

ACTIVITY: Surfing

CASE: GSAF 2006.02.08

DATE: Wednesday February 8, 2006

LOCATION: The incident took place in the Indian Ocean at Nahoon Beach, five kilometres northeast of the harbour entrance at East London, Eastern Cape Province, South Africa.

32°59,4'S, 27°57,1'E

NAME: Jason Noades

DESCRIPTION: He is a 15-year-old male from Bonnie Doon. He has been surfing for three years.

BACKGROUND

WEATHER: The sky was partly cloudy, average humidity was 81%, and there was a light southwesterly breeze. Air temperatures during the day ranged from 17° to 26°C, but by late afternoon it was 19°C.

MOON PHASE: Waxing Gibbous, 80% of the Moon's visible disk was illuminated.

SEA CONDITIONS: The water temperature was 17°C, mean high tide was at 14h03.

ENVIRONMENT: Nahoon lies on the west bank of the Nahoon River. The most popular beach in East London, Nahoon is renowned throughout the South African surfing community for producing some spectacular waves and it is the site of many surfing competitions. The incident took place 150 metres west of the Nahoon Mouth.

TIME: Late afternoon

NARRATIVE: There were about seven other surfers in the water when the incident took place. "I was surfing when I fell and the wave took me down," said Noades. "Then I felt something grab my right leg and I saw the shark's fin, which was about 15 centimetres long." Noades' friend, who was surfing a few metres behind him, also saw the shark.

Noades said he kicked the shark with his left foot and then "I paddled faster without even looking back." When he was out of the water he told the lifesaver who called everybody in.

INJURY: The surfer sustained two bite marks to his right calf.

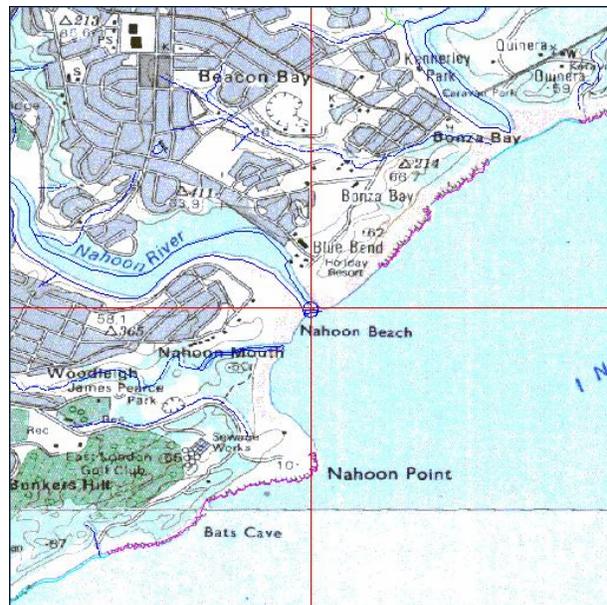
DAMAGE TO EQUIPMENT: The leg of his surfing suit was torn.

SPECIES INVOLVED: After examining the wetsuit and photographs of the injuries, Greg



Photo by Alan Eason

Jason Noades shows the tear made by the shark's teeth in the leg of his surfing suit.



Brett of the East London Museum concluded the incident involved a raggedtooth shark, *C. taurus*.

NOTE: Barry Noades, Jason's father, is a former Springbok pedal surfer who reports that he also had a run-in with a white shark while surfing at Nahoon Reef some time back. Barry thinks the situation has come to a stage where something needed to be done to protect people at the Nahoon Beach stretch. "Sharks are now moving to the shore to get food . . . even fishermen say there are fewer fish," said Barry. However, according to Jason, his parents have not discouraged him from going back in the water.

SOURCES: Modise Kabeli, Dispatch Online
<http://www.dispatch.co.za/2006/02/10/Easterncape/abshark.html>
<http://www.go.co.za/2006/02/16/news/dshark.html>