



**ACTIVITY:** Surfing

**CASE:** [GSAF 2006.01.18](#)

**DATE:** Wednesday January 18, 2006

**LOCATION:** The incident took place in the Pacific Ocean at Second Bowl, 'The Hook', Santa Cruz, California, USA.

*36°57.592'N, 121°57.886'W*

**NAME:** Mario Lari

## **BACKGROUND**

**WEATHER:** The sky changed from partly cloudy to clear.

**MOON PHASE:** Full Moon, January 14, 2006

**SEA CONDITIONS:** The water was warmer than usual for January, and the water was glassy. The waves were about head high and soft on the bigger sets and there was about a five-minute wait between sets.

**ENVIRONMENT:** The Hook is also known as 41st Avenue. The incident took place over a flat rock reef.

**DISTANCE FROM SHORE:** Less than 100 yards

**DEPTH:** About eight feet

**TIME:** 22h30 (10:30 pm)

**NARRATIVE:** Mario Lari and a companion were night surfing and had been in the water about 3.5 hours. Lari reported the following:

*"I had paddled out around 7:00PM. My friend was already in the water. I checked before going out, it was between 0' and 1/2' foot low tide at that point. At 9:38PM, by my watch, the moon came up. We had been about 150 yards from shore but moved-in to a little more than half that distance as the tide filled in and the bowl shifted and the shape got better. At about 10:30PM my friend took what I thought might be his last wave. I had been sitting on my board and at this point I placed my legs down to get ready (during night surfing I usually keep my feet on top of my board). My board was at a 45 degree angle away from the shore when I felt a soft push against my upper left thigh. I felt spaced wide points distributed on a rough oval shape on the top and bottom of my thigh; from the bottom of my buttocks to the middle of my thigh. It lasted but a fraction of a second and I must stress it felt extremely gentle. I started paddling toward the beach as hard as I could while trying not to keep my arms too long in the water. My legs were bent at the knee and my feet were up while paddling. I looked back once, immediately after turning around, but saw nothing. As I paddled, I yelled 'Shark!' once at the top of my lungs, but thought the noise might attract it back so I stopped; after a few more strokes I realized that my friend might have paddled back out so I started yelling 'Shark!' repeatedly as loud as I could. I paddled about half the distance to shore before a wave broke behind me and I was able to catch the white water in. Once on shore I saw my friend getting out of the water some distance away from me. I told him what had just happened. He told me he saw nothing."*

**INJURY:** The surfer was not injured by the shark.

**DAMAGE TO EQUIPMENT:** Upon close examination on the outside of the left wet-suit leg, at the height of the bottom quarter of the buttock and below the leg seam, there are two very small nicks 1/16" wide by 1/16" deep. The nicks are very similar in shape and are 9/16" apart, perpendicular to the direction of the leg, and 1 3/8" below the seam that runs the length of the leg. On the outside of the leg 8 3/16" below the two upper nicks there is a slightly larger nick 3/16" wide by 1/8" deep. It is located 2 7/16" below the previously mentioned seam. There are no other nicks, cuts, or abrasions on the outside of the wetsuit."

**SPECIES:** The diameter of the bite arch is slightly more than nine inches. A positive identification of the species of shark responsible for this incident is not possible. Ocean water activities following sunset are not recommended due to the obvious inherent risks associated with this activity. Caution should be exercised when utilizing this location for your ocean water activities.

**CASE INVESTIGATOR:** Ralph Collier