

**ACTIVITY:** Scuba diving  
**CASE:** **GSAF 1991.09.08**  
**DATE:** Sunday September 8, 1991  
**LOCATION:** Snapper Point, Aldinga Beach  
45 kilometres south of Adelaide, South  
Australia.  
*Latitude: -35.2722, Longitude: 138.4433*

**NAME:** Jonathon Lee  
**DESCRIPTION:** He was a 19-year-old  
male, a student at the University of  
Adelaide.

### **BACKGROUND**

**WEATHER:** The sky was clear and it was a  
warm day.

**MOON PHASE:** New Moon, September 8,  
1991

**SEA CONDITIONS:** The water was murky.

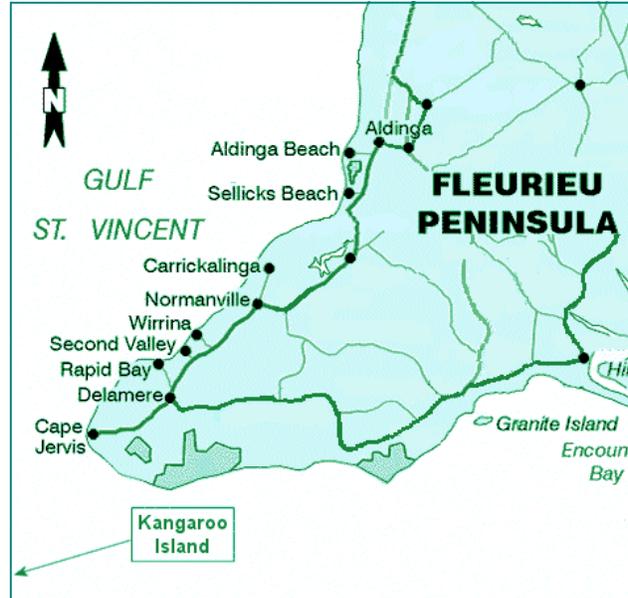
**ENVIRONMENT:** Aldinga Beach and  
adjoining Snapper Point is a 1.5 km long,  
narrow, crenulate high tide sand beach,  
fronted by 300 to 400 m wide intertidal rock  
flats, that extend further offshore as reefs.  
The reef has many overhangs hiding soft  
corals and abundant fish. Large schools of  
snappers traveling north to their breeding  
grounds are found near the drop off. When  
the snappers schools are running, they are  
sometimes followed by white sharks.

**DISTANCE FROM SHORE:** 350 metres

**DEPTH OF WATER:** 18 metres

**TIME:** 15h00

**NARRATIVE:** A group of eight students took a boat to the reef and were diving at a popular spot called the Drop Off. They had been in the water 20 minutes and four of the divers had already exited the water and were back on the boat. "We were heading back to the boat," said Dave Roberts, the senior diver. "I turned back and when down to have a look at a colorful rock", he said. Suddenly Roberts heard "heard a great thunder", which he thought was a boat. Then he turned and saw a white shark, thrashing its head from side to side. "The whole bottom was dusted up . . . I took a defensive position behind the rock and it moved away. It came within one and a half feet of me as it went past. It didn't look at me. It just took my buddy first—just dragged him past me as I was behind the rock." Other members of the group didn't see the shark until it was on top of Lee. Robert surfaced screaming "Shark!" As 18-year-old Ben Peterson pulled the anchor and motored the boat over to Roberts, and said "a tank, fins and other equipment floated by". Roberts and the other divers scrambled in the boat and lit a flare to raise the alarm.



**INJURY:** Fatal. Despite intensive beach and sea searches, the only tissue recovered was a single piece of lung, along with pieces of wetsuit and diving equipment.

As in other cases, the where disruption of the integrity of the body occurred, the only tissue recovered was a portion of lung. The buoyancy of aerated pulmonary tissue enables it to rise quickly to the surface where it may be recovered by searchers soon after the attack. Aeration of the lung is in keeping with death from trauma rather than from drowning and may be a useful marker in unwitnessed deaths to separate ante- from postmortem injury, using only relatively small amounts of tissue.

**DAMAGE TO EQUIPMENT:** Lee's swim fins and his undamaged tank with severed hose to the first stage of his regulator were recovered.

**SPECIES INVOLVED:** The incident involved a white shark about four metres in length.

**SOURCES:** Alan Sharpe, pages 127 & 128; Adelaide Advertiser, September 9, 1991; Daily Globe, September 9, 1991, page 17; Trenton Times (New Jersey), September 9, 1991..

[http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/entrez/query.fcgi?db=pubmed&cmd=Retrieve&dopt=AbstractPlus&list\\_uids=16936505&itool=iconabstr&query hl=2&itool=pubmed\\_docsum](http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/entrez/query.fcgi?db=pubmed&cmd=Retrieve&dopt=AbstractPlus&list_uids=16936505&itool=iconabstr&query hl=2&itool=pubmed_docsum)

**CASE INVESTIGATOR:** Phil Kemp, Global Shark Accident File

## **Shark attack kills diver**

**ADELAIDE, Australia (AP) —** A 19-year-old diver died Sunday after being mauled by a shark at a popular underwater reef, police said.

The attack occurred about 350 yards off Aldinga Beach, where there had been previous shark sightings.

Seven of the man's fellow divers were in the murky water when the shark attacked, but said they realized they could do nothing except

scramble into their boat and fire a flare to summon help.

"I turned to look at a rock and heard a great thunder," said diver Dave Roberts. "I thought it was a boat but as I turned I saw a shark. It thrashed past me and came pretty close to me, but that's the last I saw of it."

Police did not release the name of the victim, an Adelaide student.

## ■ Shark mauls diver

ADELAIDE, Australia — A 19-year-old diver died yesterday after being mauled by a shark at a popular underwater reef, police said. The attack occurred about 350 yards off Aldinga Beach, where there had been previous shark sightings. Seven of the man's fellow divers were in the murky water when the shark attacked, but said they realized they could do nothing except scramble into their boat and fire a flare to summon help.

*From wire service reports.*