



**ACTIVITY:** Swimming

**CASE:** GSAF 1962.02.07 / SA-0155

**DATE:** Wednesday February 7, 1962

**LOCATION:** The attack took place in the Indian Ocean at Winkelspruit, 33 kilometres [20.5 miles] south-west of Durban, KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa. It occurred 180 metres from the spot where, two days earlier, Reece Nielsen was fatally injured by a shark.

*30°05,6'S, 30°51,9'E*

**NAME:** Clifford Hoogvorst

**DESCRIPTION:** The swimmer, a 22-year-old male, had a dark tan and was wearing royal blue swimming trunks. He wore no jewellery, but had an open wound caused by a blister on the heel of his right foot. He was a powerful swimmer and often left Winkelspruit, swam far out to sea and came ashore several kilometres up the coast.

### GENERAL BACKGROUND

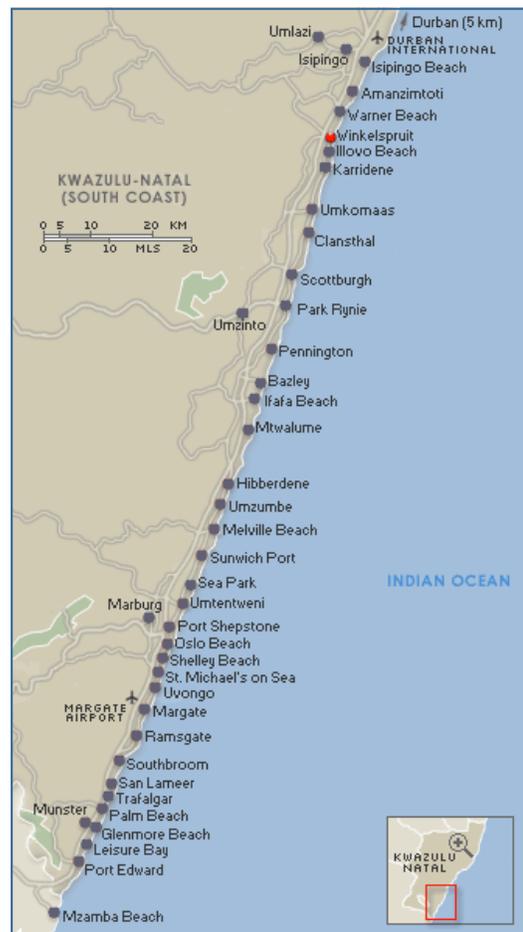
**WEATHER:** The temperature was 29°C [84.2°F] and the sky was sunny.

**MOON PHASE:** New Moon, February 5, 1962

**SEA CONDITIONS:** The sea was very dirty and murky, and mean low tide was at 11h47. The incident occurred two days after spring tide. Sea temperature was 27°C [80.6°F], and the salinity, measured an hour after the incident, was 34,790/00 which indicated that it was contaminated with fresh water.

**ENVIRONMENT:** Winkelspruit is a small seaside resort north of the mouth of the Illovo River. A long channel sweeps diagonally in from the sea into an area known as Shark's Pool, so named because of the number of sharks seen there in the past.

**DISTANCE FROM SHORE:** More than 60 metres



**DEPTH OF WATER AT INCIDENT SITE:** Five metres

**TIME:** 09h00

**NARRATIVE:** Clifford Hoogvorst had been on a long swim with a companion, Jack McDonald, but both had consumed a considerable amount of alcohol. McDonald, unable to continue, had returned to the beach. Hoogvorst was south of Shark's Pool; he was alone beyond the breakers when he turned on his back, kicked vigorously for about five seconds, then turned toward shore and began swimming towards the beach against the strong seas.

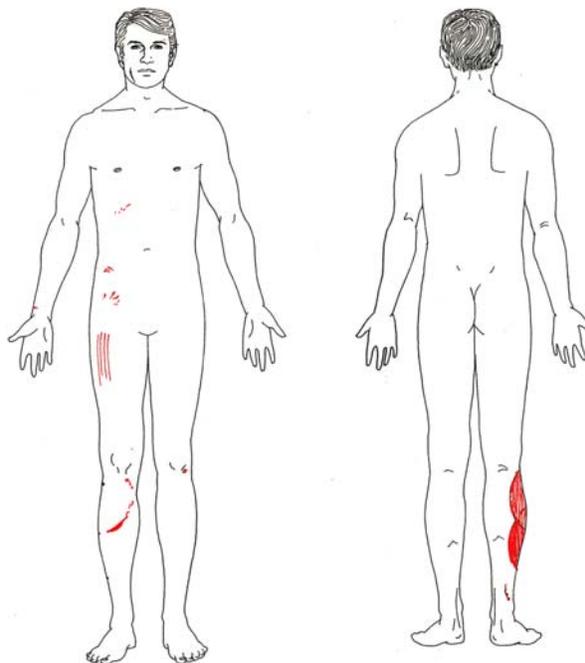


*Clifford Hoogvorst*

Although Hoogvorst was able to reach the rocks at the rim of Shark's Pool he was too weak to pull himself from the water. Most of the life-savers were attending Reece Nielsen's funeral but McDonald assisted Hoogvorst to the beach.

Although none of the witnesses realized it at the time, it was believed that Hoogvorst was bitten by the shark as he turned onto his back and began kicking the water — about 20 minutes before he reached the shore.

**INJURY:** There were two extensive, deep overlapping lacerations on the outer side of the right leg: one extended from his knee to midcalf, the other from midcalf to just above the ankle. The edges of the bite were clean-cut according to Dr David Davies and a small amount of skin and flesh had been removed. On the inner side of the leg there was a series of triangular punctures caused by the individual teeth of the shark; these showed as a single laceration at the point at which they overlapped. A few punctures were present on the outside of the left knee. There was a single small laceration on the left wrist at the base of the thumb. Small punctures and scratches on the left side at the edge of the rib cage and adjacent to the iliac crest were probably caused by rocks and barnacles as the swimmer attempted to climb out of the water.



**FIRST AID:** Hoogvorst was breathing when he was taken from the water but suffered respiratory arrest while being given first aid. Life-saver Louis Ferreira gave the swimmer mouth-to-mouth resuscitation, then Danny Feasley performed mouth-to-tube resuscitation for 35 minutes but was unable to revive him. It is not known what measures were taken to control the massive blood loss. An inquest was held and a verdict of "death by drowning" was rendered.

**SPECIES:** Photographs of the injuries sustained by the swimmer indicate the shark had serrated teeth in its upper jaw and grasping teeth in its lower jaw. Dr David Davies and Jeanette D'Aubrey believed the incident involved a Zambesi shark, *Carcharhinus leucas*. Bathing was banned at Winkelspruit and members of the Durban Shark Angling Club and the Warnerdoone Shark Angling Club attempted to catch the shark involved in the incident. A 23-kilogram dusky shark, *Carcharhinus obscurus*, was hooked 90 metres from the spot where Nielsen was killed earlier in the week and although it was considered to be too small to have been responsible for either incident and the specimen was taken to the Oceanographic Research Institute for dissection.

The Nielson/Hoogvorst cases are often cited as the work of a single rogue shark. However, photographic comparison of the injuries sustained in both cases (tooth impressions and width of the shark's jaws) indicate that two different sharks were involved.

**CASE INVESTIGATORS:** 1) Dr. David Davies & Jeanette D'Aubrey, Oceanographic Research Institute, P.O. Box 736, Durban, Natal, South Africa. 2) Marie Levine

