LONG-LINING for SWORDFISH



0. LONG-LINING for SWORDFISH - Story Preface

1. THE ANDREA GAIL

2. LONG-LINING for SWORDFISH

3. PREDICTING BAD WEATHER

4. PREDICTING DANGEROUS STORMS

5. THE PERFECT STORM DEVELOPS

6. DEATH ON THE HIGH SEAS

7. ANOTHER MAELSTROM

8. RESCUE EFFORTS AT SEA

9. THE UNNAMED HURRICANE

10. NEIGHBORS IN DEATH

Swordfish usually feed at night, but this one - off the coast of Florida - was caught during the day. Image online courtesy Florida Sportsman. Copyright, Florida Sportsman, all rights reserved. Provided here as fair use for educational purposes.

Looking for "blue [temperate] water" where swordfish feed, the crews of the *Andrea Gail* and *Hannah Boden* did what all "long-liners" do. They set their 40-mile lines with hooks - lots of hooks. About a thousand of them.

Since swordfish feed at night (especially when the moon is full), lines stay out overnight. At daylight, the crews see what they've caught. It's a tough life. No one gets much sleep when the lines are out. It takes a long time to set the line and a long time to harvest what the hooks have caught.

Because the equipment is dangerous (even more so than pre-modern fish hooks), crews have to be careful. It's hard to be careful on four hours of sleep. (Follow this link to see a picture of Linda Greenlaw and hear an audio interview where she describes life on a long-liner.)

Conservationists are often critical of long-lining. But, as Linda Greenlaw says in her recorded interview, being a long-liner and a conservationist aren't necessarily incompatible. Plus, the government of Canada has established a Management Plan which regulates swordfishing in the Grand Banks. The Plan allows long-lining.



Swordfish (Xiphias gladius) on the deck of a long-lining fishing vessel. Photo by Derke Snodgrass, online courtesy NOAA.

As Linda also says, it's easy to think "your luck will change" when things go well on a trip. If "the weather is great, you start to think when will it end."

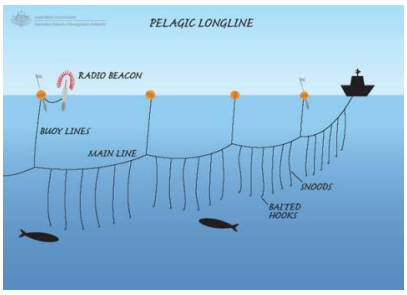
Skippers on fishing boats, in 1991, usually had fax machines on board to track when the good weather would end. Those fax machines served as safety lines for people who were days away from land. The best most crews can do with bad weather reports, however, is use the knowledge to ride out the storm.

Linda Greenlaw makes the point directly. If she had to constantly worry about bad weather, she and her crew "might as well never leave the dock."

See Alignments to State and Common Core standards for this story online at:
http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicAlignment/LONG-LINING-for-SWORDFISH-Perfect-Storm-The

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Media Stream



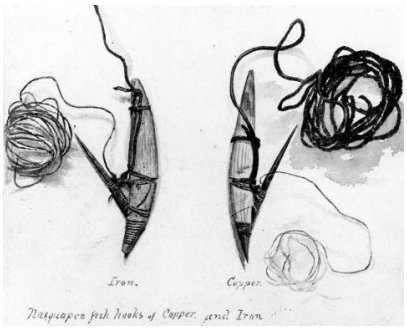
Long Liner Fish Hooks

Image, described above, online courtesy Duke University.

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Pre-Modern Fish Hooks

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