

**ACTIVITY:** Surfing

**CASE** [GSAF 2001.04.08.b](#) / SA-440

**DATE:** Sunday April 8, 2001

**LOCATION:** The attack occurred in the Indian Ocean at Cape St. Francis, Eastern Province, South Africa. Cape St. Francis is a popular surfing beach 112 kilometres southwest of Port Elizabeth.

*34°12'S, 24°52,8'E*

**NAME:** Dunstan Hogan

**DESCRIPTION:** The surfer, a 46-year-old male, is a businessman from East London. He was wearing a wetsuit.

**SURFBOARD:** A white trifin

### **BACKGROUND**

**WEATHER:** It was a cold, grey day.

**MOON PHASE:** Full Moon, 100% of the Moon's visible disk was illuminated.

**SEA CONDITIONS:** According to the surfer, "the water was cold, about 15°C"

**ENVIRONMENT:** From July to October southern right whales enter the bay to calve but it is not known if any were in the area at the time of the incident.

**DISTANCE FROM SHORE:** 75 metres

**DEPTH:** Eight feet

**TIME:** 09h30

### **NARRATIVE:**

Dunstan was surfing alone, paddling. "The attack came without warning. I was lying on my surfboard and didn't see the shark coming as it attacked from underneath. Suddenly I felt this enormous pressure, like being gripped in a vice.

"[The shark] wrapped its teeth around the board and my left thigh, buttock and hip, and lifted me and my board clear out of the water," he said. "I was still holding on to the board, and then I felt myself going under and I was forced to the bottom and my feet hit the sand. I opened my eyes and there was a lot of white water and sand and this big, dark shadow. I was trying to hold the board as protection, but couldn't hold on to it underwater and let go. I popped to the surface, pulled the board towards me by the ankle leash and got on to it.

"I didn't feel any pain. I started paddling to the shore and then the shark came for me again, coming from the shore. I just saw this grey mass and thrashing tail fin. When it attacked, I was lifted out of the water again. Then it left, and I started paddling again and caught a broken wave into shore. There was a lot of turbulence in the water, with sand churning up all over the place. I just couldn't see where the shark had gone. I pulled the surfboard towards me again and mounted it to exit the area as quickly as I could."



Hogan's wetsuit was torn. "I held it together and walked up on to the grass and lay there while someone went to call the doctor. Only then did I start to feel the pain."

**INJURY:** The surfer sustained a crescent-shaped bite wound to his left thigh, buttock and hip.

**DAMAGE TO EQUIPMENT:** There were tooth marks of the shark on the surfboard.

**FIRST AID:** He was taken in the back of a bakkie to a local doctor, Therese Jordaan, who controlled the bleeding. Then he was taken to hospital in Port Elizabeth for further treatment.

**TREATMENT:** At the hospital in Port Elizabeth, surgeon Gerrie Steenkamp used 50 clips to close Hogan's lacerations, which had missed his main artery by two centimetres. A press interview was given by the surfer in the hospital on Tuesday following the attack, but it is not known how long he remained in the hospital.

**SPECIES INVOLVED:** The attack involved a white shark, *Carcharodon carcharias*. According to the press, "experts said the bite marks on Hogan's board and body indicate the shark was about three metres long". The press report also quoted Bayworld marine biologist Dr. Malcolm Smale, so it may be that he was one of the experts mentioned.

**CASE INVESTIGATORS:** Benjamin Marcus and Andrew Gifford, Shark Research Institute



*Dunstan Hogan's surfboard*