

Orca Whales Attack Boats During Race

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Two teams in a world-wide sailing race got a surprise when they bumped into a group of killer whales, also known as orcas, while they were sailing west of Gibraltar in the Atlantic Ocean. The teams, Team JAJO from Amsterdam and Mirpuri Trifork Racing from Portugal, are part of a race called The Ocean Race VO65 Sprint. This race is a shorter version of a bigger race called The Ocean Race, which also helps scientists collect data about the climate.

The captain of the JAJO team, Jelmar van Beek, said there were many orcas and they came very close to the boats. They even bumped and bit at parts of the boats called rudders, which help steer. Even though this was scary, no one got hurt and the boats didn't get damaged.

Recently, there have been more cases of orcas acting like they are planning to attack boats. A lot of these cases have happened near Gibraltar, which is close to Spain. Researchers aren't sure why this is happening, but the number of these events has gone up a lot in the last two years. There have been cases where boats have sunk because of damage caused by orcas.

A boat captain who had two encounters with orcas said that it seemed like the whales knew what they were doing. They destroyed the rudders on his boat, but didn't harm anything else.

Comprehension Questions:

1. How did the sailors feel during the encounters with the orcas?
 - a) Excited
 - b) Scared
 - c) Annoyed
 - d) Indifferent
2. According to the captain's observations, how did the orcas behave?
 - a) Randomly
 - b) Accidentally
 - c) Intentionally
 - d) Peacefully
3. How does the Ocean Race help scientists?
 - a) It investigates causes of orca attacks.
 - b) The boats can attack orcas with machine guns.
 - c) It raises funds for climate research.
 - d) It collects valuable climate data.
4. Which of the following statements is true?
 - a) The number of orca attacks against boats has not changed in the last two years.
 - b) The number of orca attacks against boats has decreased in the last two years.
 - c) The number of orca attacks against boats has increased in the last two years.
 - d) This is the first time that orcas have attacked boats.



5. Which of these statements is NOT true?
- The Ocean Race VO65 Sprint is a part of The Ocean Race.
 - All incidents of orcas attacking boats have been near Gibraltar.
 - No one was hurt when the orcas interacted with the boats.
 - The orcas bumped and bit the rudders of the boats.
6. Why might the orca encounters be a problem for sailors?
- The orcas could damage their boats and potentially cause them to sink.
 - The orcas could swim faster than their boats and win the race.
 - The orcas could eat their food supplies.
 - The orcas make navigation more difficult.
7. How can we understand the orcas' selective damage to the boats?
- Orcas have a specific interest in the rudders.
 - Orcas randomly attack parts of boats.
 - Orcas were attempting to communicate with the sailors.
 - The damage to the boats was accidental.
8. What is a rudder?
- A type of sail used in boats.
 - A part of the boat that helps with steering.
 - A device used to measure wind speed.
 - A tool for catching fish from a boat.
9. Based on the incidents, what can we understand about orcas' intelligence?
- Orcas are unintelligent because they are fish.
 - Orcas are able to distinguish between different parts of a boat.
 - Orcas can effectively communicate with humans.
 - Orcas understand the concept of sailing races.
10. What is the main idea of the article?
- Two sailing teams encountered orcas near Gibraltar during a race.
 - Orcas are very aggressive and intelligent animals.
 - The Ocean Race helps scientists collect climate data while promoting sailing.
 - The encounters with killer whales have led to increased safety measures in sailing races.

Speaking and Writing Activities:

- Discuss these questions with a partner or a small group.
- Choose one topic and write a response to it. Show your writing to a classmate or teacher.

1. What are some possible reasons why orcas have started interacting with boats more frequently?
2. Have you ever travelled by boat before? Describe the experience.
3. Do you think it's okay to keep orcas and other dolphins in aquariums and amusement parks for human entertainment? Discuss.

