

**ACTIVITY:** Surfing

**CASE:** GSAF 2006.12.11

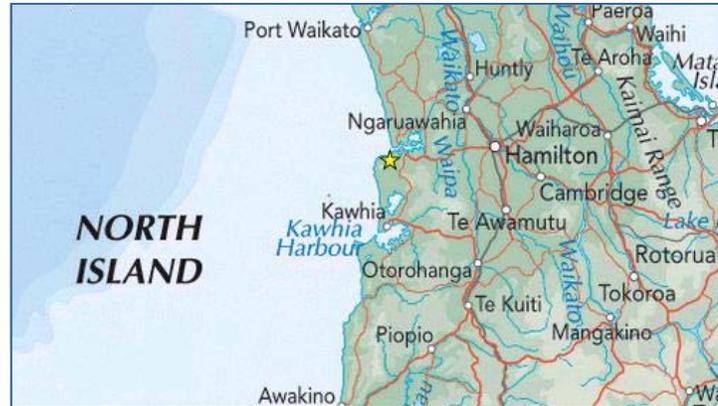
**DATE:** Monday December 11, 2006

**LOCATION:** The incident took place at Raglan, Manu Bay, North Island, New Zealand.

**NAME:** Elliot Paerata-Reid

**DESCRIPTION:** He is a 10-year-old male, the son of TV3's Melanie Reid. He is 4'7" tall, weighs 38 kg and was wearing a 3mm wetsuit and a red surfboard leash. He had no injuries prior to the incident.

**SURFBOARD:** A 5'5" Hughes (Raglan) white trifin surfboard.



## BACKGROUND

**WEATHER:** The sky was partly cloudy, and the wind was south-to-west at 20 (?)

**MOON PHASE:** Waning Gibbous, 66% of the Moon's visible disk was illuminated. Full Moon, December 6, 2006. Last Quarter, December 13, 2006.

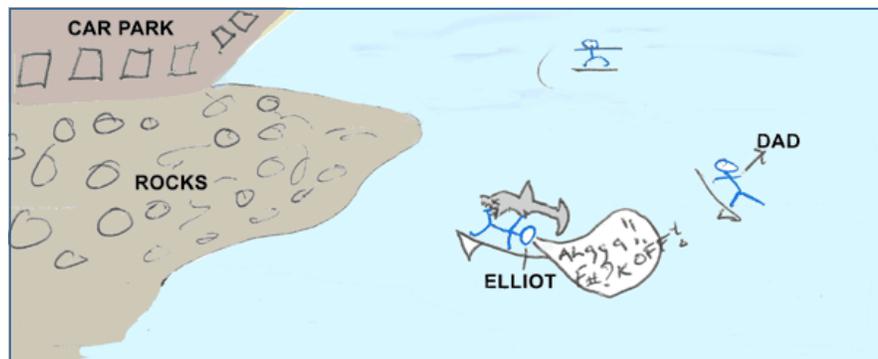
**SEA CONDITIONS:** The sea was greenish with two-foot surf. Underwater visibility was about two feet. A channel was present, and the incident took place inside the channel.

**DISTANCE FROM SHORE:** "Not far"

**DEPTH OF WATER:** Three to four feet

**TIME:** 11h00

**NARRATIVE:** Twenty to 30 people were on the beach, and another 20 people were in the water, five to six of whom were within three metres of the boy. Elliot had been in the water 15 to 20 minutes. He was facing seaward, jumping



back onto his board. said he was paddling his board when he touched what he said felt like a "slippery, rockish thing". He put his foot up "just in case". "Because he (the shark) felt me nudging him, he thought I was a seal and jumped up and bit me," Elliot said.

Elliot's father, Jamarl Paerata, was surfing nearby, and afterwards filled out the GSAF questionnaire. He wrote, "[Elliot] felt something slimy under the water, thought it was a rock, pulled his feet out of the water, and the shark followed his foot out of the water, and bit it. He then screamed. I looked over and the shark was on top him, and he was pushing it off with his hands and kicking with his feet. The shark then casually rolled over and swam off. At first, I thought it had just given him a nudge, but then I saw the blood." Elliot's father helped the boy to shore.

Jamarl also said, "I think [Elliot] stood on the shark when jumping back on his surfboard and it was just warning him to piss off. I saw the shark, which was about [Elliot's] size, maybe a bit longer than him. I don't think [the shark] was hungry; [the shark] was just cruising..."

Two other men said they also saw the incident and had seen Elliot come ashore crying. Twenty minutes later another young surfer yelled out he was being attacked by a shark, they said. "This guy yelled out 'shark attack, shark attack' and was saying a shark was pulling on his leg rope." While paddling to catch a wave, one of the men said his hand touched a shark which was circling underneath his board. Both men estimated the shark was about 1.5 metres long, smaller than the shark which bit Elliot.

**INJURY:** There were three deep cuts, two to the dorsal surface of the foot and one to the sole. One cut on the dorsal surface was repaired with three sutures, and another with two sutures. Three sutures were needed to repair the cut on the sole of the foot.

**FIRST AID / TREATMENT:** The boy felt no pain for 20 to 30 minutes. He was driven by car to Raglan Medical, arriving there two hours after he was bitten.

**SPECIES:** Not identified. According to the boy's father, the shark was about 4'10" inches in length and it was thought the incident involved either a thresher shark or a seven-gill shark. The thresher shark is unmistakable due to its very long tail, however, the description of the shark given by witnesses fits that of a seven-gill shark.

**SOURCES:** Interview with Jamarl Paerata, Otago Daily Times, 12 Dec 2006, front page.

The Southland Times, 12 Dec 2006, page 3  
<http://www.stuff.co.nz/stuff/0,2106,3897561a10,00.html>

**CASE INVESTIGATOR:** Richard Weeks, Global Shark Accident File

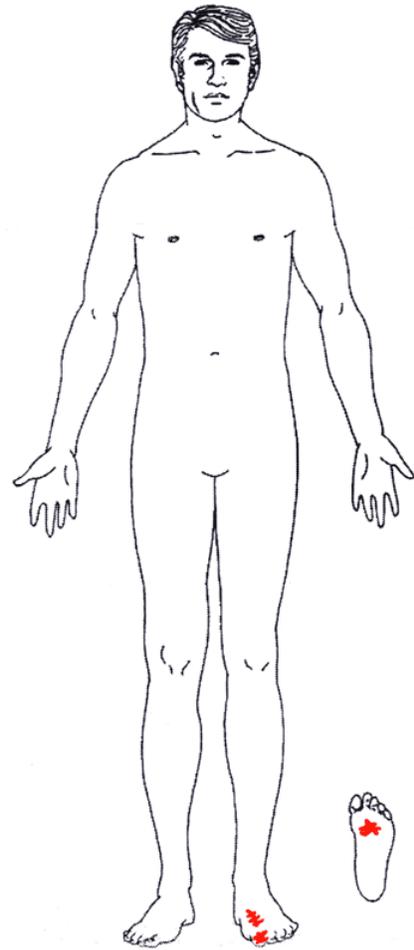


Photo / Martin Sykes

*Elliot Paerata-Reid says he will be back surfing once his injury has healed.*