

**ACTIVITY:** Surfing

**CASE** [GSAF 1981.05.20 / SA-296](#)

**DATE:** Wednesday May 20, 1981

**LOCATION:** The incident took place at Nahoon, East London, Eastern Cape Province, South Africa. 32°59,4'S, 27°57,1'E

**NAME:** Dr. Mark Jury

**DESCRIPTION:** He was a 27-year-old male, 1.85 m in height and weighed about 70 kg. He was wearing a black and blue neoprene shorty wetsuit, and had no injuries prior to the incident. An expert surfer, since 1980 Dr Jury has been a contributor to The Surf Report, an international newsletter for traveling surfers, and he is the author of the book: *Surfing in Southern Africa*.

**SURFBOARD:** The surfer was using a 1,9-metre light blue trifin fibreglass foam-core board and wore a clear leash attached to his ankle.



*Dr. Mark Jury*

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**BACKGROUND:**

**WEATHER:** It was a tranquil, but overcast, misty morning with no wind.

**MOON PHASE:** Waning Gibbous with 98% of the moon's visible disk illuminated. Full Moon on May 19, 1981 at 00:03 Universal Time.

**SEA CONDITIONS:** The sea was glassy with a two-metre swell from the south, and visibility was about five metres.

**ENVIRONMENT:** Nahoon lies on the west bank of the Nahoon River, five kilometres north of the entrance to East London Harbour. The most popular beach in East London, Nahoon is renowned throughout the South African surfing community for producing some spectacular waves and is the venue of many national surfing competitions. Raggedtooth sharks frequent the gullies which run from Nahoon Reef to the seabed. Sewage from the Bats Cave outfall was floating near the reef when the incident took place, and later in the day after repairing his board, Jury paddled back out for a surf and saw a pod of dolphins on the reef.

**DISTANCE FROM SHORE:** 200 metres

**DISTANCE FROM THE ROCKS:** 60 metres

**DEPTH OF WATER:** Four metres

**TIME:** 08h30

**NARRATIVE:** Jury entered the water at 08h00 and had been surfing for 30 minutes. Two or three other surfers had been surfing at Nahoon Reef but they had ridden a wave to shore just before the incident. He was lying on his board and paddling out to sea but his feet were not dangling over the side of his board. He was paddling directly into the prevailing current when a raggedtooth shark struck his board from underneath. Then shark surfaced on the right side of the board, and swam out to sea. After warning the other surfers Jury caught a wave to the beach.

**INJURY:** The surfer was not injured.

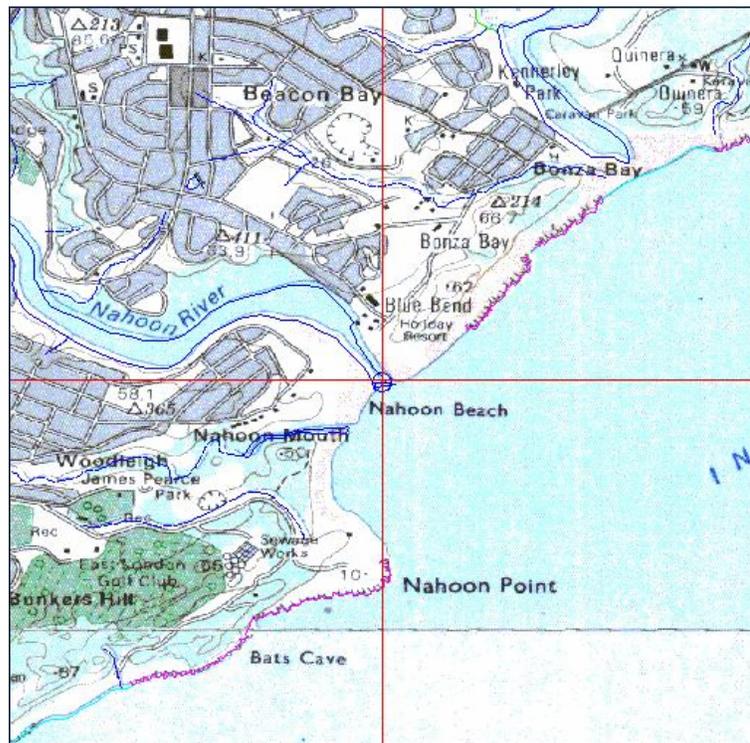
**DAMAGE TO SURFBOARD:**

There was an oval indentation measuring 10 x 20 centimetres and about three centimetres in depth in the underside of the surfboard.

**SPECIES:** The incident involved a raggedtooth shark.

**SOURCE:** Interviews with Mark Jury.

**CASE INVESTIGATOR:** Marie Levine, Global Shark Accident File



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