

In Confidence - Not to be quoted without prior reference to the Laboratory

R1/10

11GR84

FRV "Goldseeker"

LD

Cruise 11/84

Report

18 October - 7 November

Objectives

- 1) To observe Nephrops behaviour along the sweep wires and at the wingends with special attention to whether or not Nephrops pass from the sweeps towards the wingends.
- 2) To make diving observations of Nephrops reactions at dusk using the TUV II.
- 3) To compare the sizes of catches of Nephrops and fish on commercial grounds using BT 160 trawl fitted with a separating panel. The trawl will be fished with and without sweeps.
- 4) To obtain a wide range of demersal fish species for staff training purposes at the Laboratory.

Narrative

The Scientific staff joined the Goldseeker at Buckie on Tuesday 18 October but due to bad weather the vessel was unable to make a passage to Burghead. The opportunity was taken to load the trawl gear aboard and the dredges and scientific equipment from the previous cruise taken ashore and returned to Aberdeen.

The Goldseeker sailed for Burghead the next day where the scientific equipment and diving vehicle was loaded and prepared for operation.

Due to the bad weather the vessel remained in port until Sunday 21 October when an attempt was made to collect enough demersal species for staff training purposes at the Laboratory in Aberdeen. Unfortunately catches were poor in the area and the objective was not achieved.

The next 3 days were worked off Burghead where diving observations were made of rigging of the separating panel which lead to major alterations ashore at Burghead. Due to poor catches of both Nephrops and fish our base was moved to Buckie where the first half landing was arranged for Tuesday 25 October. Before sailing the diving vehicle was replaced by the remote vehicle for work in deeper water.

On the 26 October severe gales again prevented the vessel from sailing from Buckie and during the day regrettably Mr William MacKay, a relief member of the crew died on his way home from the vessel

The Goldseeker sailed on Monday 29 and proceeded to where the Buckie fleet were operating 10 miles North of Cullen. With continuing bad weather the RCTV could not

be used but 2 trawl hauls were made during that day and repeated the next day (30 October).

The second half landing was brought forward for the funeral of Mr MacKay.

Bad weather continued to affect the programme and the Goldseeker sailed on the 1 November only to return to port without shooting the trawl gear.

The next day the weather had improved and observations were made of the gear, fish and Nephrop reactions but poor fishing had now affected this area and the fleet had moved off even further and out of the range of our operation.

Unfortunately the weather again brought the operations to a halt for the next 3 days allowing us only the last day at sea where 2 trawl hauls were made.

The scientific and trawl gear was returned to Aberdeen on Wednesday 7 November.

Results

The new trawl BT 160 was filmed and measured giving a headline of 2.7m.
Separator free running of 1.2m.
Wingend height 2.1m.
Spread between the wingends 7m.
Towing at a speed of 2.3knots.

It was noted that the lower wings were very slack and the centre of the headline was peaked. 4 x 200mm floats were added, 2 to each quarter of the headline, this improved the shape of the headline to a smooth curve and lifted the slack netting in the lower wing without lifting the footrope.

The separator fishing line was in the correct position vertically above the footrope but the amount of material in the separator panels had to be altered considerably by taking in meshes on each side back as far as the joins of the 2 codends. It was observed before the alteration that small fish were being pushed up through the top panel by the flapping of spare material in the separator at a position just before the codends.

Effective separation was obtained in all the hauls with haddock, whiting and squid being caught in the top codend and Nephrops flats, angler, skate and dogfish in the bottom codend. The separator was set at 75cms above the footrope.

The new fittings for the stern gantry of the Goldseeker worked well and improved the handling of the RCTV. No problems were encountered.

J Main

17 December 1984

Seen in draft by A Mair