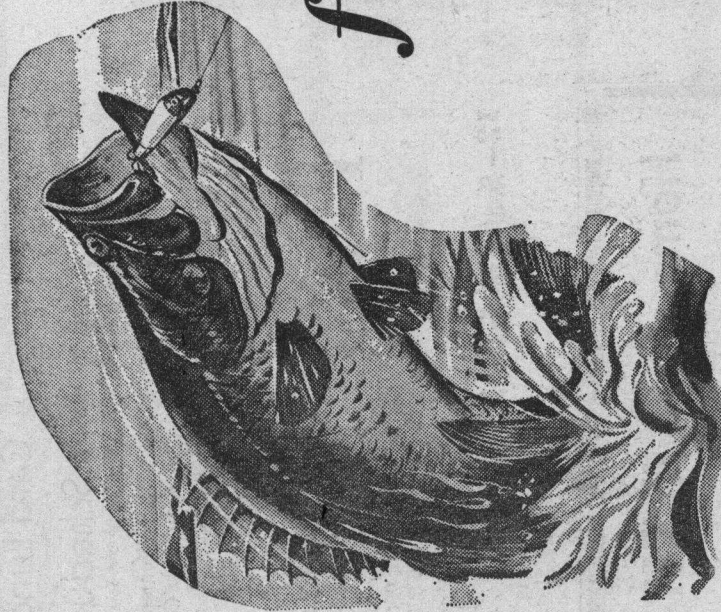




Trolling for Salmon

Salmon trolling: a nice way to spend a day on the bay.

That's about the best definition of a sport which is available daily to anyone, thanks to C. Stagnaro Fishing Trips.

Stagnaro's charter trips are certainly nothing new to sport fishermen as the old Santa Cruz family has offered fishing trips, of one sort or another, for the past 38 years. Presently, four Stagnaro boats comprise the charter service. Photos on this page were made on the "Old Tom," the vessel which does most of the trolling. Other boats are the Cottardo Stagnaro, Stagnaro I and Ida.

Salmon trolling is a fairly simple operation. At 6 a.m., you're leaving the Santa Cruz Wharf, and at about 6:30 and about three and a half miles from shore, the Old Tom's skipper, Tom Ghio, cuts the vessel to trolling speed—two knots. At this point, as many as 14 lines may go over the side.

Using years of experience, the skipper directs the craft to areas which he thinks salmon schools are most likely to be found. Meanwhile, fishing poles are secured along the boat's railing (see bottom photo), and the fisherman sits back and waits for a bite. When he notices a strike, he removes the pole from its bracket and immediately reels the fish aboard.

Like in any sport, there can be disappointment in salmon trolling. You may

spend seven hours fishing, and take aboard nothing but "shakers" (a fish under the legal size, which must be thrown back), but in almost all cases, just about everyone on the boat takes home at least one "keeper" (a fish of legal size).

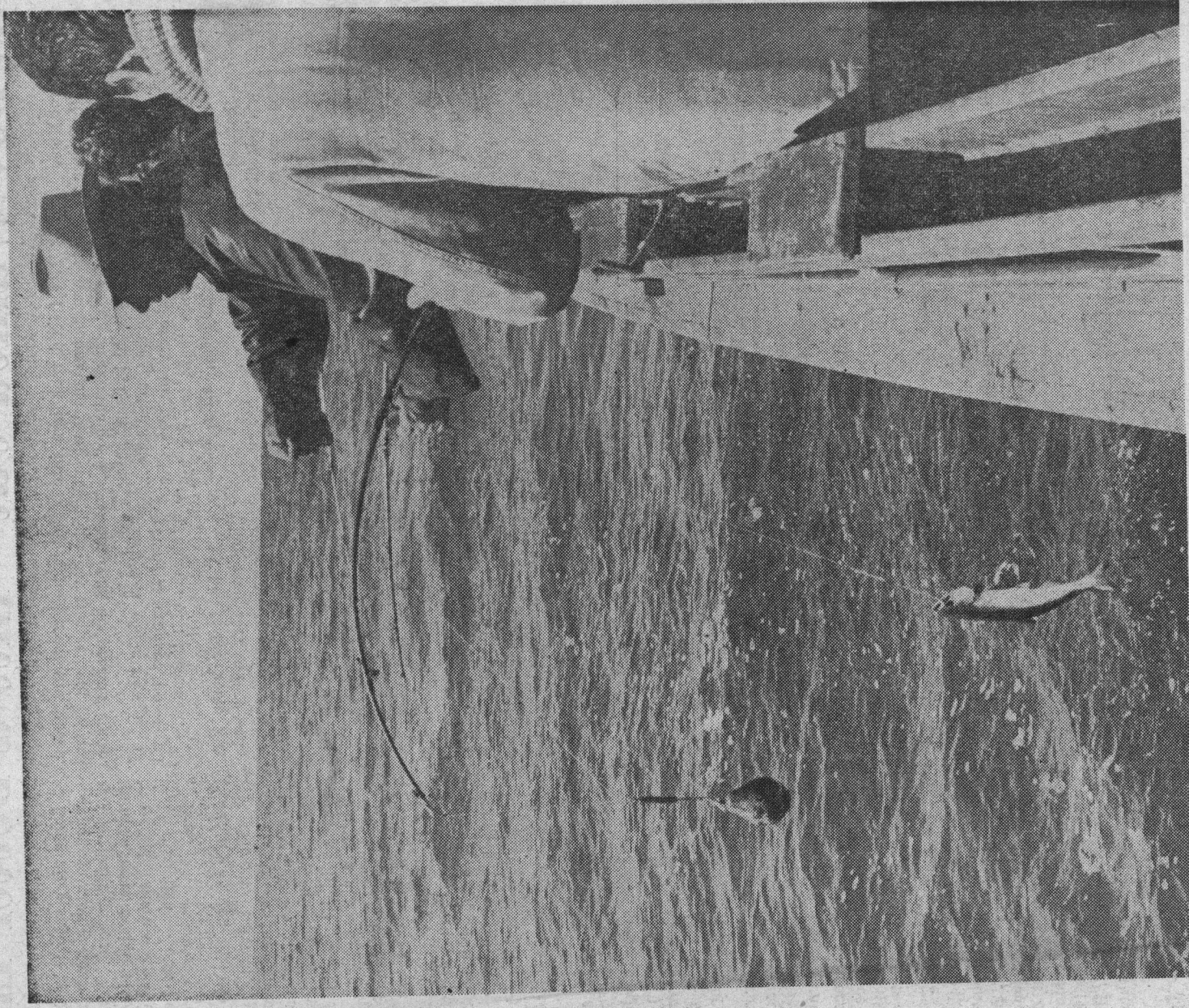
The California State Fish and Game Regulations give the salmon fisherman the benefit of the doubt. The limit is three fish, one of which may be between 20 and 22 inches. The other two, however, must be 22 inches or over. Fish and Game Warden Jack Wilson relates that there are two other main regulations: the trolling hook can not be more than one point and the weight may not exceed four pounds.

The weight is attached several feet above the hook and is freed if a large enough fish takes the bait. This makes reeling in a much more desirable task. It'll cost you 45 cents for another weight, but if you land a "keeper," it's well worth it.

The anchovy is the most popular bait, but some fishermen prefer a "spoon," a shiny metal lure.

The salmon season runs from the "Saturday nearest April 15" (April 18, this year) to the "Sunday nearest November 15" (November 12, this year). With weather and tidal conditions permitting, Stagnaro will continue its trips daily, although poor conditions—fish-wise—may also cause cancellation on any given day.

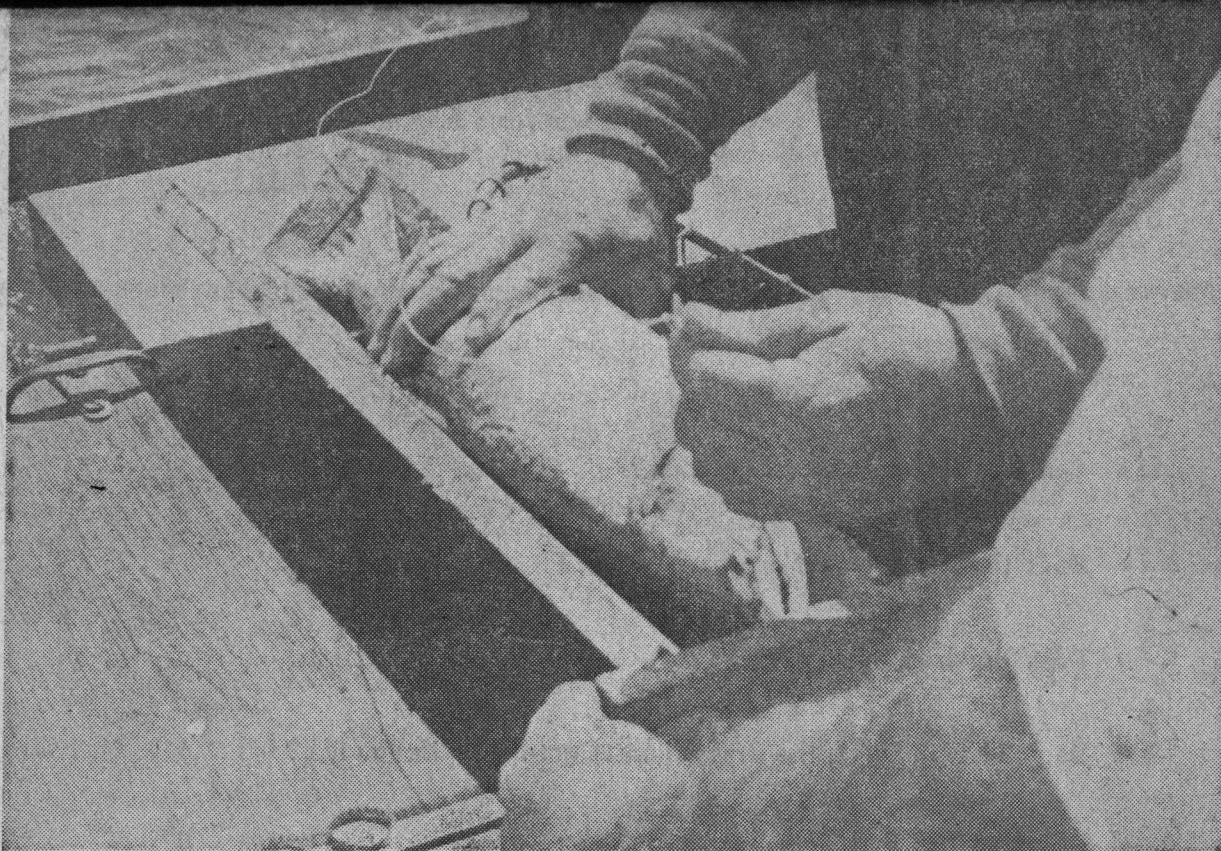
So, if you're not lucky enough to own your own boat or know someone who does, a day on the bay with Stagnaro should sell you on one of the sportiest of sports—salmon trolling.



Photos and Text

By John Lindsay

Tree'n' Sea
Living



Top Right—"Old Tom" crewman R. M. Roberts hauls aboard one of many "shakers" which are hooked daily during C. Stagnaro charter salmon trolling trips. Richard Sarkisian (right), of Los Gatos, hooked the under-sized fish, which was tossed back into Monterey Bay waters.

Above — This is the method by which salmon are measured to determine whether or not the fish is of legal size. Here, the salmon is placed in a v-shaped box, which is calidrated at 20 and 22 inches.

Above Right—Norman Masonson, director of the Santa Cruz Symphony, takes advantage of the opportunity to enjoy a little sunshine on a recent salmon trolling excursion. A few minutes after this photo was taken, Masonson hooked a legal salmon from Monterey Bay waters.

Right—This is the scene on the "Old Tom" during daily salmon trolling trips by C. Stagnaro Fishing Trips. The poles are secured to the boat which trolls at about two knots. When a salmon strikes, the fisherman, who should be watching his pole, removes the pole from its bracket and reels in the fish.

