



Ryan Koenigs

**ACTIVITY:** Surfing

**CASE:** [GSAF 2014.09.13](#)

**DATE:** Saturday September 13, 2014

**LOCATION:** The incident took place in the Pacific Ocean at Manresa State Beach, Santa Cruz County, California, USA.

**NAME:** Beau Browning

**DESCRIPTION:** He is a 42-year-old surfer from Freedom and has been surfing for 20 years.

**SURFBOARD:** A nine-foot Surftech longboard,



#### **BACKGROUND**

**WEATHER:** At 18h53, Watsonville recorded seven-mile visibility and overcast skies. The air temperature was 61°F, dew point 57°F, humidity 87%, sea level pressure 29.86 inches, and wind direction was NE at 3.5 mph.

**MOON PHASE:** Waning Gibbous, 73% of the Moon was illuminated. Last Quarter, September 15, 2014.

**DISTANCE FROM SHORE:** 50 yards and 100 yards south of the main parking lot at Manresa.

**TIME:** 18h45



**NARRATIVE:** Browning claimed that he had just caught his second wave when a white shark came out of the water, landed on his surf board and split it. "I was popped into the air by probably like 10-15 feet, and I looked down and saw a shark," Then, he said, the shark bit his board, let go, and Browning said he was able to get to the surface. "

On investigation of this incident, however, a photograph of Browning's surfboard was uncovered with tire marks, and there were no teeth marks on the surfboard. Then on Sunday Browning said he might have been hit by a whale's tail, not a shark. The damaged

surfboard appeared for sale on craigs list on Monday with a \$1,000 asking price.

On Monday lifeguards posted signs that banned access to the water within a mile of the incident site for five days, which is the agency's protocol.

**SPECIES:** No shark was involved in this incident. It was apparently a hoax.

**CASE INVESTIGATOR:** Ralph Collier, GSAF

**Shark attack reported at Manresa State Beach**  
***No injuries sustained***

SANTA CRUZ COUNTY, Calif. —Beau Browning said he was surfing about 50 yards out from shore at Manresa State Beach around 6:45 p.m. Saturday when a 15-foot great white shark knocked him off of his surfboard.

"I caught my second wave, and barely got into it and out of nowhere, I was popped into the air by probably like 10-15 feet, and I looked down and saw a shark," Browning said. "He took a bite on the way down."

Browning had no injuries from the attack, but his board is no longer usable, he said.

Browning said a great white shark came out of the water, landed on his surf board and split it. He was still tethered to his board, so when the shark began swimming, it pulled him under water for five seconds.

"And he finally let go, and I let go of my leash and I was finally able to get up to the surface," Browning said.

Browning doesn't blame the shark. "They were just doing what they're designed to do," Browning said. "And they thought I was something else. And that's all it is. I got no hard feelings against sharks."

According to the Florida Natural History Museum, since 1926 there have only been 10 total shark attacks in Monterey County, two of them fatal. In Santa Cruz County there have been seven total attacks since 1926, none of which were fatal.

Surfers out at Manresa State Beach said sharks won't stop them from surfing. "We know they're out there all the time. It's a little creepy to hear of an attack," Santa Cruz surfer Mahmoud Alnahlawi said. "But I try and block it off, just go back in the the water and have fun."

**SOURCE:** KSBW, September 14, 2014, <http://www.ksbw.com/news/shark-attack-reported-at-manresa-state-beach/28057458>

**Did a shark attack really happen at Manresa beach?**

That's what many local surfers and Santa Cruz County residents are wondering this week after Beau Browning called KSBW's newsroom and told his shark tale on TV Sunday

Suspensions heightened when a Craigslist advertisement was posted on Monday. (see next page)

The ad read, "Shark Attack Surfboard For Sale - \$1,000 (santa cruz). 9'0" SurfTech soft/top Tufflite epoxy bottom...literally buckled and bitten by large white shark attack. See KSBW news account. Google KSBW news shark attack. The board is a one-of-a-kind testament to the ferocity of this particular attack. The owner of the board miraculously survived unscathed but shook up! We will sell outright for \$1,000 or trade for a pristine longboard, preferably Pearson Arrow, Surftech, or Freeline."


When KSBW called Browning to ask him about the Craigslist ad, he said his friend Marty posted it, and he had no intention of actually selling it. He added that Pearson Arrow Surf Shop offered


to give him a new board for cheap because of his shark experience. The ad was deleted from Craigslist.

CL SF bay area > santa cruz > all for sale / wanted > sporting goods - by owner [ account ]

[contact](#) [prohibited](#) Posted: 5 hours ago

★ Shark Attack surfboard for sale - \$1000 (santa cruz)





condition: salvage  
size / dimensions: 9'0" Surftech Tuflite

9'0" SurfTech soft top "Tuflite" epoxy bottom, blue e.p.d.m soft deck...literally buckled and bitten by large white shark attack at Mauresa State Beach 9/13/2014. \*See K.S.B.W news account with photos \*google K.S.B.W news "shark attack:"  
The board is a one-of-a-kind testament to the ferocity of this particular attack. The owner of the board miraculously survived unscathed but shook up!! We will sell outright for \$1000. or trade for a pristine long board of equal value...preferably Pearson Arrow....Surftech or Freeline

- do NOT contact me with unsolicited services or offers

post id: 4669246644 posted: 5 hours ago [email to friend](#) [best of](#)

Browning said he was surfing at dusk Saturday and was riding a wave when a great white shark rammed his surfboard, launching him into the air. "I caught my second wave, and barely got into it, and out of nowhere, I was popped into the air by probably like 10, 15 feet, looked down, and saw a shark," Browning told KSBW.

According to Browning, the shark landed on his board and split it. The surfer was then dragged underwater by the shark after it bit into his board and swam deeper with it while Browning's ankle was still tethered with a leash, he said.

State parks rangers are attempting to figure out if a shark really did attack, and are eager to talk to anyone who witnessed the Manresa encounter. So far, no witnesses have come forward. Rangers said they had a hard time reaching Browning on Monday and Tuesday, but he eventually agreed to meet with them and show them the board first-hand on Thursday.

Sean Van Sommeran, a Santa Cruz shark expert with the Pelagic Shark Research Foundation, said there are key signs to look for while determining if a shark attack really happened. "There will be subtle, if not obvious, teeth marks," Sommeran said. "Surfboards are constructed

almost perfectly to seize a loose tooth."

"Half the boards I've seen, the shark left a fragment in it, either blood, or gum, or a tooth," Sommeran said. Sharks even have tiny scales that would rub off on a board if the shark landed hard on it, Sommeran said.

Roger Stoneburner was one of several skeptics who wrote into KSBW and said Browning seemed too calm to be a person who was just attacked by a shark. "Why so nonchalant? He was just slammed by a creature the size of a VW bus, no doubt at full speed to knock him 10-15 feet in the air. But he's not freaked at all," Stoneburner said.

When interviewed by KSBW on Monday, Browning's story change slightly from his news interview that aired on TV Sunday. On Sunday he said his friends saw the shark attack, but on Monday, he said they were too far away to see much. "I was pretty much alone," Browning said.

On Sunday, he gave details about what the great white looked like and how big it was, however on Monday, he said he was not sure that it was a shark at all. "I could have been smacked by a whale's tail. It happened so fast. I saw gray and white. I was in shock," he said.

When asked why his board did not have any fins, Browning said the shark probably ripped them off when it landed on his board. "I hope that shark has a fin in his back" he said.

Still, Sommeran said this is the time of year when large great white sharks swim from the open ocean into the Monterey Bay, and hang out close to shore. He said he's amazed that more injuries from sharks do not happen each year. Less than 24 hours after Browning's experience, a biologist witnessed a shark eating a harbor seal and throwing the seal up in the air off Seabright State Beach in Santa Cruz. "She described a shark sticking its head out of the water and some blood in the water," State Park Supervising Ranger Joe Connors said. Shark warning signs will remain posted at Manresa and Seabright beaches this week.

Sommeran said real and fake shark reports are made locally every year. Last year, fake shark warning signs ordering people to stay out of the water were posted at Pleasure Point during a rare summer swell. The signs were marked with a state park seal and claimed an aggressive great white attacked three people at Capitola Beach, Privates, and Rockview in Santa Cruz.

The most serious, confirmed shark attack happened at Marina State Beach in October 2011. Eric Tarantino, 29, of Seaside, narrowly escaped death when a great white bit his arm and neck before dragging him below the surface. A tooth was inches away from a main artery in his neck. Tarantino recovered at a trauma center, got a free new board from Vernor Surfboards, and still surfs at Marina State Beach.

**SOURCE:** Amy Larson, KSBW, September 17, 2014, <http://www.ksbw.com/news/central-california/santa-cruz/did-a-shark-attack-really-happen-at-manresa-beach/28092512>