



Photograph by Lu Gerda

ACTIVITY: Spearfishing / Free diving

CASE: [GSAF 1994.11.25](#)

DATE: Friday November 25, 1994

LOCATION: The incident took place in the Indian Ocean at a blinder known as Windvogel off the Point [Cape St Blaize], Mossel Bay, Western Cape Province, South Africa.

NAME: Anton van Velden Bosman

DESCRIPTION: The diver, a 39-year-old male, is 1,89 metres tall and weighs 95 kilograms. He wore a dark blue, double nylon five-millimetre wetsuit, a longjohn, jacket with hood, gloves, and neoprene socks. He had a black silicon face mask, snorkel, weightbelt, and long Goldfin black and grey swim fins. He carried a black 1,9-metre Champion rubber-powered speargun with a neoprene camouflage sock, and towed an orange float. He wore no jewelry and had no injuries prior to the incident.

BOAT: The support boat was a 15-ft white V-hulled SkeeVee ski-boat.

BACKGROUND

WEATHER: The sky was partly overcast, air temperature was about 24°C, but wind direction and velocity are not known.

MOON PHASE: Third Quarter, November 26, 1994

SEA CONDITIONS: The sea was blue-green and calm, and there was a west to east current. Water temperature was estimated to be 18°C, and underwater visibility was six metres. The incident took place about ten metres from a 25-foot deep channel.

ENVIRONMENT: The average depth at Windvogel is 15 metres; its maximum depth is 27 metres. The diver had speared fish; he had two Cape knifejaw on a stringer suspended from his float and a 14-kilogram musselcracker on his spear.

DISTANCE FROM SHORE: 300 metres, and 300 metres from the rocks at Cape St Blaize.

DISTANCE FROM BOAT: 100 metres

DEPTH: Six metres [20 feet], but the spearfisherman was on the surface when the incident took place.

TIME: 07h00

NARRATIVE: Anton Bosman was facing seaward when the shark approached from his left. *“I had shot a musselcracker and played it to the surface, then overpowered the fish by grabbing its gills and pinning the body and tail between my legs. I called to the boat, intending to put the fish directly in it. The boat was on the way to me when I felt a jab on my lower left shin and calf.”*

“I pulled away instinctively, and pulled clear from [the shark’s] jaws. I let go of my fish and speargun (the spear was still in the fish) and looked down. I identified the shark as raggedtooth shark as it turned to swim off. It came in twice; the first time just passing underneath, but the second time it came in so close beneath me that by just toppling over I hit it with my fist on the nose. It dived down again, and by that time the boat was next to me. Without an invitation I jumped on the boat!”

“After that we picked up my float, with the two fish I had shot earlier still hanging on it. We pulled in my speargun, and the musselcracker was still on the spear. That fish paid for my medical expenses!!”

“The raggie never went for the fish after the first attack. The shark never really seemed agitated; it appeared curious and never moved very fast at any time.”

INJURY: The shark made a single bite, resulting in three puncture wounds. No tissue was removed by the shark.

TREATMENT: No first aid was administered. The diver was taken from the incident site by boat and then by car to Dr. Ganie Roux in Mossel Bay, arriving there 60 minutes after the incident. At the hospital the wounds were sutured by Dr Christo Barnard. No tooth fragments were recovered.

The diver remarked that he felt no pain until about 12 hours after he was bitten, but also noted that he had little feeling in the area due to previous knee surgery.

SPECIES INVOLVED: According to the diver, the incident involved a raggedtooth shark about nine feet total length.

CASE INVESTIGATOR: Andrew Gifford, Shark Research Institute-South Africa



Musselcracker, *Cymatoceps nasutus*
The fish may grow to a length of 1.5 m in length and nearly 35 kg in weight