

ACTIVITY: Surf skiing

CASE: [GSAF 2004.01.15.R](#)

DATE: Reported January 15, 2004

LOCATION: The incident took place in the Indian Ocean off Ballito, KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa.

29°32,5'S, 31°28'E

NAMES: Dave Hamilton-Brown and Ant Rowan

DESCRIPTION: Both men are highly experienced paddlers, and have represented South Africa at sprint events internationally. Hamilton-Brown is part of NOCSA's Operation Excellence squad training to qualify for the Athens Olympics.

NARRATIVE: The two men were training, paddling their double ski, when the stern of their ski was bitten by a shark. The pair managed to remain upright on their ski during the attack, while the shark repeatedly grabbed the tail of their craft, and took a number of bites at it, with such force that several of its teeth were left embedded in the fibreglass hull of the skim before disappearing and swimming away.

Then the pair, using the swell, headed for the beach. Their dash to the shore was hampered by a swim as they rode a particularly large swell. "We got back onto the ski in a flash!", said Hamilton-Brown afterwards.

INJURY: No injury

DAMAGE TO SURF SKI: The stern of the ski was bitten. "The teeth marks around the tail show how the shark hit the tail of the ski from below, and then adjusted it's grip around the top of the ski's deck, before letting go", said Hamilton-Brown.

SPECIES INVOLVED: The paddlers took their damaged ski, with the shark teeth still embedded in the tail, to the Natal Sharks Board, where experts confirmed that the shark was an adult mako shark, probably between three and four metres in length.

NOTE: A few months ago there was a similar incident off the south coast of KwaZulu-Natal during which a shark damaged a double ski, leaving the paddlers shaken but unharmed.

SOURCE: http://www.surfski.co.nz/news/2004_01_15.htm

A two-person surf canoe

