

**ACTIVITY:** Windsurfing

**CASE** GSAF 1994.01.30 / SA-407

**DATE:** Sunday January 30, 1994

**LOCATION:** The incident took place in South Africa close to the river mouth at Nahoon, East London in the Eastern Cape Province.

32°59,4'S, 27°57,1'E

**NAME:** Andrew Arthur Austin

**DESCRIPTION:** The windsurfer, a 44-year-old male, is 1,67 metres tall and weighs 83 kilograms. He was clad in a faded black, yellow and orange three-millimetre wetsuit, and faded blue booties. He wore no leash and had no injuries before the incident.

**BOARD:** The windsurfer was using a three-metre Kolaski triffin sailboard. The upper surface was white, yellow, blue and orange; the undersurface was white with red and pink fins.

## BACKGROUND

**WEATHER:** The sky was sunny, air temperature was estimated to be 25°C, and there was a moderate 15-knot northeasterly breeze.

**MOON PHASE:** Waning Gibbous, 89% of the Moon was illuminated. Full Moon, January 27, 1994.

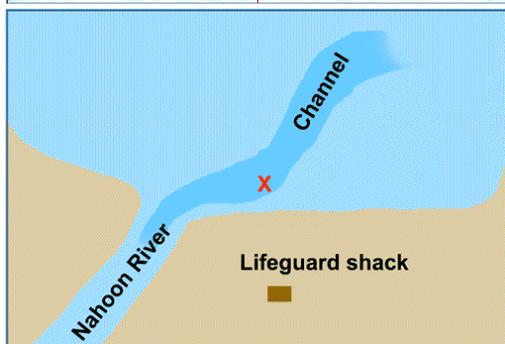
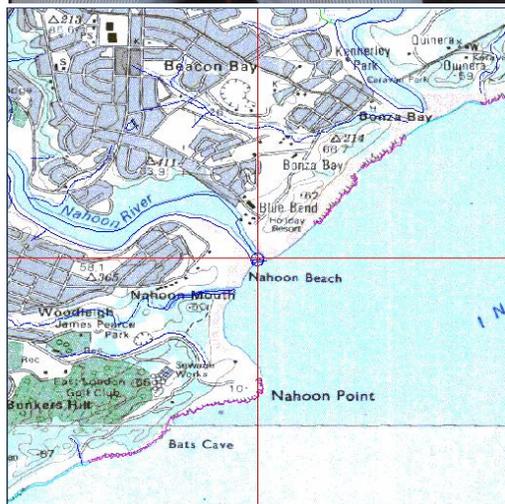
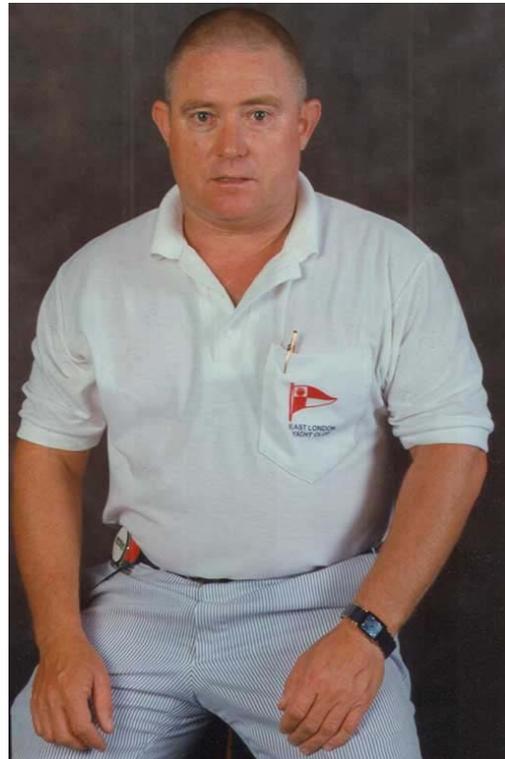
**SEA CONDITIONS:** The sea was blue, and choppy. A small swell running. Visibility was five metres, and water temperature was 18°C, estimated.

**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. About 200 people were on the beach and 50 were in the water. The incident took place in the one-metre-deep channel extending from the river mouth, about 200 metres from the bathing area where Junior Lifesavers were training. No one was fishing in the area and no unusual fish or bird activity was observed. Next day Lionel Hartly, a Hobie sailor, told Austin that dolphins were present in the bay on Sunday.

**DISTANCE FROM SHORE:** 30 metres

**DEPTH:** One metre

**TIME:** 13h30



**NARRATIVE:** Andy Austin had been windsurfing for two hours. "I was facing shoreward, turning to sail out to sea, when I momentarily lost my balance and my leg went into the water. This was when the shark grabbed it," said Austin. The windsurfer did not see the shark.

**INJURY:** The windsurfer's left calf was bitten.

**DAMAGE TO BOARD:** No damage

**FIRST AID / TREATMENT:** Lifesavers administered first aid, then took Austin, in a baakie, to Frere Hospital. The ride took about 20 minutes. At the hospital Austin's wounds were sutured by Dr Andy Terr, then he was discharged. No X-rays were taken of the wound and no tooth fragments were recovered. Post op photographs of the injury are in the GSAF restricted case file.

**SPECIES INVOLVED:** Not identified

**COMMENT:** Nahoon Beach was temporarily closed after the incident. In 1980, Austin was swimming at Kings Beach, Port Elizabeth, when he was bitten on the arm by a raggedtooth shark (CASE GSAF 1980.01.10).

**CASE INVESTIGATOR:** Andrew Gifford, Shark Research Institute-South Africa



*Andy Austin with his windsurfer after the incident*

## Shark bites wind-surfer

EAST LONDON—The Nahoon beach bathing area was closed temporarily yesterday after a shark attacked a boardsailor.

Mr Andy Austin, of Beacon Bay, was bitten on the calf while sailing in shallow water in the river mouth shortly after 1pm.

He was not seriously injured and was recovering at his home yesterday evening after having the wound stitched up at Frere hospital.

N. MERCURY  
31. 1. 1994

## Shark attack

East London: The Nahoon Beach bathing area near East London was temporarily closed after a shark attacked a boardsailor.

Andy Austin, of Beacon Bay, was bitten on the calf while sailing in shallow water in the river mouth just after 1pm yesterday.

He was not seriously injured.—Sapa

31/1/94