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FRV "Goldseeker" 9GR86
Cruise 9/86

Report

17 June - 2 July 1986

Personnel

P A M Stewart	PSO	(in charge)
R Priestley	SSO	
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Objectives

1 To use the underwater vehicle "SEAPUP" to observe a seine net of current design, to observe the shape and mesh opening of the codend and to check the mounting and operation of underwater instruments used for performance measurements.

2 To measure the performance of BT155 with bobbins, to check earlier data on groundgear drag.

Narrative

The fishing gear was loaded in Corpach on 17 June. The underwater vehicle had developed a fault and was unavailable, having been returned to the manufacturers for repair. "Goldseeker" sailed for Stornoway, arriving about 1300 on 19 June. A drop-camera system was rigged as a temporary measure and tested near Chicken Rock on 20 June. On 21 and 22 June, "Goldseeker" accompanied the chartered vessel "Jenmar" to Broad Bay to participate in seine net trials. Underwater visibility was too poor for the camera to be used and the vessel was used to obtain net height, depth and spread measurements using a Scanmar system. Twenty-third of June was taken as the half-landing.

Delivery of the repaired "SEAPUP" was delayed until the evening of 24 June, the day was used to test at sea an underwater colour camera system. On 25 June "SEAPUP" was installed on the vessel and tested extensively in Lochs Grimshadder and Erisort. To provide more time for objective 1 and to make as much use as possible of "SEAPUP", objective 2 was abandoned. From 26 to 29 June, "Goldseeker" operated in Broad Bay with "Jenmar" obtaining underwater observations of the seine net and ropes. "Goldseeker" anchored on clear tows and the net or ropes were shot close by.

Equipment was unloaded and scientific staff left the vessel in Stornoway on 30 June. "Goldseeker" sailed at 1100 for Dunstaffnage, arriving 1 July.

Results

"SEAPUP" was equipped with a 400 m long cable. It was established during the trials on 25 June that the vehicle was affected by cable drag and would be extremely difficult to use from an unanchored vessel. It was most manoeuverable if steered away from the vessel in a straight line with or against the tide but not across it. Seine net observations were made during 20 hauls with variable results. Under-

water visibility was extremely poor, which required the vehicle to be very close to the net and ropes to maintain contact during towing. Nevertheless a number of good sequences of observations were made on the net and ropes and recorded on video-tape. These will be edited in the laboratory and used to cross-check the gear instrument data and to compare with earlier material on other net types. Although the vehicle was able to reach most parts of the gear during the first stages of a haul, the limited length of the cable meant that observation could not take place throughout a haul. Thus observations on the codend shape, with and without a small mesh cover, proved difficult to obtain. In its present form, "SEAPUP" is not easy to use for tracking moving targets and is more suitable for use in static situations.

The Scanmar data will be analysed in due course along with the other measurements made of gear performance on "Jenmar".

Peter A M Stewart
28 August 1986

Seen in Draft: A Mair