

ACTIVITY: Surfing

CASE: GSAF 1999.12.26

DATE: Sunday December 26, 1999

LOCATION: The attack took place in the South Atlantic Ocean at Praia da Boa Viagem beach, Recife, Pernambuco State, Brazil.

8.1°S, 34.8°W

NAME: Aílton Cicero

DESCRIPTION: The surfer is an 18-year-old male.

BACKGROUND

MOON PHASE: Waning Gibbous, 80% of the moon was illuminated. Full Moon on December 23, 1999.

SEA CONDITIONS: The sea surface temperature was 32°C / 90°F

ENVIRONMENT: The incident occurred in an area where swimming and surfing were banned because of the high risk of shark attack.

DISTANCE FROM SHORE: 100 metres

DEPTH OF WATER: Three metres

TIME: Late morning

NARRATIVE: Aílton Cicero was swimming with two other 18-year-old boys: Martins de Barros and Edélson Da Silva. Suddenly, a shark bit his right leg and pulled him beneath the surface. Moments later, he surfaced and shouted for help. His friends brought him to shore.

INJURY: The surfer's right leg was severely bitten, and his right thumb and hand were lacerated.

FIRST AID / TREATMENT: According to Josemberg Fields, head of the Trauma Unit at Hospital of the Restoration, "Aílton's friends had managed to stop the loss of blood at the scene. If they had not taken this initiative, the youngster would not have survived," said Dr. Fields. Nevertheless, the boy lost about two liters of blood during the attack, and was in hypovolemic shock on arrival at the hospital. "Only one bone of his (right) leg, the tibia, was not damaged by the shark," according to Dr. Fields. Because Aílton had lost a great amount of tissue from his leg and the risk of infection was high, surgical amputation was necessary.

SPECIES INVOLVED: It was thought that a white shark, *Carcharodon carcharias*, bull shark, *Carcharhinus leucas*, or a tiger shark, *Galeocerdo cuvier*, was involved in this attack..

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According to biologist Otto Bismark Gadig, the culprit was most likely a bull shark, the species behind almost all attacks recorded off Recife. The theory is particularly reinforced by the recent discovery by researchers from the Pernambuco Rural Federal University that bull sharks reproduce in the nearby Jaboatão River estuary in this time of the year.

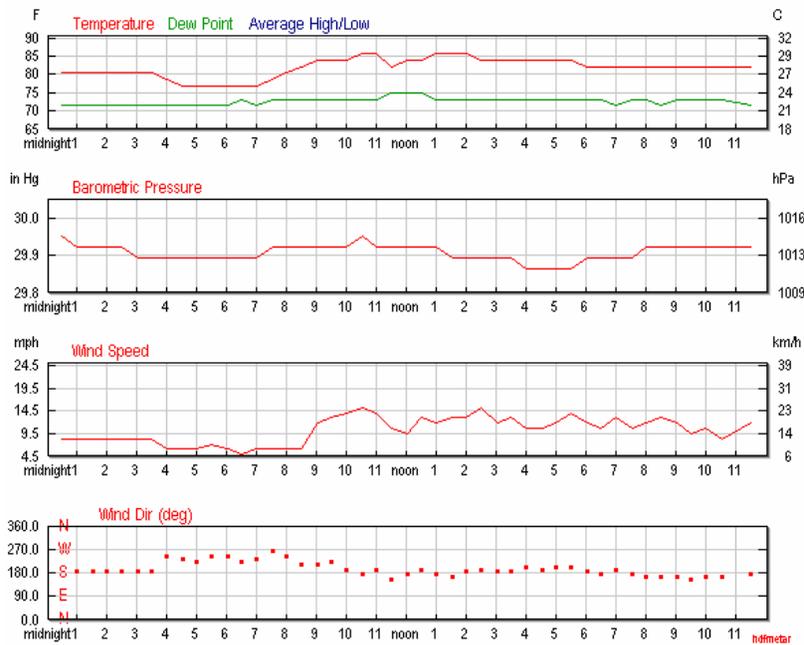
SOURCES: JC, December 27, 1999; Marcelo Szpilman (2004), page 140

CASE INVESTIGATORS: Paulo Mariano Lopes, GSAF and Luiz Antonio Pereira.

Banhista nadador atacado na Praia de Boa Viagem perde a perna e o polegar

Por volta do meio-dia do dia 26 de dezembro de 1999, o estudante A.C.S., de 18 anos, nadava depois da linha dos arrecifes, a 100 metros da faixa de areia da Praia de Boa Viagem, Recife (PE), junto com dois amigos, quando um tubarão mordeu e esfacelou sua perna direita e o puxou violentamente para baixo da água, só retornando alguns segundos depois. Os amigos, que nada sofreram, conseguiram resgatar o rapaz, que deixou uma mancha de sangue no local. Ele foi levado para o Hospital da Restauração onde deu entrada pouco antes das 13 horas em choque hipovolêmico, provocado pela forte hemorragia. Em função da grande perda de tecido da perna direita, necrosada na parte inferior, que deixou de receber sangue, e devido ao alto risco de infecção, o restante do membro, no nível da coxa (do joelho para baixo), teve que ser amputado. O dedo polegar da mão direita também foi perdido.

Marco Szpilman, page 140



Weather at Recife, Brazil on Sunday, December 26, 1999