

ACTIVITY: Kayaking

CASE: GSAF 2010.08.02.b

DATE: August 2, 2010

LOCATION: The incident took place in the Pacific Ocean towards oil rig *Hondo*, five nautical miles from Gaviota, California, USA.
34°23'50.08"N, 120°7'20.51"W

NAME: Duane Strosaker

DESCRIPTION: He is a male from Irvine, California

KAYAK: He was in a 17.5-foot long by 21-inch wide sea kayak with enclosed cockpit. The kayak is made of fiberglass and plywood, and painted red. He was using a Greenland style paddle with long narrow blades.

BACKGROUND

WEATHER: It was foggy and the air temperature was about 65°F

SEA CONDITIONS: The sea was calm surface temperature was about 62°F, water visibility was good

ENVIRONMENT: Dozen sea lions at mooring buoy for oil rig *Hondo*. There was no deep water drop-off nearby, no kelp in the vicinity, nor was there any fishing activity.

DISTANCE FROM SHORE: Five nautical miles

DEPTH OF WATER: 100 fathoms, but the incident took place at the surface.

TIME: 12h40

NARRATIVE: "I left oil rig *Hondo* in my sea kayak at about noon to begin the seven-nautical-mile crossing at a heading of 300 degrees to get back to Gaviota State Beach," reported Duane. "Without warning at about 12:40PM, when I was around five nautical miles from Gaviota State Beach, a great white shark, which I estimated to be at least 15 feet long, bit and held onto my kayak. It attacked from my left side, with its head coming up from the water only a few feet from my kayak. It bit my kayak where my left foot was located inside the hull, and its mouth wrapped half way around the hull. There was not a hard impact. The shark held onto my kayak for 10 to 15 seconds, during which it seemed relaxed and was not moving. Its head was huge. I put the left tip of my paddle against the shark's head, and I thought about hitting the shark, but I didn't want to anger it or make it thrash. After the longest 10 to 15 seconds in my life, the shark gently let go of the kayak and slid back into the water. I wasn't knocked off balance and did not have to brace. A few seconds later and about 15 to 20 feet in front of my kayak, I saw the tail fin of the shark break the surface and powerfully whip around, like the shark was coming back at me for a second strike, but it never happened. After waiting a few seconds I started paddling again. Frequently, I checked behind me to see if the shark was following, but I never saw it again."



INJURY: The kayaker was not injured.

DAMAGE TO KAYAK: “My kayak had teeth marks and punctures on the top and bottom, and water was leaking into it,” said Duane.

SPECIES: According to the kayaker, the incident involved a white shark about 15 feet in length.

CASE INVESTIGATOR: Ralph Collier