



ACTIVITY: Body boarding

CASE: [GSAF 1998.05.29.b](#) / SA-430

DATE: Friday May 29, 1998

LOCATION: The attack took place at the main beach in Sardinia Bay, Eastern Cape Province, South Africa.

NAME: Marc Jucker

DESCRIPTION: The surfer is a 15-year-old male, a 10th grader in Woodridge High School.



BACKGROUND

MOON PHASE: New Moon, May 25, 1998. First Quarter, June 2, 1998.

SEA CONDITIONS: The water was murky.

ENVIRONMENT: There was a lot of activity, with flocks of birds circling overhead which suggest pockets of sardines may have been close inshore.

TIME: The incident took place two hours after Opperman was bitten by a shark.

NARRATIVE: “We were quite far out,” Shaun Neveling said. “I was looking around. The waves were pretty big. As I checked back over my shoulder, I just saw Marc going under. I thought I was dreaming when I saw this big grey thing on top of him. The thing was huge and there was blood in the water. It had him by the arm and board and was thrashing around.”

Another eyewitness, Zack Vincent, said he was paddling out to sea when the shark struck. “I heard Marc shout 'here's a shark' and then I saw it. It was the biggest shark I've ever seen. The fin was massive and it was out of the water while it had him by the arm.”

"It hit me from underneath," said Marc Jucker. "I didn't see it. My board took the full impact. I didn't know what was happening. I saw my friends, looking over my shoulder, just like blank stares. Then it came from underneath and I felt like I'd been hit by a train. It took a bite out of my arm and my board. Everything was like slow-mo and all weird. I looked down at my arm and I could see to the bone, I could see my elbow joint."

Jucker was knocked off his board. "The shark had my board in its mouth and was thrashing it about. The leash had snapped. Then it turned away. I grabbed my board and got on. Then it swung around and came back. I lay on my board and put my arms and my legs up, I didn't want anything in the water."

"It swam under me and the dorsal fin knocked my board. Then I caught a wave and got to the beach."

INJURY: The surfer sustained severe lacerations to the right arm and shoulder, and the bite removed most of the triceps muscle.

FIRST AID: "Mark has first aid training and knew exactly what to do. He told us to put two thumb pressures under his arm to stem the blood. The shark must have hit an artery because there was blood everywhere." said one of the surfers. "My friend, Kev, was on the beach and he always carries a first aid kit, so he made a tourniquet with a T-shirt and a crepe bandage and stopped the bleeding," said Jucker. A man who witnessed the attack helped the surfers bundle Jucker into a car and he was rushed to the hospital.

TREATMENT: Jucker underwent surgery that evening at Greenacres Hospital. "The doctors took some of my bicep and sewed it onto what was left of my tricep," said Jucker. Tony Futter, hospital manager, said both Jucker and Opperman were admitted to the same ward and would be able to "compare notes on their harrowing experiences."

SPECIES INVOLVED: The incident involved a white shark three to four metres in length.

SOURCE: Daily Dispatch (East London), May 30, 1998

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

NOTE: Jucker continued to body board; on September 30, 2004 he competed at Kommetjie in the South African Bodyboarding Championships.