

**ACTIVITY:** Surfing

**CASE:** [GSAF 1998.07.06.a](#)

**DATE:** Monday July 6, 1998

**LOCATION:** The incident took place in the Indian Ocean at Lookout Beach in Plettenberg Bay, Western Cape Province, South Africa.

**NAME:** Mark Thomas

**DESCRIPTION:** He is a 10-year-old male.

### BACKGROUND

**WEATHER:** The air temperature on the day of the incident ranged from 08°C to 15°C, humidity was 33%, at 14h00 there was a seven-knot northeasterly breeze, the barometer was 1012,9 hPa (falling), and no rain fell throughout the day.

**MOON PHASE:** Full Moon, July 9, 1998

**SEA CONDITIONS:** The sea surface temperature was 16,5°C.

**NARRATIVE:** It was the first day of the Thomas family holiday in South Africa and Mark Thomas and his father, Clark, were in the water. "I was helping Mark body board in very shallow water of just over knee height," said Clark. "The shark came just as Mark was starting to ride a wave, taking him at the knee. He shouted, and I bent down and pulled the shark off him." As Clark pulled the shark off his son, it grabbed his leg. "It bit me," said Clark. "I tried to pull it off my leg and managed to do so with great difficulty. I took the shark in a wrestling grip, carried it out of the sea and threw it onto the sand."

**INJURY:** Mark's right leg was bitten by the shark

**TREATMENT:** Some 22 stitches to repair his injury.

**SPECIES INVOLVED:** The incident involved a four-foot long raggedtooth shark. The shark was killed on the beach and its belly slit open.

**SOURCE:** Daily Dispatch (East London), July 8, 1998,  
<http://www.dispatch.co.za/1998/07/08/southafrica/BSHARK.HTM>

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

