

NO ONE HURT, SHARK LIVES

Great white thumps on to boat

Staff Writer

A THREE-METRE great white shark breached into a vessel carrying marine researchers yesterday.

While none were injured, they said it gave them "the fright of our lives".

Six researchers from Oceans Research, a Mossel Bay-based marine research organisation, were on the boat Cheetah collecting data on sharks near Seal Island, in Mossel Bay, led by field specialist Dorien Schroder.

It was 6.30am. "Activity around the boat ceased for about five minutes and all was pretty quiet at the stern," Schroder said.

"Next thing, I hear a splash and see a great white breach out of the water from one side of the boat hovering, literally over a crew member chum-

containers - with half of its body onto the boat, she said.

The team hoped the shark would make its way back into the water, but watched horrified as the it panicked and became stuck, thrashed around and damaged equipment on board.

The shark began cutting the fuel lines as it twisted and turned on the deck.

Schroder helped the researchers to safety while other team members rushed towards a safe area on the boat.

Shark scientist Ryan Johnson and Oceans co-director Enrico Gennari were radioed and raced out to sea to assist, while Schroder began pouring water over the shark's gills.

When Johnson, Gennari and a crew of field specialists arrived, their attempts to return the shark to the water included tying one end of a



HIGH AND DRY: The 500kg great white shark that breached onto a research vessel in Mossel Bay yesterday morning had to be lifted off damaged boat was towed back to the harbour. The shark survived the ordeal and nobody was injured.

shark off the Cheetah.

After the attempts failed the Cheetah was towed to Mossel Bay harbour where a crane was used to lift the boat off the boat.

Oceans Research marketing

gills while ropes were secured to its tail.

"The shark immediately began thrashing as soon as it hit the water.

"It was then seen swimming towards the harbour mouth,"

harbour beach, she said.

Johnson and his team then attached ropes to its tail and behind the pectoral fins and a boat slowly towed it out to sea.

"About a kilometre from the harbour, the shark began to

Heil said.

"This is the first time such a thing has happened to us. The Cheetah is damaged, but will be repaired and will be back in the water in a few days."

Said Johnson: "When work-

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