

ACTIVITY: Surfing

CASE: GSAF 1997.12.28.a / SA-420

DATE: Sunday December 28, 1997

LOCATION: The incident took place in the Indian Ocean at St. Francis Bay, between Port Elizabeth's main beach and the Krom River Mouth, Eastern Cape Province, South Africa.



St. Francis Bay

NAME: Stuart Buchanan

DESCRIPTION: The surfer, a white male from Cape Town, was clad in a three-quarter sleeveless wetsuit. The wetsuit was black with an angled pink bank on each leg.

BACKGROUND

MOON PHASE: Waning crescent, 2% of the Moon was illuminated. New Moon, December 29, 1997

ENVIRONMENT: According to witnesses, a shoal of small fish was observed in close proximity to the surfers shortly before the incident.

DISTANCE FROM SHORE: 75 metres

NARRATIVE: Stuart Buchanan was sitting on his surfboard with both legs dangling in the water. He was unaware of the shark's presence until he felt a bump on his leg as the shark bit his left calf.

INJURY: According to the medical superintendent of Humansdorp Hospital, there were 12 lacerations and numerous deep puncture marks in the surfer's left calf.

TREATMENT: The surfer was treated on an outpatient basis at Humansdorp Hospital. His injuries were sutured and he was discharged.

SPECIES INVOLVED: The nature and description of the injuries suggest that a raggedtooth shark may have been involved.

SOURCE: Daily Dispatch (East London), December 30, 1997

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