

**ACTIVITY:** Surfing

**CASE:** GSAF 2005.11.25.a

**DATE:** Friday November 25, 2005

**LOCATION:** The incident took place at Nahoon Reef, five kilometres northeast of the harbour entrance at East London, Eastern Cape Province, South Africa. 32°59,4'S, 27°57,1'E

**NAME:** Ashley Milford

**DESCRIPTION:** He is a 26-year-old male from East London, an information technology specialist.

### BACKGROUND

**WEATHER:** The sky was partly cloudy, air temperatures ranged from 16° to 24°C, and there was a n 18 kph southwesterly wind.

**MOON PHASE:** Waning.

**ENVIRONMENT:** Nahoon lies on the west bank of the Nahoon River, five kilometres north of the entrance to East London Harbour. The most popular beach in East London, Nahoon is renowned throughout the South African surfing community for producing some spectacular waves and is the venue of many national surfing competitions.

**SEA CONDITIONS:** High tide

**ENVIRONMENT:** There is a sewage outfall at Bats Cave.

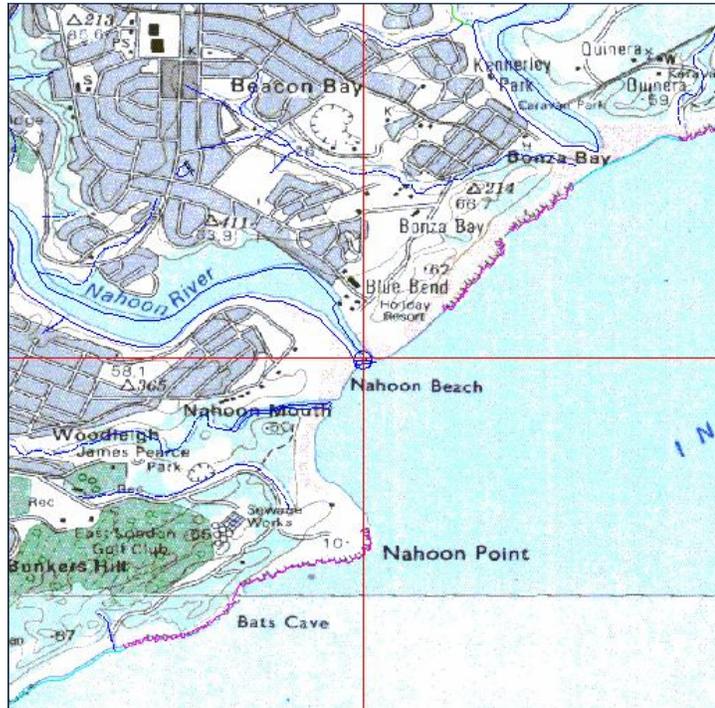
**TIME:** 11h30

**NARRATIVE:** Ashley Milford had a bad day. It started when he learned that someone had accessed his banking details and taken an R11870 "loan" in Johannesburg – and repayments were now being deducted from his account. While at the bank to sort out the problem, he was fined for failing to display his licence disk – which was in the cubby-hole of his car. Then he learned that he was facing retrenchment in May. To de-stress from his banking and traffic woes earlier that morning, he went for "a nice relaxing surf" at Nahoon Beach.

He fell off a wave during a manoeuvre, remounted his board and paddled only three or four strokes out to sea when the shark hit from underneath and knocked him off his surfboard. As the shark surfaced next to him, Milford rammed his surfboard sideways into the shark's mouth.

**INJURY:** The surfer suffered only a small cut on his finger.

**DAMAGE TO BOARD:** There was a 20-centimetre-wide arc of tooth marks on the surfboard which appeared to have been made by serrated teeth. The resilient surfer said he would get his board fixed and be back in the water in a couple of weeks. "I've got to get my



board fixed; then I'll give it a couple of weeks and will be back in the water", he said.

**SPECIES:** Milford said the shark had a "squarish snout", indicating it could have been a Zambezi or a tiger shark.

**SOURCE:** Nick Pike, Daily Dispatch November 26, 2005,  
<http://www.dispatch.co.za/2005/11/26/Easterncape/battack.html>

**CASE INVESTIGATOR:** Jeremy Cliff, Natal Sharks Board