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CRUISE REPORT

FRS CLUPEA

24 FEBRUARY -- 6 MARCH 1975

OBJECTIVE

International Young Herring and Gadoid Pre-recruit Survey in the North Sea

'Clupea' left Aberdeen on the evening of 24 February and headed for the most easterly station to start trawling in day light. At the first haul the trawl was badly damaged and had to be replaced. The second haul also resulted in serious damage but the net was repairable. The first haul on the next day (26 February) was clear but at the second haul the net was again badly damaged but repairable. Three hauls on 27 February were clear with only minor damage in one; the only haul on the following day was also valid with only minor damage before 'Clupea' returned to Aberdeen, 'Clupea' sailed again on 3 March to start trawling on the Gadoid stations off Aberdeen with a clear haul, but at the next haul in the early hours of 4 March most of the trawl was lost. The next six hauls were clear with no damage but in each of the final three hauls of the cruise the net was badly damaged until finally it was not repairable. Most of the damage during the cruise appeared to be caused by large boulders; on two occasions the cod end came on board with boulders in it.

On 6 March hydrography stations were carried out before 'Clupea' entered Aberdeen in the evening.

Only two of the valid hauls produced any quantity of herring, 213 from 65 miles NE of St Abbs and 349 from 60 miles East of St Abbs. The other valid hauls yielded from 0 to 92 herring. From one spoiled haul, 20 miles NE of St Abbs, about $\frac{2}{3}$ of all the catch escaped from a torn cod-end but over 1,000 herring were brought on board. Nearly 90% of the herring caught during the cruise belonged to the autumn 1973 year class, with a size range of 13 to 20 cm.

Throughout the cruise the bulk of the catches consisted of young haddock and young whiting between 11 and 21 cm long. Whiting was the most abundant species in the catches off the Firth of Forth and haddock in the catches between the Firth of Tay and Aberdeen.

G McPherson

1.5.75

Seen in Draft by Mr G Geddes.