

ACTIVITY: Surfing

CASE: GSAF 1982.06.29 / SA-300

DATE: Tuesday June 29, 1982

LOCATION: The attack took place in the Indian Ocean in South Africa at a halfmoon bay with reef on either side. This bay is situated on the Transkei coast just south of Ntlonyane Bay; it is 95 kilometres southwest of Port St Johns and 355 kilometres southwest of Durban.
32°12,2'S, 28°57'E

NAME: Alex Macun

DESCRIPTION: The surfer, a 27-year-old male, was clad in red, black and beige baggies. He wore no jewelry and had no injuries before entering the sea.

SURFBOARD: The board, a 1,69-metre Country Rhythm triffin, was multicoloured: black, yellow, pink red and blue. The fins were white and the centre fin was incised in order to create a humming sound; when the speed was increased, the hum developed into a whistle.



Alex Macun and his grandmother

BACKGROUND

WEATHER: Clear sunny skies and light winds prevailed for a week before the attack. The Port St Johns Meteorological Office recorded a temperature of 14°C and clear skies. At 08h00 it was calm, but by 14h00 there was a fresh 20-knot northeasterly breeze. A light offshore wind was blowing at Ntlonyane Bay at the time of the incident.

MOON PHASE: Waxing Gibbous, 62% of the Moon was illuminated. First Quarter, June 28, 1982.

SEA CONDITIONS: The water was described as “crystal clear” and “warm”. The wave interval was, peak to peak, 18 seconds. There was a continual rip current running out to sea on the north and south sides of the bay. A deep channel ran parallel to shore. The initial attack took place between the channel and the beach, about 45 minutes before mean high tide.

ENVIRONMENT: Dolphins were seen passing the bay and shad were caught that morning.

DEPTH: Three metres

TIME: 09h30

NARRATIVE: Alex Macun entered the water a few minutes before the attack and was paddling out to sea after having just ridden a wave inshore. Two surfers, John Luyt and Wayne McMillan, sitting astride their boards behind backline heard Macun shout. Turning around, they saw a large blue-black shark attacking the victim who was lying on his board. The shark dragged Macun off his surfboard and into the water where it proceeded to savage his body. Two eyewitnesses, Shavonne Hill and Steve Manthe, watched the shark attacking and thrusting the victim's body towards the rocks where they were standing. At one stage the body was about three metres away from them, with the shark in between, but the water was so discoloured with blood that they were unable to assess the extent of Macun's injuries. The attack continued for more than an hour and may have attracted other sharks into the area, thus a different shark from the one which initiated the attack, may have been seen by Hill and Manthe. A shark eventually swam out to sea with the body.

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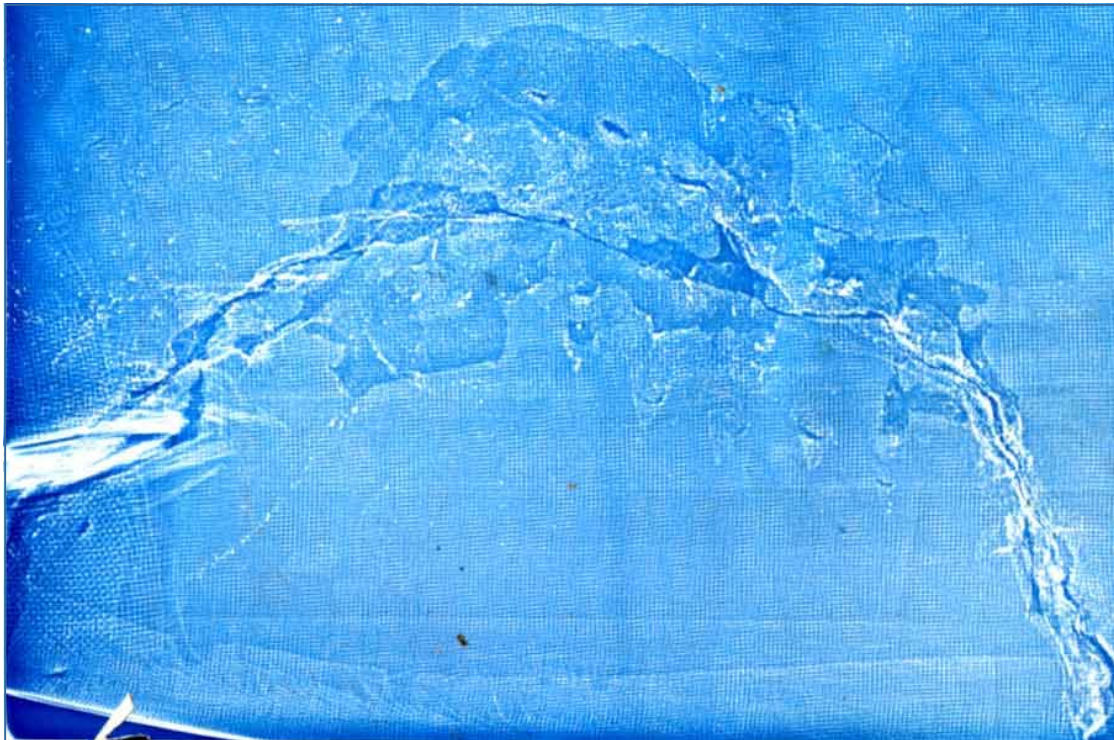
Neighbouring beaches were searched but Macun's body was never recovered.

DAMAGE TO EQUIPMENT: The right side of the surfboard was bitten. The arc of the bite measured 43 centimetres in circumference and 32 centimetres in diameter. The radius of the bite was 5,5 centimetres.

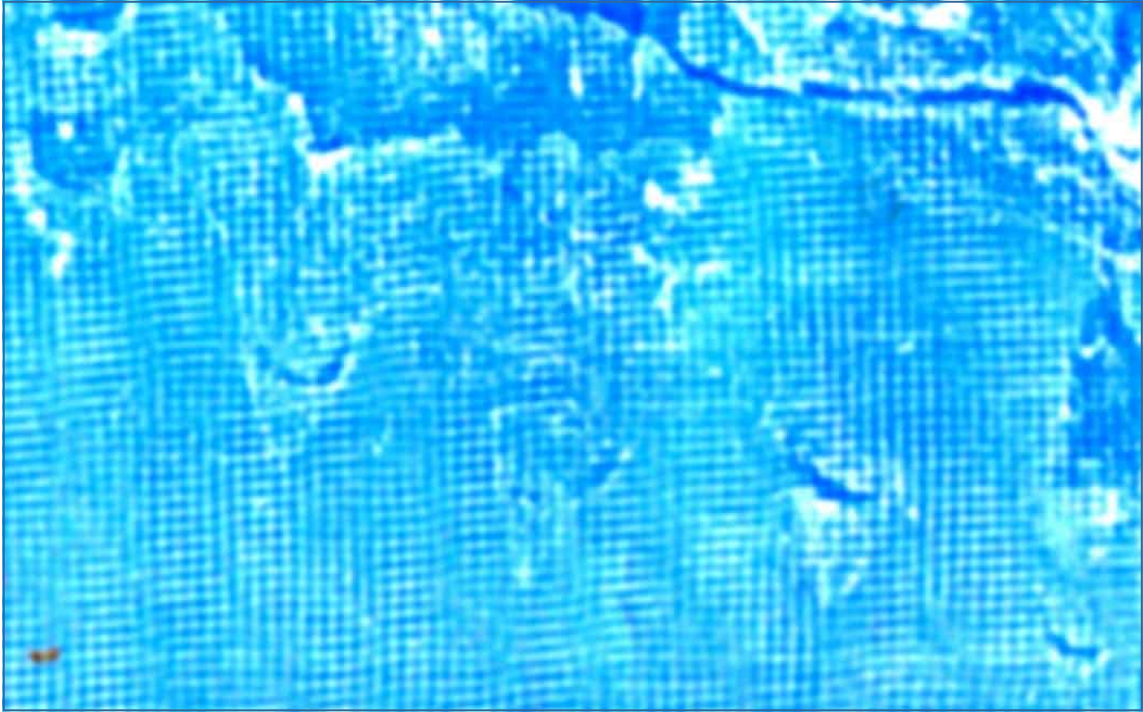
INJURY: Fatal. The surfer's body was never recovered.

SPECIES INVOLVED: Five years after the accident, xeroradiography of the surfboard confirmed that the incident involved a white shark. Based on measurements of the bite in the surfboard, the shark was approximately 2,4 metres in length and had a mass of 180 to 190 kilograms.

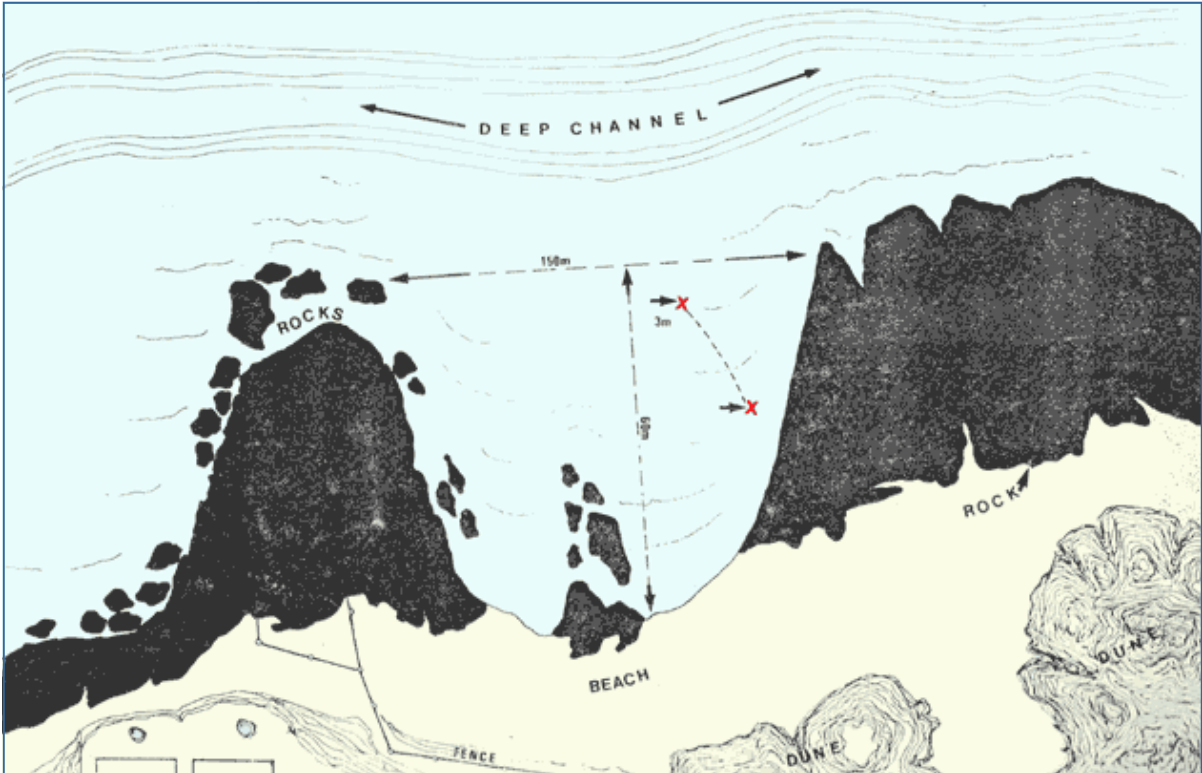
CASE INVESTIGATOR: Marie Levine



Xeroradiograph of Alex Macun's surfboard showing widely-separated triangular tooth impressions



Detail of Xeroradiograph of Alex Macun's surfboard showing triangular tooth impressions.



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The 1.69-metre Country Rhythm surfboard Alex Macun was using when he was attacked by a shark/s.

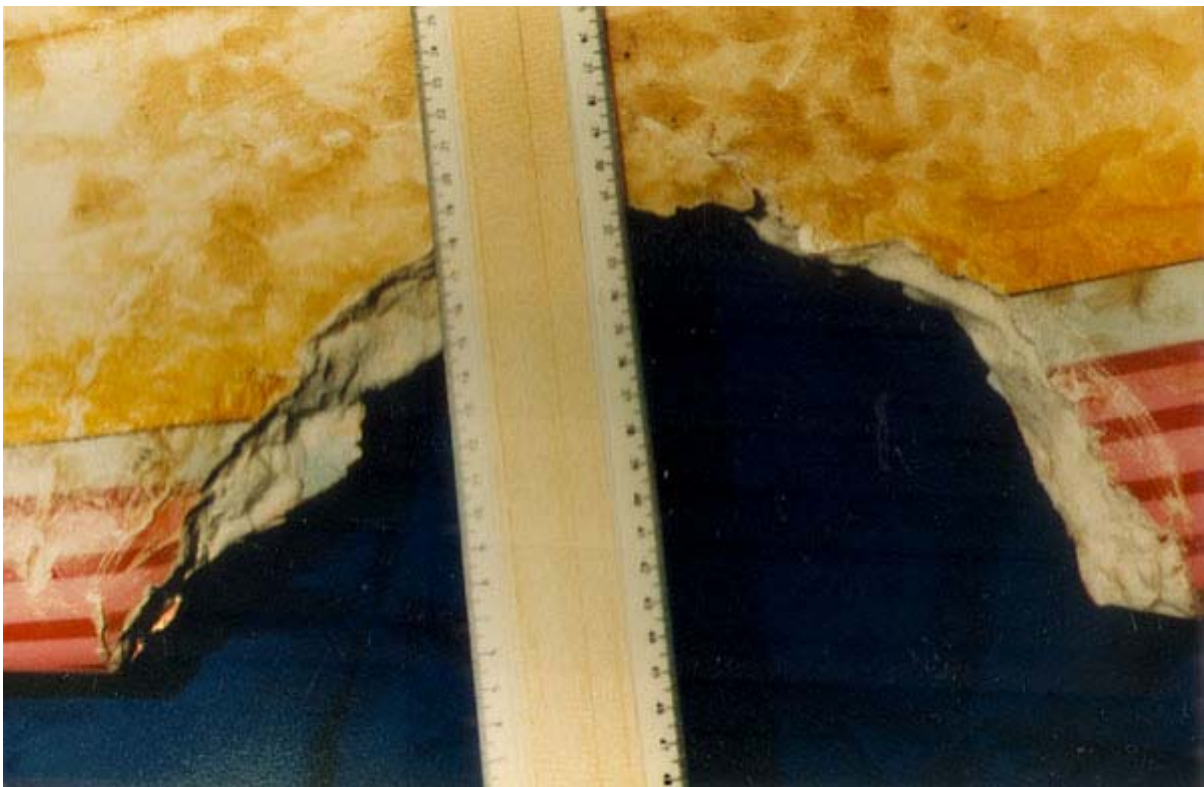


Under surface of Alex Macun's surfboard

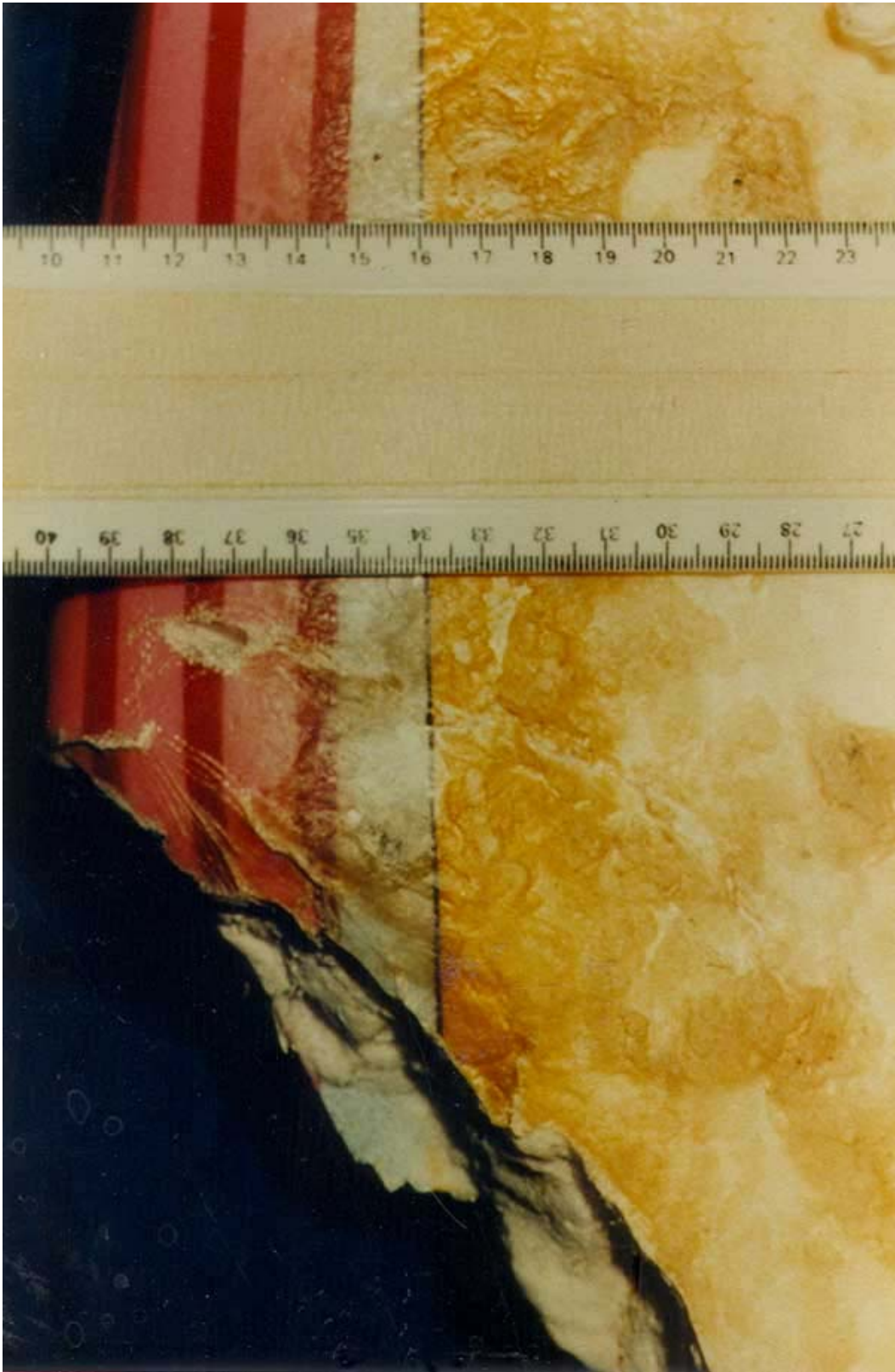
Deck of Alex Macun's surfboard



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