



File image taken off Kauhola Point in 2012.

<http://www.bigislandvideonews.com>

ACTIVITY: Surfing

CASE: [GSAF 2014.10.31](#)

DATE: Friday, October 31, 2014

LOCATION: The incident took place off the Halaula Lighthouse at Kauhola Point in North Kohala, Hawaii County, Hawaii, USA.

NAME: McKenzie Clark

DESCRIPTION: She is a 34-year-old female from Kailua-Kona.

SURFBOARD: A white triffin with red fins.



Images by Matt Solomon

BACKGROUND

WEATHER: At 10h56, Bradshaw AFB recorded clear skies and 10-mile visibility. The air temperature was 64.2°F, dew point 45°F, humidity 50%, sea level pressure 30.37 inches (falling) and wind direction SSE at 17.3 mph.

MOON PHASE: Waxing Gibbous, 62% of the Moon was illuminated. First Quarter, October 30, 2014.

SEA CONDITIONS: The sea surface temperature ranged from 79° to 81°F, and the water was murky.

ENVIRONMENT: Kohala lies in the northwest portion of the island of Hawaii in the Hawaiian Archipelago. Kohala Lighthouse is an exposed reef break that has consistent surf.

DISTANCE FROM SHORE: 150 yards



DEPTH OF WATER: 10 feet

TIME: The police were notified at 11h12, that she was en route to the hospital.

NARRATIVE: McKenzie Clark was surfing with her friend, 45-year-old Brian Wargo, when he heard her scream. As he turned around he saw her board lifted out of the water and being pushed out to sea – with Clark on top of her board!

“I was just scared. I didn't know what to do,” said Clark. “The first time [the shark] bumped me I thought, 'What's happening? Did I hit a rock?' I was kind of in disbelief. It just happened so fast,” Clark said.

Wargo said the shark lunged at Clark three times. “The shark comes back, grabs her board and her hand, and rips her off the board and she rips her hand out of the shark's mouth and the shark is pulling her board out to sea with her getting dragged by her leash leg,” he said.

According to Wargo, when the shark let go of the board, he grabbed it's dorsal fin. “I just started punching the shark and I punched it probably five times,” Wargo said. “When I hit it that fifth time, it turned away from her and started going out to sea.”

The pair paddled in and drove to the hospital.

Department of Land and Natural Resources closed the beach, and posted shark warning signs.

INJURY: Clark sustained injuries to two fingers of her left hand. “They're pretty mangled, but I didn't lose them. I still have them all intact,” said Clark.

FIRST AID / TREATMENT: At North Kohala Community Hospital, Clark's injuries were repaired with several stitches, and she was released shortly before 15h00.

SPECIES: According to Wargo, the incident involved a tiger shark approximately 12 feet in length.

SOURCES: Lisa Kubota, Hawaii News Now, October 31, 2014, <http://www.hawaiinewsnow.com/story/27180411/shark-bites-surfers-hand-big-island-beach-closed>;

KITV, October 31, 2014, <http://www.kitv.com/news/big-island-surfer-bitten-by-shark-off-north-kohala/29469960>

KITV, November 11, 2014,

<http://www.kitv.com/news/hawaii-woman-survives-shark-attack/29673108>



Photo: Matt Solomon



Kapa'au is four miles from the lighthouse at Kauhola Point.





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