

MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE, FISHERIES AND FOOD
 FISHERIES LABORATORY, LOWESTOFT, SUFFOLK ENGLAND
 1983 RESEARCH VESSEL PROGRAMME

REPORT: "RV G A REAY": CRUISE 8

(PROVISIONAL: Not to be quoted without prior reference to the author)

STAFF:

B W Jones
 P Wallace
 B C Mumford
 G Howlett
 J Coleman

DURATION:

Left Aberdeen 1645h 10 August
 Docked Aberdeen 1515h 29 August (All times BST)

AIMS:

To undertake a trawl survey of Rockall Bank to determine the distribution and abundance of haddock and other species of commercial importance.

NARRATIVE:

G A REAY departed from her berth at 1345h on 10 August to take fuel. The ship sailed from the oil quay at 1645h and made passage direct to Rockall. Fishing commenced at 1030h on 12 August and continued until 1630h on 27 August with only one short interruption due to gale force winds. G A REAY then returned to Aberdeen where she again took fuel before berthing at 1700h on 29 August.

RESULTS:

1. The trawl survey of Rockall Bank was successfully completed and 54 valid survey tows of one hour duration were made using the Portuguese high-headline trawl fitted with a small meshed liner in the cod-end. The attached chart shows the positions of the tows.

Haddock were less abundant than last year. For the 45 tows which were worked in all three surveys (1981, 82 and 83) the total catch of haddock was 28,000 tonnes which can be compared with 30,000 tonnes in 1981 and 48,000 tonnes in 1982. Maximum catch rate was 2 tonnes per hour. 0-group haddock were caught in only very small numbers (<100 fish) compared with 350,000 in 1981 and none in 1982.

More cod were caught than in previous years but their distribution was patchy. Large saithe were taken in smaller quantities.

A sample of 523 haddock otoliths was collected. Otoliths of cod (200) and saithe (70) were also taken.

2. In addition to the 54 survey hauls a further 14 trawl hauls were made for a selectivity experiment using a 90mm (nominal) cod-end. The cod-end was double braided treated nylon and was fitted with a fine mesh

bottom side liner and a fine mesh topside cover. Two of the hauls were invalid due to damage to the cover. In the remaining 12 hauls over 8 tonnes of haddock were caught. The results gave a selection factor of 2.69.

3. Samples of fish of various species were collected and frozen for use in fish identification courses.

Two samples of horse mackerel were frozen for further analysis.

B W Jones
29 August 1983

SEEN IN DRAFT:

W E Clark, Master

INITIALED:

D J G

DISTRIBUTION:

Basic List:

B W Jones

P Wallace

B C Mumford

G Howlett

J Coleman

