

ACTIVITY: Surfing

CASE: GSAF 2009.03.01

DATE: March 1, 2009

LOCATION: North Avalon Beach, Sydney, New South Wales, Australia.

NAME: Andrew Lindop

DESCRIPTION: He is a 15-year-old male and a member of the local surf club. He was wearing a full-length steamer wetsuit.



North Avalon Beach

BACKGROUND

WEATHER: At 06h45, Sydney recorded an air temperature of 70.5°F, dew point 59°F, humidity 67%, sea level pressure 29.79in and no wind.

MOON PHASE: Waxing crescent, 17% of the Moon was illuminated. First Quarter, March 4, 2009.

SEA CONDITIONS: Warm waters - 23°C - and coastal rains had attracted large numbers of baitfish to the area, bringing marine predators with them. Local surfer Audrey Styman-Lane said she had seen sharks chasing fish at South Avalon in the past week, and the mood among surfers had become increasingly wary.

ENVIRONMENT: Avalon Beach lies between two headlands in Sydney's Northern Beaches region. According to a spokesman for NSW Primary Industries Minister the shark net at Avalon had been checked the day before the accident and it was "fine".

DISTANCE FROM SHORE: 150 metres

TIME: 06h45

NARRATIVE: Andrew Lindop and his father, Charles, were alone in the water when Andrew was bitten by a shark. Charles, who had just caught a wave, heard a scream and turned to see his son thrashing about in the water. "He held on to his board and we caught a wave and brought him on to the shore," Mr Lindop said. An onlooker remarked that the boy was conscious the entire time and joking about the size of the shark.

INJURY: Andrew sustained a massive bite to his left thigh and lacerations down to the bone on his lower leg and foot.

FIRST AID: Charles Lindop — an ironman competitor, a senior patrol captain at the Avalon Surf Club and a gold lifesaving medallion holder — stemmed the bleeding using Andrew's leg rope and another surfer's shirt as a tourniquet. He told another surfer to run to a couple who had just arrived in the car park and call an ambulance. Mr Lindop turned his son over so his leg was elevated as they waited for the ambulance. Andrew remained calm despite the pain, which he rated as a 10 on a 1-10 scale. "His dad was calming him and the boy was in shock. His leg was a mess," surfer Dylan Cram said. He saved his son's life. "He was telling us what to do - hold this, do that." Andrew was airlifted to Royal North Shore Hospital in stable condition.

SPECIES: Andrew's father said the accident happened quickly and his son was unable to identify the size or species of shark. It is believed the shark was about 6.5ft long but police

have yet to determine the species responsible. After the accident, police closed five beaches on Sydney's northern peninsula. A surf lifesaver helicopter mounted an aerial search for the predator, but failed to spot the shark. Later, Maroubra beach, to the city's south, was closed and scores of swimmers herded out of the water after an unconfirmed report of another shark accident.

In the wake of this accident, the third in Sydney in as many weeks, the NSW government came under fire for failing to protect swimmers. The NSW opposition questioned the state of shark nets off the city's beaches. "We have a situation that shark nets are deteriorating, the minister has not renewed the quota on catching sharks, and the time of the Westpac shark (aerial) patrol has been cut," opposition industry spokesman Duncan Gay said.

But NSW Primary Industries Minister Ian Macdonald said aerial surveillance was ineffective at dawn and dusk, when all three recent accidents occurred, as neither helicopters nor fixed-wing planes could spot the predators at those times. "That's why the government is focused on its shark meshing program, and resourcing our lifeguards with better equipment," Mr Macdonald said in a statement. "There is no doubt the shark meshing program we have in place on 51 beaches from Newcastle to Wollongong is extremely successful, with only one fatal shark attack on a meshed beach in NSW since the program began in 1937." The shark net at Avalon had been checked the day before the attack and was fine, a spokesman for Mr Macdonald said. The minister's office also said about 95 per cent of the government's shark fishing quota consisted of harmless shark species, so increasing quotas would not prevent attacks. "Great whites aren't included in it, they are protected," his spokesman said.



Andrew Lindop, 16, and his father Charles have urged the Government to set up a communication system so surfers can make informed decisions. *Photo: Frank Redward*

Another shark attack hits Sydney

A young surfer has suffered severe leg lacerations in a shark attack on Sydney's northern beaches.

A NSW ambulance spokesman said a boy was being airlifted to hospital after being attacked in the water at the northern end of Avalon Beach, in the city's north, about 6.45am (AEDT).

'A young male has suffered severe upper leg injuries,' the spokesman told AAP.

Gordon Aspinall from the NSW Ambulance Service later said the boy had lacerations to his thigh.

'The boy is being airlifted to Royal North Shore Hospital,' Mr Aspinall told Network Seven.

'It's hard to ascertain the extent of the damage but the young boy is in a stable condition.

'The young lad was surfing with his father, that's all I know at this stage.'

Nick Miller from the Avalon Beach Surf Lifesaving Club said the surfer was in the water with his father when the shark attacked.

'The father and son were out surfing this morning. They are members of our surf club as well,' Mr Miller told ABC Radio.

'The quick news I got, without being a ghoul, is that it attacked his young son.

'It got him around the top of his leg and his calf muscle and the father came in and dragged him in.

'They've just taken him to hospital in a helicopter.'

It is the third serious shark attack in Sydney in less than three weeks.

Navy clearance diver Paul de Gelder was lucky to survive after being mauled by a 2.7-metre bull shark off Garden Island, in Sydney Harbour, on February 11, causing him to lose a hand and leg. Just a day later, 33-year-old surfer Glenn Orgias was attacked by a 2.5m great white that shook him and nearly severed his left hand.

The Sydney Harbour Swim Classic is scheduled to go ahead on Sunday despite the two attacks.

SOURCE: Sky News, Sunday March 1, 2009,



Top photo taken from Andrew's MySpace

Teen bitten on leg in Sydney shark attack

There has been another shark attack on Sydney's northern beaches.

Ambulance crews were called to the scene at Avalon Beach where a 15-year-old boy was bitten on the leg.

A spokesman for the New South Wales Ambulance Service, Brett Garvy, says they found a young man with severe leg injuries.

"We're not sure if he was on his own at this stage but he's suffering upper-right thigh injuries which are quite severe and paramedics are frantically working on him and currently waiting for him to be airlifted out of there," he said.

Witness David Rundle says the boy has multiple injuries.

"He's got a wound on the thigh which is around about the spread of your hand, he's got a wound on the top of the leg muscle just under the knee which is about the size of your fist and then he's got a wound right on the ankle as it joins the foot which is about half the size of the fist," he said.

Vic Miller from the Avalon Beach Surf Life Saving Club says the young man's father dragged him to the shore after he was attacked while surfing.

"I think it was lucky the father is a member of the surf club so he didn't panic and he came in and got things organised," he said.

Mr Miller says no one else was in the water at the time of the attack. There were two other shark attacks in Sydney waters last month.

Sydney Harbour Swim

Organisers of today's Sydney Harbour Swim are playing down fears of further shark attacks, after a Navy diver was mauled two weeks ago.

More than 500 competitors are expected to take part in the race, which starts on the Opera House steps.

The event's organiser, Adam Wilson, says shark spotters and underwater patrols are some of the extra measures being taken to protect entrants.

"Really, they're not going to spot anything. They're on the course during the day just in case we do need to help anybody get out of the water or bring them into one of the rubber boats," he said.

"These are the general public swimming in this so we've got to make sure for their safety more so than what's in the water, we're looking after the swimmers."

SOURCE: ABC News,
<http://www.abc.net.au/news/stories/2009/03/01/2504173.htm?section=australia>

Shark attack at Avalon Beach in Sydney



TEENAGE surfer Andrew Lindop will undergo surgery after suffering severe leg lacerations in a shark attack on Sydney's northern beaches.

A NSW ambulance spokesman said a Andrew, 15, was airlifted to hospital after being attacked in the water at the northern end of Avalon Beach, in the city's north, about 6.45am today.

"A young male has suffered severe upper leg injuries," the spokesman said. Gordon Aspinall from the NSW Ambulance Service later said the boy had lacerations to his thigh.

"The boy is being airlifted to Royal North Shore Hospital," Mr Aspinall told Network Seven. "It's hard to ascertain the extent of the damage but the young boy is in a stable condition.

"The young lad was surfing with his father, that's all I know at this stage." Nick Miller from the Avalon Beach Surf Lifesaving Club said the surfer was in the water with his father when the shark attacked.

"The father and son were out surfing this morning. They are members of our surf club as well," Mr Miller told ABC Radio. "The quick news I got, without being a ghoul, is that it attacked his young son. It got him around the top of his leg and his calf muscle and the father came in and dragged him in. They've just taken him to hospital in a helicopter."

Onlookers wrapped the teenager's wounds in beach towels before emergency services arrived. A teenage boy told Channel 7 he watched the aftermath, with ambulance officers treating the boy on the beach. "They were just tending to them and we were just watching from up here thinking what's happened," he said. "And then, on the way here, a surfer said there had been a shark attack."

The father said the attack happened quickly and his son was unable to identify the size or species of shark, Seven said. No one else was in the water at the beach at the time. But a short time later, life savers had to call a swimmer out of the surf. The beach remains empty, with swimmers and surfers warned not to enter the water.

It is the third serious shark attack in Sydney in less than three weeks. Navy clearance diver Paul de Gelder was lucky to survive after being mauled by a 2.7-metre bull shark off Garden Island, in Sydney Harbour, on February 11, causing him to lose a hand and leg.

Just a day later, 33-year-old surfer Glenn Orgias was attacked by a 2.5m great white that shook him and nearly severed his left hand.

The Sydney Harbour Swim Classic is scheduled to go ahead on today despite the two attacks.

SOURCE: Chelsea White, The Sunday Telegraph, March 1, 2009

Blame laid over shark attacks

Surfwatch Australia director Michael Brown today criticised the NSW Government for responding slowly to shark attacks and sightings. "The Government's shark spotting and surveillance measures are non-existent," Mr Brown said, as the victim of Sydney's third shark attack in three weeks recovered in hospital. "I don't think they're particularly well organised when it comes to responding to this type of situation."

NSW attacks this year His patrol saw no sharks or visible fish activity when it went out today, he said. "Everything is looking very calm this morning," Mr Brown said. "Yesterday there was a lot of bait fish activity ... but this morning things are looking very quiet and there doesn't seem to be a lot of bait fish in the water."

NSW Department of Primary Industries shark biologist Vic Peddemors rejected calls for increasing aerial patrols over Sydney beaches. "It's a well proven fact that aerial surveys do not work," he said. "Yesterday they knew there was a shark in the area. They were out there soon afterwards and no one spotted it. "If [aerial patrols] are so effective how come they weren't able to sight the shark that did the damage yesterday?"

Victim making jokes: sister Andrew Lindop, the teenager mauled off a northern Sydney beach yesterday, is making jokes from his hospital bed after undergoing emergency surgery, his sister says. Andrew, 15, was attacked by a two-metre long shark during an early morning surf with his father off Sydney's North Avalon beach yesterday. His father, Charles, got the wounded boy to shore after the shark bit his left thigh to the bone. Andrew was taken to Royal North Shore Hospital (RNSH) where today he was in a satisfactory condition in a general ward after undergoing a four-hour operation.

His sister Sarah, 16, said the surgery had gone well, although he might need more later in the week. "He's been really, really brave," she told the Seven Network. "He's joking and stuff. He's in really good spirits. I don't know how much of all of this he'll remember, but he's doing really well." Sarah said Andrew routinely went for a surf in the morning. "It was lucky dad was there because often he would go out by himself," she said. "There's been a lot about [the danger of] going out really early and stuff but at the end of the day it's everyone's routine here. That's what the culture is." Sarah said she still couldn't believe the attack had happened and many people were in shock. She said she had never seen a shark before and the attack would not keep her out of the water. "We all spend a lot of time down here," she said. "I don't know how great it will be but we'll get back in there."

Great white? Mr Peddemors said there was a good chance the shark was a great white but speculation was unhelpful. "I'm just amazed that people just say it's a great white ... it could be one of any three species out in the open ocean," Dr Peddemors said, referring to the great white, bull and tiger sharks, the only three capable of eating large mammals.

Dr Peddemors will visit Royal North Shore Hospital today to examine photographs of Andrew's wound. "The Royal North Shore surgeons took photographs for me and I imagine I'll look at those today," Dr Peddemors said. "From that we can hopefully reconstruct the attack sequence, get an idea of the type of shark involved and, if there's sufficient information, then the approximate size of the shark involved."

Net checked day before On average, about six sharks a month are caught in the nets off Sydney. "The nets aren't deteriorating," a spokesman for NSW Primary Industries Minister Ian

Macdonald said. "The one at Avalon was checked the day before."

"I don't know how much of all of this he'll remember, but he's doing really well." Sarah said her brother routinely went for a surf in the morning, often by himself, and was lucky his dad had gone with him on Sunday. Immediately after the attack, Mr Lindop dragged his son from the water and off-duty surf club members helped care for him until paramedics arrived. "There's been a lot about (the danger of) going out really early and stuff but at the end of the day it's everyone's routine here, that's what the culture is," Sarah said.

The Environmental Protection Authority, which is analysing the bite, will release its findings within days, but it is expected to confirm a great white was the culprit.

Navy clearance diver Paul de Gelder lost a hand and a leg and was lucky to survive after being mauled by a 2.7-metre bull shark in Sydney Harbour on February 11. Just a day later, 33-year-old surfer Glenn Orgias was attacked at Bondi Beach by a 2.5-metre great white that shook him and nearly severed his left hand.

SOURCE: Georgina Robinson, Brisbane Times, March 2, 2009

Shark attack victim keen to return to Samoa

Andrew Lindop was barely out of surgery on Sunday, recovering from a shark attack at Avalon Beach, when he started planning a surfing trip to Samoa.

After a hour operation on Sunday afternoon to repair the bone-deep gashes on his left thigh, Andrew, 15, was released into the general wards of Royal North Shore Hospital and saw some of his year 10 classmates from St Augustine's College.

Shark attack: surfers undeterred

Two of his friends, Dylan Gagen and Nick Baker, said Andrew was back to his old self: telling jokes and talking about getting back into the surf. "He definitely wants to get back into surfing as soon as he can," Dylan said. "He's already been talking about his next trip to Samoa. He went a couple of months ago and was saying how much he wants to go back."

Although he was unsure how long it would take Andrew to be able to walk properly, Nick said he was coping with the attack mentally. "He'll be a bit nervous but knowing him, he'll keep going with it," he said. In a postcode where surfing is more a way of life than a hobby, Andrew's efforts in surviving the shark attack and getting to the shore have already earned him much respect.

Nick said that the small St Augustine's school community was preoccupied with the incident yesterday. "Everyone's thinking of him and everyone's asking how he is, but now he's all right I'm sure everyone will be pretty relieved," he said. "It was weird finding out about it, but everyone's been sending him text messages."

SOURCE: Samoa Observer,
http://www.samoobserver.ws/index.php?view=article&id=5194%3Ashark-attack-victim-&option=com_content&Itemid=66

Award for surfing bravery

SOME say there is no stronger bond than between a father and his son.

And there's perhaps no better testament to that than when on the morning of March 1, 2009 Avalon's Charles Lindop rescued his then 15-year-old son, Andrew, after he was attacked by a shark off Avalon Beach.

Yesterday, Mr Lindop was named one of 53 recipients nationally of the Commendation For Brave Conduct award, part of the federal 2011 Australian Bravery Decorations.



Charles Lindop rescued his son Andrew, 17, in March 2009 from a shark attack.

Mr Lindop said he was humbled to receive the award and said he didn't think twice when he swam to the aid of his son and pulled him to shore after he had been severely bitten on his left leg by a 2.6m great white. "From my perspective I was put in a situation where I could or couldn't have saved the life of my son," Mr Lindop said. "I doubt that any other parent wouldn't do the same as I did ... parental instinct is bloody strong and I love both my son and my daughter. "If it was somebody else's kid I would have done the same thing and I'm sure all the other bravery award recipients would say the same ... I'm very humbled."

The keen surfers were about 200m from shore, 15m apart, when Andrew prepared to catch a wave and the drama unfolded, with Andrew yelling to his dad as the sea turned red. A stunned Mr Lindop saw the effects of the shark splashing next to his son before swimming straight towards him. He then helped pull his son into shore before the Avalon Beach Surf Life Saving Club member put his club training to good use.

Mr Lindop, who praised his son's bravery and calmness during the ordeal, positioned his son's leg in an upward direction on the beach, bandaged it to reduce the loss of blood and gave his son oxygen before an ambulance arrived.

Andrew, 17, said he was proud of his dad and couldn't have thought of anyone better to be by his side if he was ever attacked by a shark again. "If it was to happen, he'll know what to do again and will be even better," Andrew said.

HOW IT HAPPENED

- *Mr Lindop and son Andrew went out for a morning surf at Avalon Beach on March 1, 2009
- *Mr Lindop swam to Andrew from 15m away when his son cried for help after being bitten by a shark
- *The pair hurriedly swam in to shore together not knowing whether the shark had left the area
- *Mr Lindop acted quickly and rationally to bandage his son's leg and directed onlookers to get medical equipment and call 000.

SOURCE: The Manly Daily, March 11, 2011; <http://manly-daily.whereilive.com.au/news/story/dad-puts-himself-in-danger-to-rescue-his-son-from-shark/>