

ACTIVITY: Diving for trochus
CASE: GSAF 1937.11.11
DATE: Thursday November 11, 1937
LOCATION: The incident took place at Ota Reef in the Torres Strait.
18°23'S.

NAME: Nelan Kris
DESCRIPTION: He was a 17-year-old male from the Torres Strait.

BACKGROUND

MOON PHASE: First Quarter, November 11, 1937

NARRATIVE: Kris and Bullio were divers from the lugger *Frankton*. As Kris was ascending he saw a large shark approaching and shouted a warning to Bullio. The two men swam for the dinghy and Bullio climbed on board. Kris was just pulling himself on board when the shark bit his leg.

INJURY: Fatal. His right calf and foot were severely bitten.

TREATMENT: The diver was brought to Cairns and admitted to the hospital, but later succumbed to his injuries.

SPECIES INVOLVED: Not identified. The shark was reported to be 12 feet in length.

SOURCES: The Advertiser (Adelaide), November 13, 1937, page 25; Victor M. Copleson (1958), page 244; Jack Green, page 33

**YOUNG NATIVE DIVERS
ATTACKED BY SHARK**

**Calf And Foot Of One
Badly Mauled**

BRISBANE, November 12.

Two young Torres Straits islanders had to swim frantically for their dinghy when pursued by a 12-foot shark while diving for trochus shell at Ota reef on the Barrier Reef opposite the Hinchbrook channel yesterday. One of them, Nelan Kris, 17, was mauled on the right leg as he was climbing into the dinghy. His calf and foot were terribly mutilated, and he was brought to Cairns tonight and admitted to hospital. His condition is satisfactory.

Kris and Bullio, of the lugger *Frankton*, owned by the Wyben Pearl Company, Thursday Island, were diving and, when Kris was coming to the surface, he noticed that a large shark was approaching. He called to his companion and they swam for the dinghy. Bullio climbed aboard, and Kris had his hand on the side and was just pulling himself on board when the shark snapped at his right leg. Before the shark could attack again, Bullio had pulled the youth into the dinghy. Blood was streaming from an ugly wound.