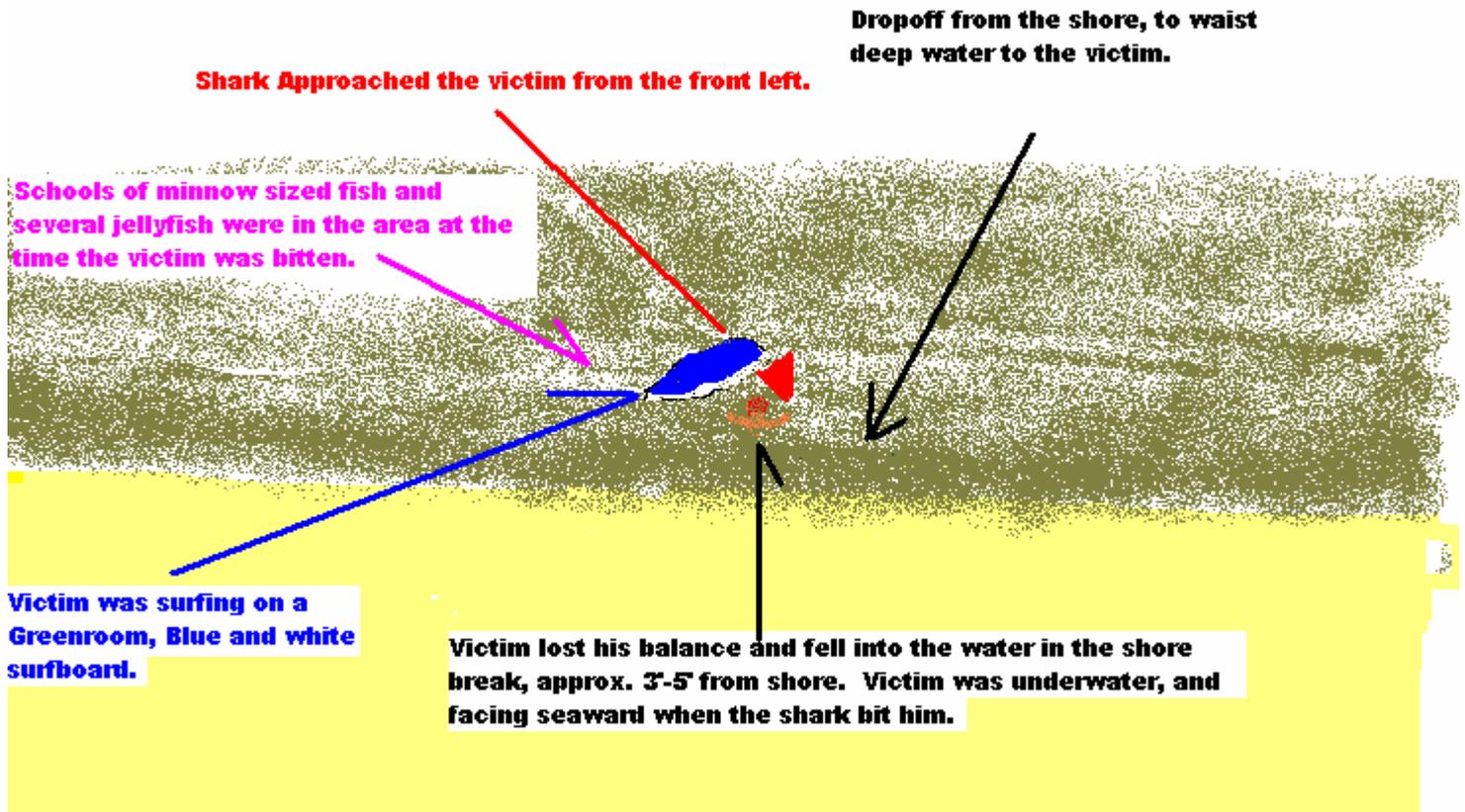**DISTANCE FROM SHORE:** Three to five feet, at a drop off
DEPTH OF WATER: "Waist-deep"
TIME: 11h30 [Between 11h00 and 12h00]

NARRATIVE: Some 50 to 100 people were on the beach, and some people were wading >30' from Chris. He had been surfing with friends for a about three hours, but his friends had left the water and remained in order to surf a few more waves. He noticed an unusual amount of baitfish around him in the water and several jellyfish in the area. Chris was fixing to come in for the day, so he caught a wave back to shore. When he got in the shore break he lost his balance and fell into the water. At that point he was facing seaward and

underwater, when he felt something grab his right arm. At first, Chris thought that it was his surfboard fin that had touched his arm, but when he got out of the water he noticed that he was bleeding "pretty bad". He believes the shark approached from the front and left "from seaward to shoreward."

Dropoff from the shore, to waist deep water to the victim.

Shark Approached the victim from the front left.

Schools of minnow sized fish and several jellyfish were in the area at the time the victim was bitten.

Victim was surfing on a Greenroom, Blue and white surfboard.

Victim lost his balance and fell into the water in the shore break, approx. 3'-5' from shore. Victim was underwater, and facing seaward when the shark bit him.

INJURY: Approximately five crescent-shaped wounds to the right forearm. The space between the individual teeth was 3/8" and the end of the wound. There was a 1/2" laceration to the side of the wrist with two puncture wounds, one above and one below the laceration.

FIRST AID: Chris started to walk home and was about halfway there, with blood dripping off his fingers, when a man stopped to ask if he was dizzy and then carried Chris' surfboard to Chris' house. At home, Chris called his mother and the man called a lifeguard. The lifeguard called New Hanover County EMS. Chris was driven to Alabama Avenue, Carolina Beach, where EMS officials wrapped his arm in bandages. Chris' sister took him to the hospital.

TREATMENT: More than an hour elapsed from the time Chris was bitten until he arrived at the hospital, New Hanover Regional Medical Center. He was treated in the Emergency Room by Michael Ward, M.D. of Eastern Carolina Emergency Physicians, PA. Chris received four binding strips for his wounds and was discharged.

SPECIES INVOLVED: Not identified, according to one witness, the shark appeared to be

about 1.8 metres [six feet] in length. Chris was bitten as soon as he fell from his board; he believes that he frightened the shark and it bit him reflexively.

SOURCES: Chris O'Connor; WECT TV6;
http://www.wect.com/Global/story.asp?S=3717144&nav=2gQcdI1p

1/2 " gash to the left side arm at the wrist. Two puncture wounds, one above and one below slash.

5" crescent shaped puncture wounds to the left forearm.