

ACTIVITY: Surfing

CASE: GSAF 2011.10.11

DATE: Tuesday October 11, 2011

LOCATION: The accident took place in the Atlantic Ocean at Adams Street, Cape Canaveral, Brevard County, Florida, USA.

NAME: Tim Riley

DESCRIPTION: He is a 56-year-old male, 5'6" tall and weighs 140 lbs. He was wearing orange white and brown surfer's baggies and grey/black rash guard top. He had no injuries prior to the accident.

SURFBOARD: He was using a 6'8" board. It was white with four fins. He wore a clear white leash attached to his left ankle.

BACKGROUND

WEATHER: The sky was partly cloudy and the air temperature was about 78°F. At 11h55, Cocoa Beach recorded partly cloudy skies and 10-mile visibility. The air temperature was 84.2°F, dew point 75.7°F, humidity 76%, sea level pressure 29.85 inches and wind direction was South at 10.4 mph.

MOON PHASE: Full Moon

SEA CONDITIONS: The sea was brown and murky with zero visibility and choppy surf. The sea surface temperature was 76°F, estimated.

ENVIRONMENT: "It's mullet season," said Riley. "We have seen schools of mullet and other baitfish outside the surf zone, with multiple predators, including sharks, tarpon, other fish as well as bird activity. This day there were surfcasting fishermen on the beach nearby which may have attracted the shark."

DISTANCE FROM SHORE: 200 feet (in the beach break)

DEPTH OF WATER: Five feet

TIME: 10h00

NARRATIVE: Eight to 10 people were on the beach, and two people were in the water. Riley had been in the water for 30 minutes and was parallel to shore, sitting on his surfboard with feet dangling in the water. The shark approached from the shore and very deliberately clamped down on the surfer's foot. The shark grabbed his foot "from the inside arch area, pulled as though to take my foot, then released, all within about one second," said Riley. "I felt the swirl of water as it swam away." The surfer believes that, due to the poor visibility, the shark mistook his foot as food. "This makes sense based on the fact that it released my foot after a very short time (one or two seconds) as though it was surprised," he said.

INJURY: All 16 wounds were on the dorsal surface of his left foot. "Only two of [the wounds] were more than simple punctures," said the surfer.

TREATMENT: His injury was cleaned and treated at MediFast Urgent care in Cocoa Beach. His doctor, Jon Lamb, believes the wound was caused by a shark.

SPECIES: Although the surfer didn't see the shark, he is an experienced fisherman and diver and thinks the accident involved a shark approximately three feet in length.

SOURCE: Tim Riley



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