



**ACTIVITY:** Swimming

**CASE:** GSAF 1982.01.29 / SA-299

**DATE:** Friday January 29, 1982

**LOCATION:** The incident took place in the Indian Ocean at Mpekeweni, about 80 kilometres from East London Harbour, Eastern Cape Province, South Africa.

$33^{\circ}26'S, 27^{\circ}13,7'E$

**NAME:** Jeffrey Phillips-Page

**DESCRIPTION:** A 20-year-old male, he is 1,8 metres tall, and weighs 63 kilograms. He wore light blue baggies that had a light blue binding. He wore no jewelry and had no injuries before entering the water.

#### BACKGROUND

**WEATHER:** It was a sunny day, but no meteorological data are available.

**SEA CONDITIONS:** The water was very dirty and there was a strong north-to-south current. A sandbank stretched "some way out". Mean high tide at East London was at 14h09, and it was a neap tide.

**ENVIRONMENT:** Although the dune-flanked lagoon at Mpekeweni teems with bird life, it is



usually closed. According to Phillips-Page, no one was fishing and no dolphins were observed.

**DISTANCE FROM SHORE:** Between 40 and 50 metres

**DEPTH:** "Just above waist-deep"

**TIME:** 16h30

**NARRATIVE:** Jeffrey Phillips-Page and six friends had been in the water together but the strong current had forced them down the beach and Phillips-Page left the water. He re-entered the sea moments before the incident. He was isolated from his friends; he was up-current and facing seaward, waiting for a wave. "I was standing in the water when something hit my right shin with a tremendous impact," he said. "There was a huge swirl of water and I kicked out and struck something with my right toe. I continued to kick in the area where I had seen the swirl. I felt no pain, but realizing what had happened, I made my way back to shore as quickly as possible. On getting out of the water, blood was running down my shin and from my toe."

**INJURY:** There was a large lump and two gashes about 20 millimetres apart on his right shin. On his right foot there were two small cuts on a toe and it was lacerated through the toenail.

**FIRST AID:** The swimmer was bleeding profusely when he reached the shore. His friends came to his assistance and took him to a nearby holiday cottage for first aid. The wound was cleaned and bandaged, and he returned to his home in Port Alfred.

**TREATMENT:** He was treated in Port Alfred by Dr Dempers. The wound required three stitches and he made a complete recovery.

**SPECIES INVOLVED:** Photographs of the injuries suggest that they may have been caused by a raggedtoothed shark.

**SOURCE:** Interviews with Jeffrey Phillips-Page and Dr. Dempers

**CASE INVESTIGATOR:** Marie Levine

