



**ACTIVITY:** Surfing

**CASE:** [GSAF 2005.09.27.R](#)

**DATE:** Reported September 27, 2005

**LOCATION:** The incident took place in the Tasman Sea at Arakoon's Little Bay, New South Wales, Australia.

*30°53'12.23"S, 153°04'12.19"E*

**NAME:** Wal Lewis

**DESCRIPTION:** He is a 28-year-old male from South West Rocks.

#### **BACKGROUND**

**ENVIRONMENT:** "There were heaps of bait fish about and the dolphins were everywhere," said the surfer

**DISTANCE FROM SHORE:** 100 metres off the point

**NARRATIVE:** "I had been out for about an hour, and there were heaps of dolphins in the waves chasing bait fish, so when I saw a big dark shape swim under my board, I thought nothing of it," said Wal Lewis. He was surfing alone when a dark shape flashed under his board. Thinking it was a dolphin, Mr Lewis wasn't perturbed and carried on surfing. Then,

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without warning the shape returned and went for him – it was a large tiger shark. "It was right then that I saw it again coming at me from out of the face of the wave while I was sitting on my board waiting for the swell. It had a big square shaped head and I could see its rows of teeth. "The force of the shark as it brushed past knocked me off my board, but I managed to give its head a sharp nudge as it launched itself toward me. I think after that it realised that I wasn't what it normally eats, and thankfully it didn't come back."

The surfer didn't relish any second encounters and he reckons no one has ever paddled out of the water faster. "It all happened so fast, but at the same time it was like slow motion- I was just sitting there watching the dolphins when this shark had a go at me, and everything just happened like a blur," he said. "I'm lucky that it realised I wasn't a fish or a seal, because it was big and aggressive, and in that first second I really thought it was going to have me.

**INJURY:** No injury, as the shark shot past the surfer it grazed his side but he was wearing his wetsuit which protected him from the shark's hide.

**SPECIES INVOLVED:** A three-metre tiger shark

**SOURCE:** Angus Green, The Macleay Argus, 27 September 2005  
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