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*Chairman—Clifford V. Varin, Fire Island
Sea Clam Co., Inc., West Sayville, New York*

Shrimp Fishing with Twin Trawls

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Abstract

Shrimp fishing with twin trawls is the towing of two nets, instead of one, from each outrigger. The nets are joined side by side by a sled or "dummy door." The sled is towed by the third wire of a 3-wire bridle. This wire constitutes the only significant change in the boat rigging.

The system allows any boat to spread considerably more webbing at reduced towing speed than is possible with standard rigs. This is attributed to several factors: (1) The third wire pulls straight from the towing block and essentially takes up half the drag resistance of both nets; (2) This allows the use of much smaller main-trawl doors, for example, 6' x 32" doors will easily spread 75 feet of webbing; (3) The four smaller individual net configurations offer less drag than two large standard nets.

After considerable testing and fine tuning on board the University of Georgia's trawler *Capt. Gene* and on cooperating commercial boats, twin trawls are proving to be more productive in Georgia's fishery.

Several comparative tows have been made on individual boats using twin gear on one side and standard gear on the other. Data from this type of experimentation are considered invalid because changes in engine rpm's can be made to favor either side.

We consider our best example of increased production to come from a group of fishermen in a north Georgia port. For years, one fisherman (A) had been the highliner. Another boat (B) of the same class and horsepower switched to twin trawls. During our last roe shrimp season, boat B doubled the production of Boat A. During the brown shrimp season, boat B again doubled boat A. During the present fall white shrimp season, boat B is outproducing boat A by 20 to 30% a week. Seven boats in this fleet have switched to twin trawls.