

**ACTIVITY:** Surf skiing

**CASE:** **GSAF 2012.06.03**

**DATE:** Sunday June 3, 2012

**LOCATION:** The incident took place in the Tasman Sea off Redhead, Newcastle, New South Wales, Australia.

**NAME:** Mark Ayre

**DESCRIPTION:** He is a 30-year-old male, a member of the Redhead Surf Lifesaving Club and a former Newcastle City Council lifeguard.

**SKI:** A 5.7-metre white-hulled ocean racing ski.

### **BACKGROUND**

**WEATHER:** At 14h30, Williamtown recorded an overcast sky and 6.2-mile visibility. The air temperature was 59°F, dew point 57.2°F, humidity 94%, sea level pressure 29.83 inches and wind direction was South at 5.8 mph.

**MOON PHASE:** Waxing Gibbous, 97% of the Moon was illuminated. Full Moon, June 4, 2012.

**SEA CONDITIONS:** "It was rough and the swell was pretty big, besides the harbour there was nowhere else for us to come in at," said Ayre.

**DISTANCE FROM SHORE:** One kilometre

**TIME:** 14h30

**NARRATIVE:** Ayre and Luke Nolan were paddling together to Newcastle Harbor. Ayre said he was paddling about 14km/h "chasing the swell", when he felt an "enormous force hit the ski," he said. "The force was indescribable, it was like being hit by a car." Ayre was knocked into the water by the force of the impact. "I had no idea what direction it came from, I just looked across and saw the shark within two feet of me," he said. "It was very solid, it looked like a brute of a thing, and I literally jumped back on the ski like a perched cat on a couch." Mr Ayre said after the shark hit the ski, it disappeared from sight and the pair continued their journey into Newcastle Harbour. By the time Ayre reached Horseshore Beach, the ski had taken on 10 or 12 litres of water.

**INJURY:** Ayre was not injured by the shark.

**DAMAGE:** The shark's teeth left puncture marks in the ski.

**SPECIES:** The incident involved a white shark, two metres in length.

**SOURCE:** Donna Page, June 6, 2010, Newcastle Herald, <http://www.theherald.com.au/news/local/news/general/surf-skiier-escapes-great-white-shark-off-redhead/2581106.aspx>





*Mark Ayre at Swansea*



*Tooth mark on Mark Ayre's ocean racing ski.  
Pictures: Max Mason-Hubers*