

Three Stripes



ACTIVITY: Spearfishing

CASE: [GSAF 2014.12.29.a](#)

DATE: Monday December 29, 2014

LOCATION: The incident took place at Three Stripes near Cheynes Beach, Western Australia.

NAME: Jay Muscat

DESCRIPTION: He was a 17-year-old male, a member of the WA Undersea Albany diving group.



Jay Muscat

Jay Muscat's profile picture on his Facebook page, posted December 1, 2014

BACKGROUND

WEATHER: At 12h00, Albany Airport recorded partly cloudy skies and 19-mile visibility. The air temperature was 71°F, dew point 58°F, humidity 53%, sea level pressure 30.07 inches (falling) and wind direction was South at 5.8 mph.

MOON PHASE: First Quarter, 54% of the Moon was illuminated.

SEA CONDITIONS: Mean low tide at Cheynes Point occurred at 05h22, and the sea surface temperature was 68°F. ABC reporter Roxanne Taylor was at the beach about an hour before the attack occurred.

ABC reporter Roxanne Taylor was at the beach about an hour before the attack occurred and described the water as “perfectly still and crystal clear”.

ENVIRONMENT: An Albany surfer described the area as, “You’re sliding off granite rocks into quite dark, deep water.” Ms. Taylor also reported that an hour prior to the attack, “There



was a massive pod of about 10 dolphins in the cove”. A member of the WA Undersea Albany dive group said they had “close calls” with great white and bronze whaler sharks at the Three Stripes dive spot. “Just about anywhere you go in the water, there’s always bronze whalers. Big whaler sharks will come in and try and steal your fish and they’ll swim around you,” he said. “They’ll come in and have a look at you, swim around you and go away again.” There was also a report of a white shark sighted in the area about an hour and a half before the attack, and it is understood a shark was seen off the beach and at Three Stripes on Saturday, two days prior to the incident.

DISTANCE FROM SHORE: 40 metres

DEPTH OF WATER: The depth of water at the site is between nine and 12 metres.

TIME: The teen’s death was reported to police at 12h20

NARRATIVE: Jay Muscat and Matt Pullella were diving together. The shark initially went for Matt, but he pushed it away. Then the shark bit Jay. As the shark came back at Matt, he pushed his speargun down its mouth and pulled the trigger. People on board a passing boat pulled Jay into the vessel and tried to resuscitate him, but he died before the boat reached the shore.

INJURY: Fatal. The diver’s leg was bitten and his femoral artery was severed. It is probable that death resulted from hypovolemic shock, but the coroners report is pending.

SPECIES: A white shark, four to five metres in length.

NOTE: The afternoon of the attack Department of Fisheries assistant director-general Rick Fletcher reported that two department vessels were in the water and drum lines had been set in an attempt to catch the shark. He said it was likely the shark involved would be killed if it could be captured.

SOURCES: Matt Pullella

ABCNews, December 29, 2014, <http://www.abc.net.au/news/2014-12-29/shark-attack-at-cheynes-beach-albany/5991766>

The West Australian, December 29, 2014, <https://au.news.yahoo.com/thewest/a/25870853/shark-attack-reported-in-sw/>

Nine News, December 30, 2014, <http://www.9news.com.au/national/2014/12/30/04/21/shark-attack-victim-was-avid-diver-and-fisherman#VIZRPth7KUX3GRIs.99>

et al.



Picture: Instagram

Matt Pullella