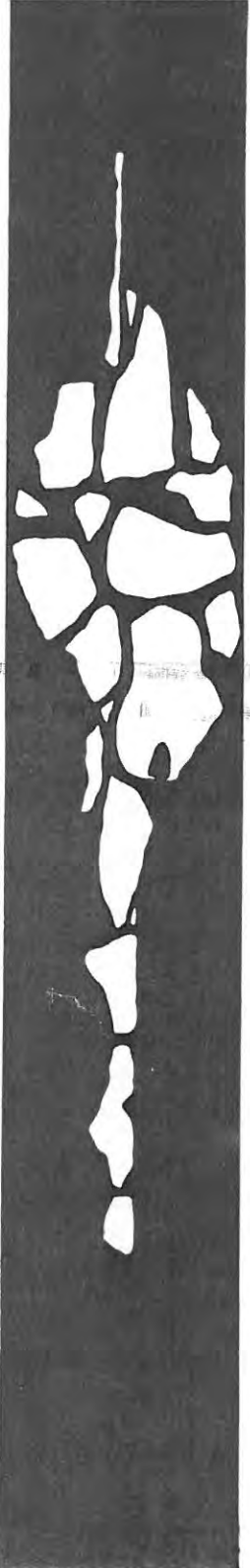


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ALASKA SEA GRANT PROGRAM

A PRELIMINARY ANALYSIS OF INJURIES IN THE ALASKA COMMERCIAL FISHING FLEET - 1984

Rick Steiner

Number 24
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This report presents data compiled from claims filed with the Alaska Fisherman's Fund. The Fisherman's Fund is administered by the Alaska State Department of Labor and supported by 60 percent of each commercial fisherman's license fee. It provides up to \$2500 for the treatment and care of an Alaskan commercial fisherman who suffers an occupation-related injury or illness.

The data was compiled and analyzed by Fishermen's Fund staff at the request of the University of Alaska Marine Advisory Program. The intent of this report is to give interested individuals and groups--insurance companies and pools, emergency medical services, fishermen's associations, education organizations, and fishermen--a better understanding of the nature of injuries that occur during commercial fishing activities. It is hoped that this information will prove useful in efforts to reduce the incidence of injuries in the Alaskan commercial fishing industry.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Of the 2637 claims filed in 1984, about 16 percent (420) were denied. Reasons for denial include: the injury being considered non-occupational; late filing/treatment; lack of a valid license; and the injury having occurred outside Alaska or Alaskan waters. Benefits paid have increased from \$504,917 in 1982 to \$868,345 in 1984. Cost per approved claim has increased from \$370 in 1982 to \$392 in 1984. Of the

claimants who specified residency, 69 percent were Alaska residents and 31 percent were non-resident.

NATURE OF INJURY

The data indicate that the most common injuries fleetwide were in the category of strains and sprains (including hernias). This was the overwhelmingly predominant category of injury in the gillnet, seine, trawl and pot fisheries, and was in second place only in the packer/tender fishery, where bruises were a slightly more common type of injury.

The second most frequently encountered category of injury was that of cuts, punctures, scrapes and avulsions (tearing). These injuries were the second most common in the troll and gillnet fisheries and nearly as common on longliners as strains and sprains. In the seine, pot and trawl fisheries, bruises were the second most common injury.

The two other major categories fleetwide were fractures/dislocations, and infections (cellulitis, ear infection, sore throat).

LOCATION OF INJURY

Injuries to arms, hands, fingers and shoulders were almost twice as common fleetwide as the next

most common area of injury, the spine. The longline fishery contributed the highest proportion of arm/hand/finger/shoulder injuries. Gillnet fishing resulted in the highest proportion of spinal injuries, closely followed by pot fishing.

INJURY BY FISH DISTRICT

Approximately 52 percent of all injury claims filed in 1984 and reporting location were from statistical area 3-- the central Gulf of Alaska (Yakutat to the east side of the Alaska Peninsula). Injuries using pot gear in District 3 accounted for the greatest number of injuries in any one area.

Gillnet, seine, pot, longline, and troll gear accounted for 96 percent of all injuries attributable to specific gear types. The remaining 4 percent included trawl, tender/packer, and scallop/clam.

NATURE OF INJURY BY BODY LOCATION OF INJURY

Most cut/puncture/scrape/avulsion injuries (65 percent) occurred on the arms/hands/fingers/shoulders. Most strain/sprain injuries (68 percent) occurred in the spinal area, and these comprised the single most recurrent injury during 1984. Most bruises, fracture/dislocations, and

musculo-skeletal disease (including bursitis, arthritis, tenosynovitis) occurred in the arm/hand/finger/shoulder category.

LIMITATIONS OF DATA

The usefulness of this data is limited by the following:

1. No knowledge of the incidence of unreported injuries
2. No breakdown of the extent of injuries by fishery, body area, and type of injury
3. No information on specific cause of injury

Of these, it is considered most important to determine the specific cause of injuries. It should be possible to compile and analyze such information from the standard Physician's Report of Injury/Illness that accompanies the claimant's Certificate of Eligibility.

CHARTS

NATURE OF INJURY LEGEND

- 100 Cuts, punctures, scrapes, avulsion
 110 Teeth
 115 Glasses
 120 Strains, sprains (including hernias)
 125 Bruises (crush, contusion)
 130 Fractures, dislocations
 140 Burns
 150 Amputations
 160 Infections (cellulitis, sore throats, ears)
 170 Respiratory diseases (URI, pneumonia, bronchitis, emphysema)
 175 Cardio and vascular disease (heart and CVA)
 180 Musculo-skeletal disease, bursitis, arthritis, tenosynovitis
 185 Carpal tunnel syndrome (CTS)
 190 Not otherwise classified

TYPE OF GEAR LEGEND

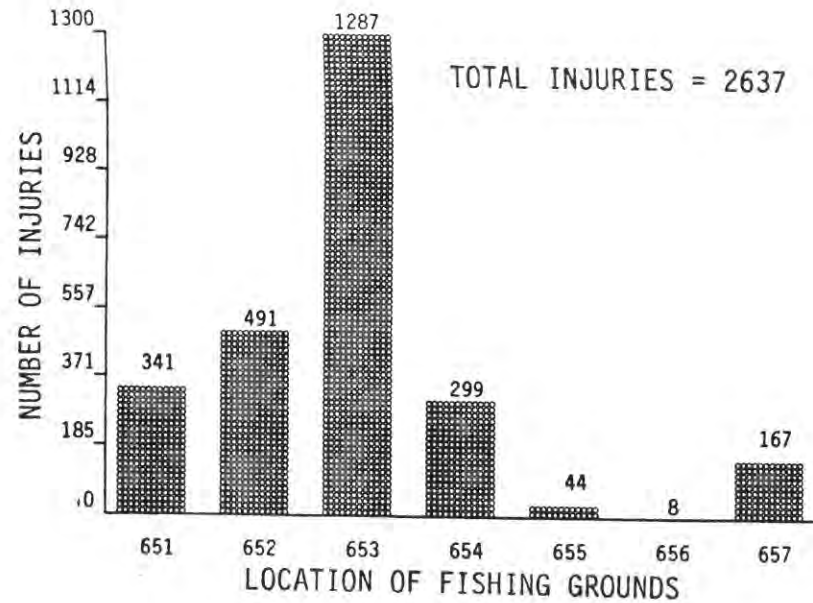
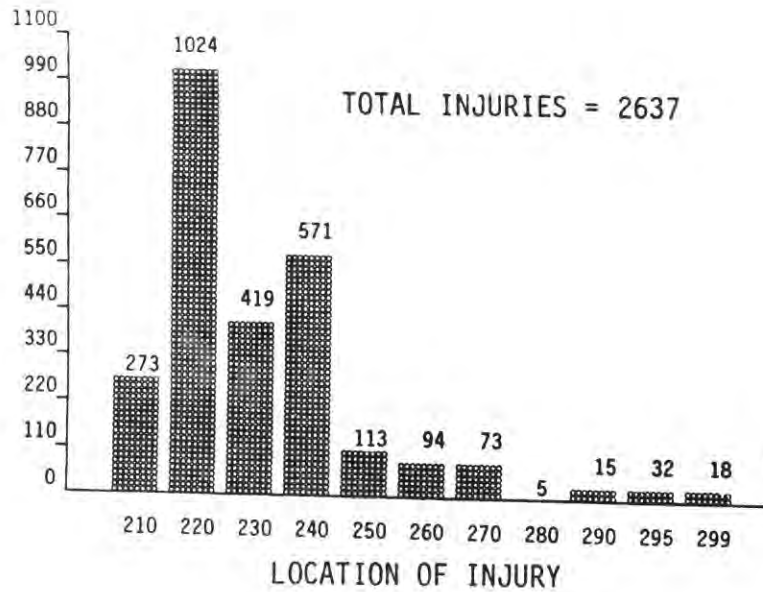
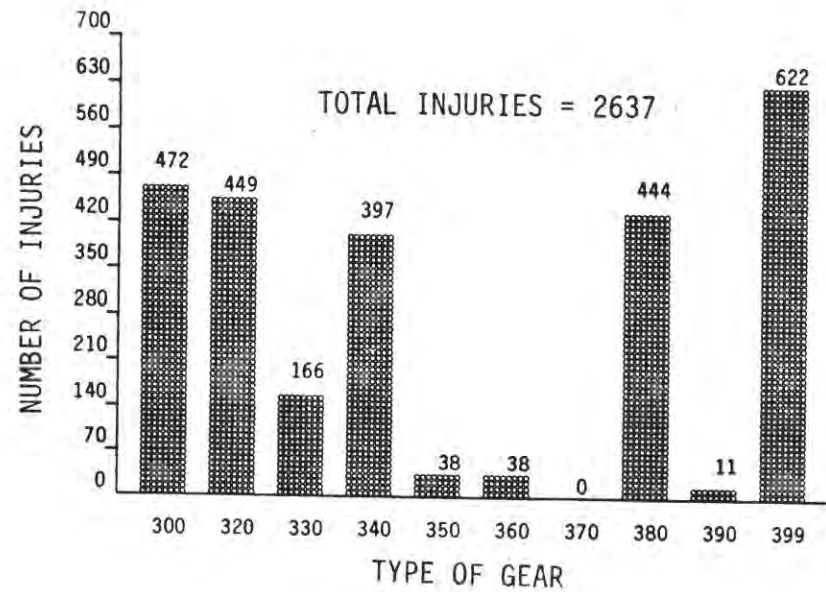
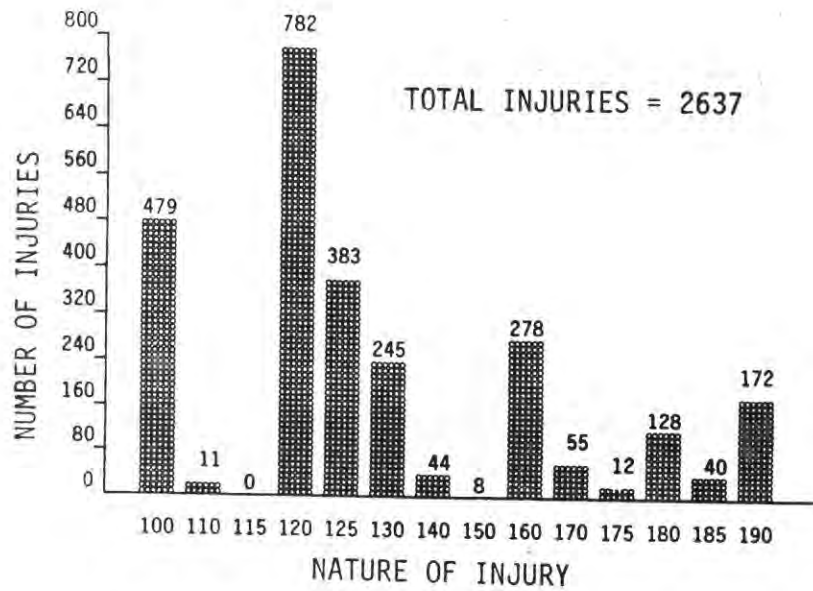
- 300 Gillnet
 320 Seine
 330 Troll
 340 Pots
 350 Trawl
 360 Packer/Tender
 370 Multiple Gear
 380 Longline
 390 Scallop, clam
 399 Not stated

LOCATION OF INJURY LEGEND

- 210 Head, face, neck
 220 Arms, hands, fingers, shoulders
 230 Legs, feet, toes, hips
 240 Spine (complete)
 250 Chest (bone structure), ribs, clavicle
 260 Chest (soft tissue), lungs, heart
 270 Abdomen (stomach and internal organs, including genital system)
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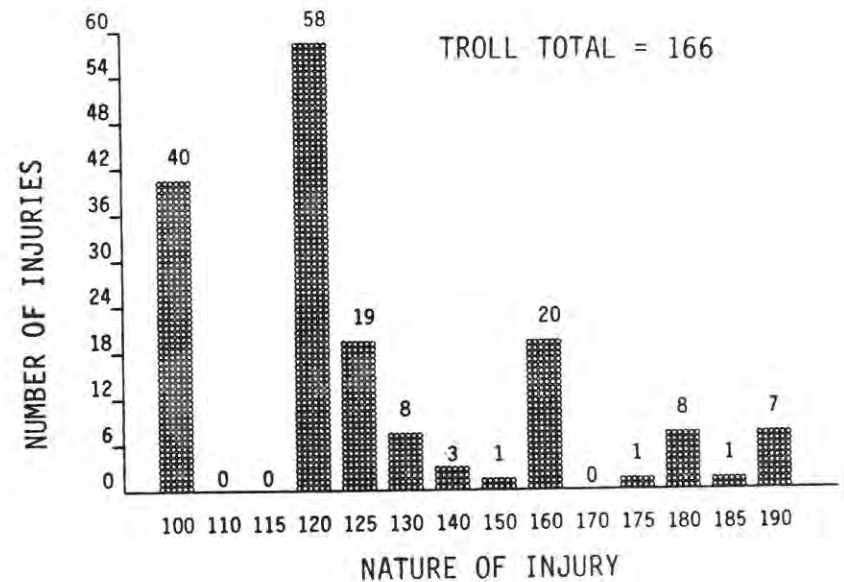
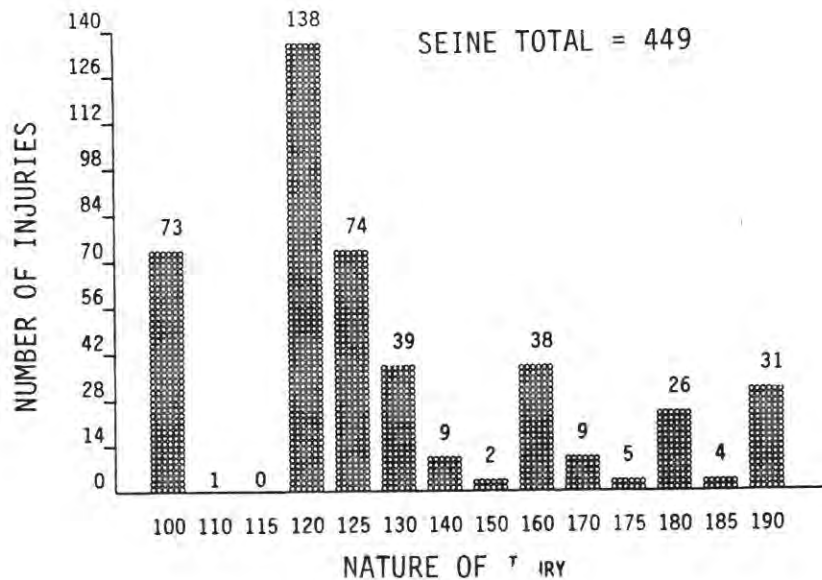
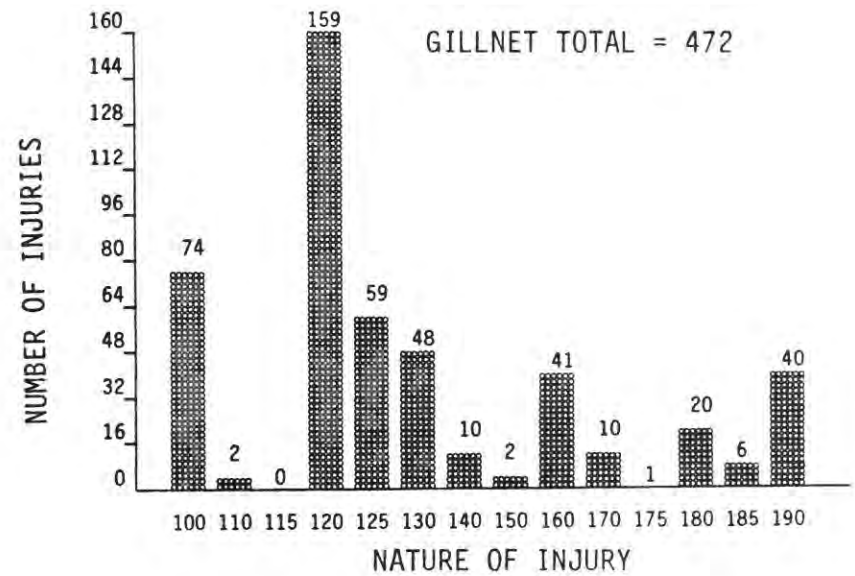
FISH DISTRICTS LEGEND

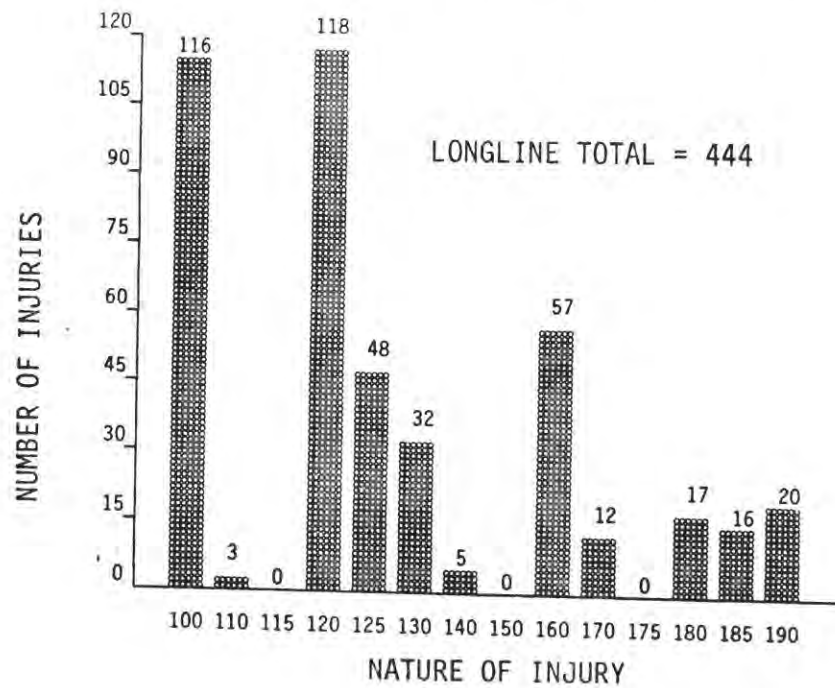
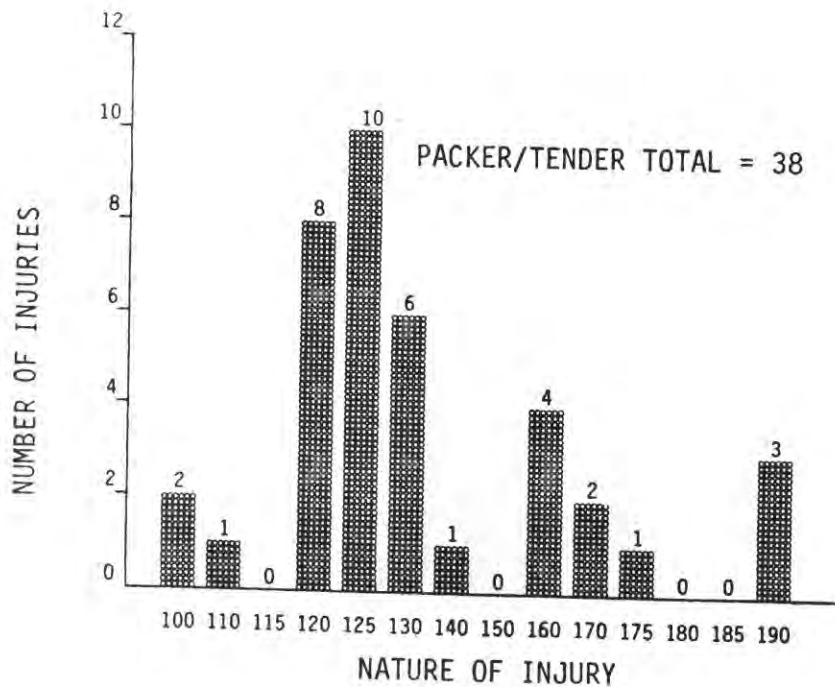
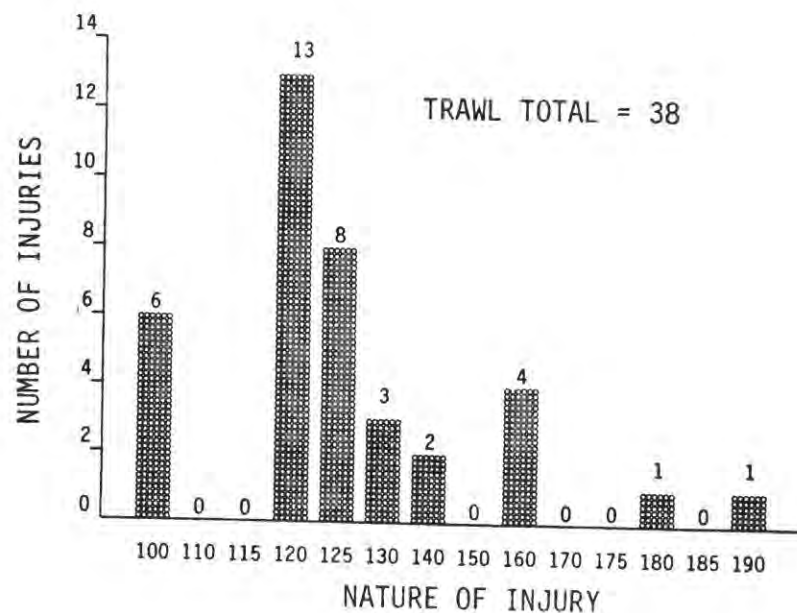
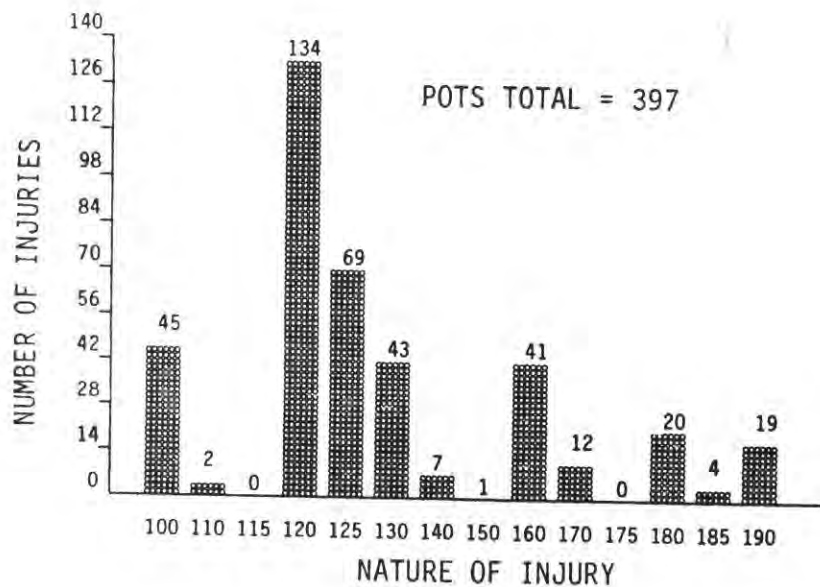
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NATURE OF INJURY LEGEND

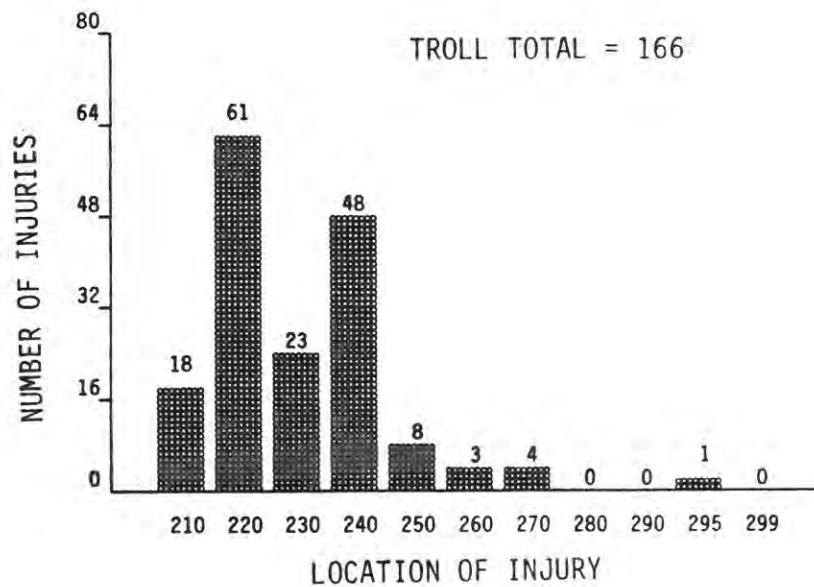
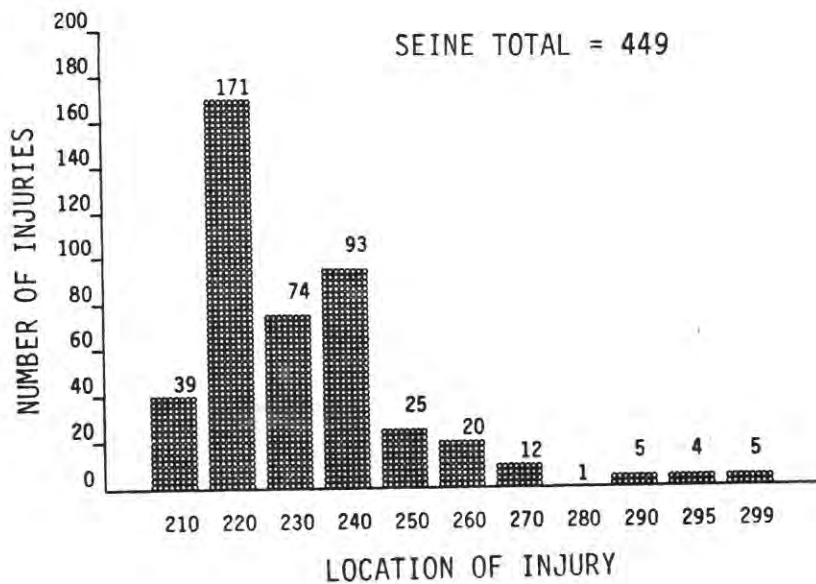
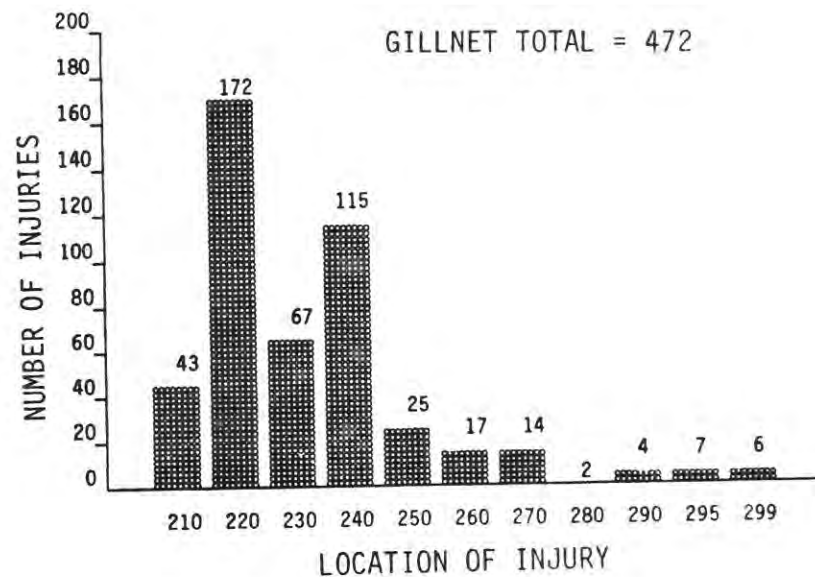
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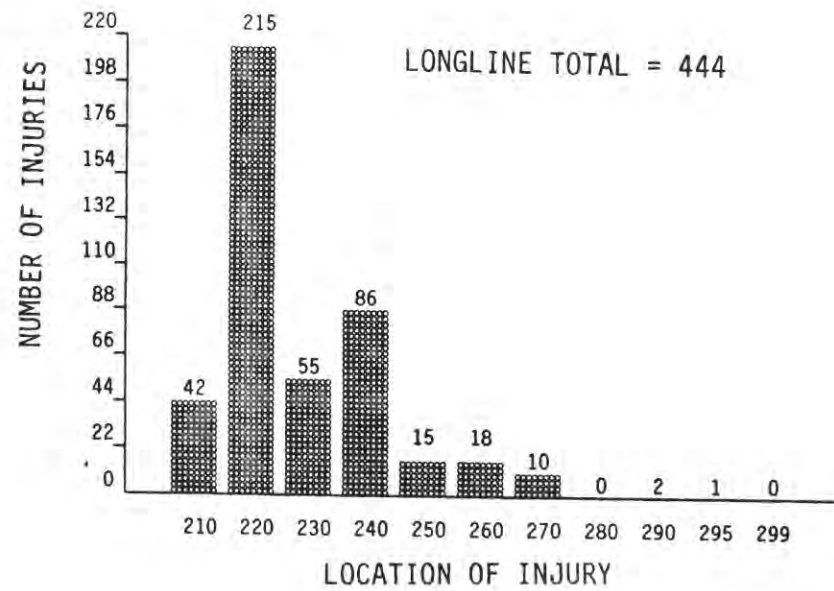
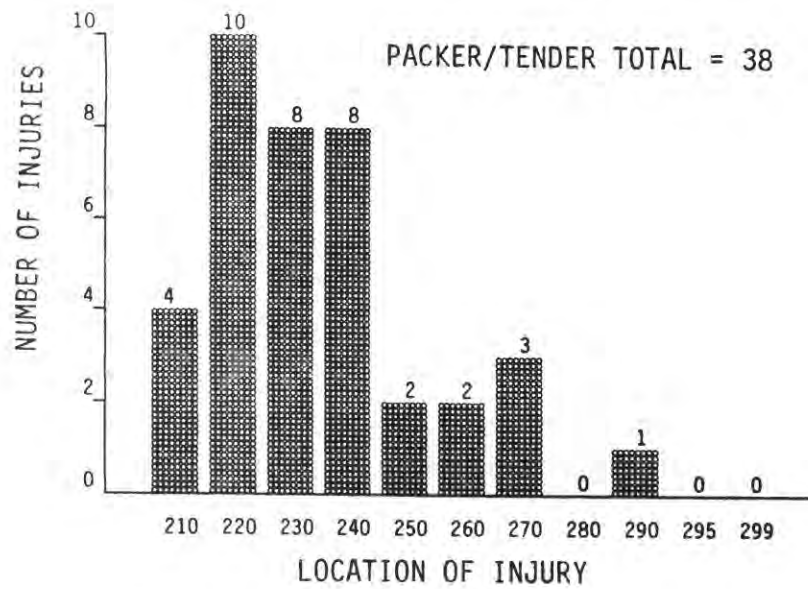
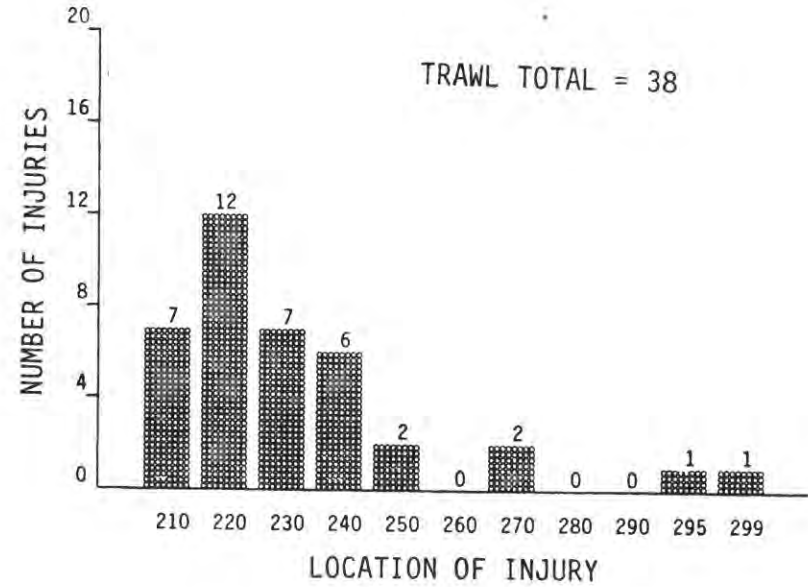
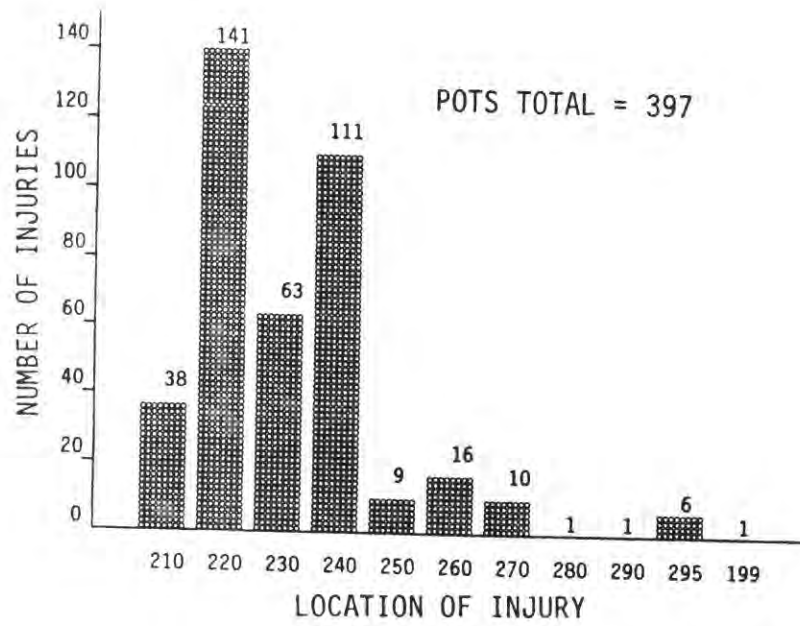




LOCATION OF INJURY LEGEND

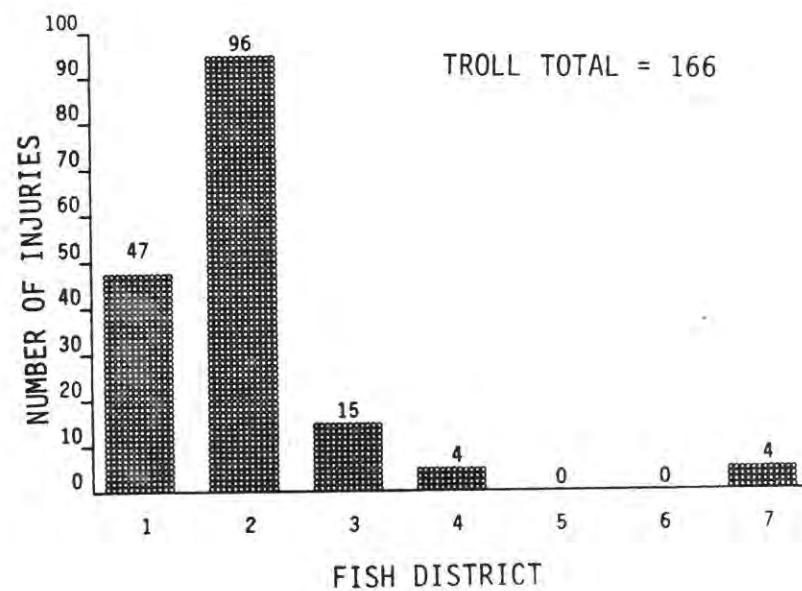
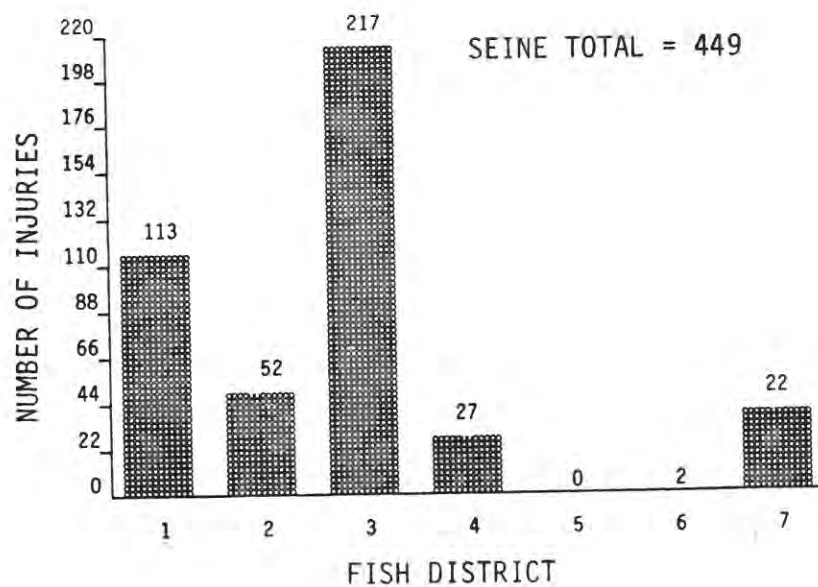
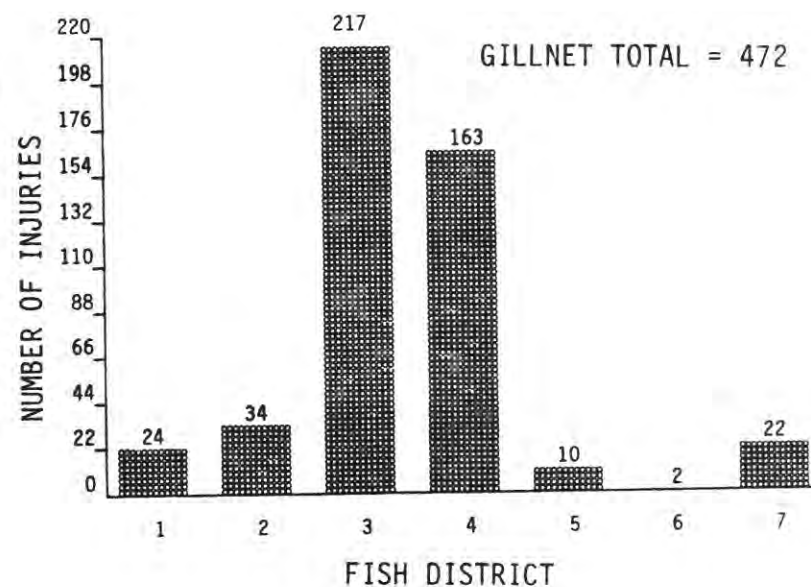
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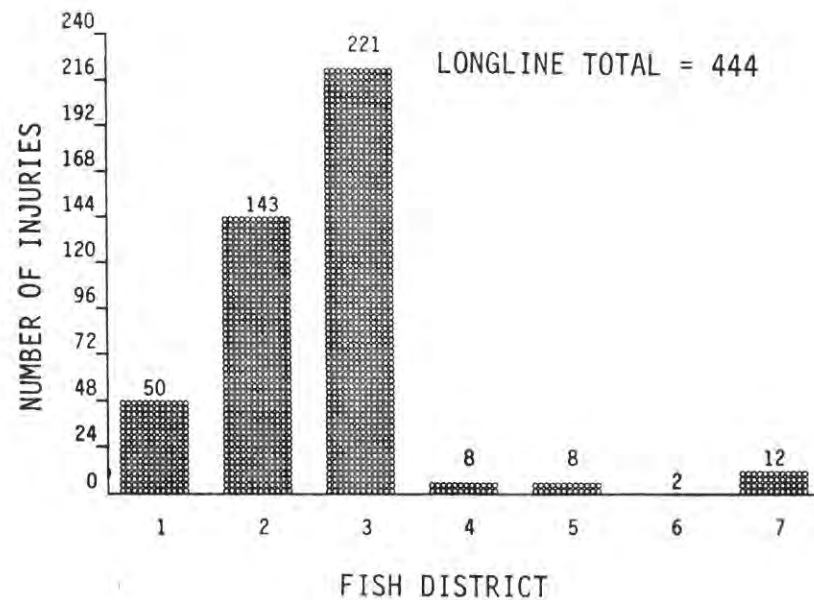
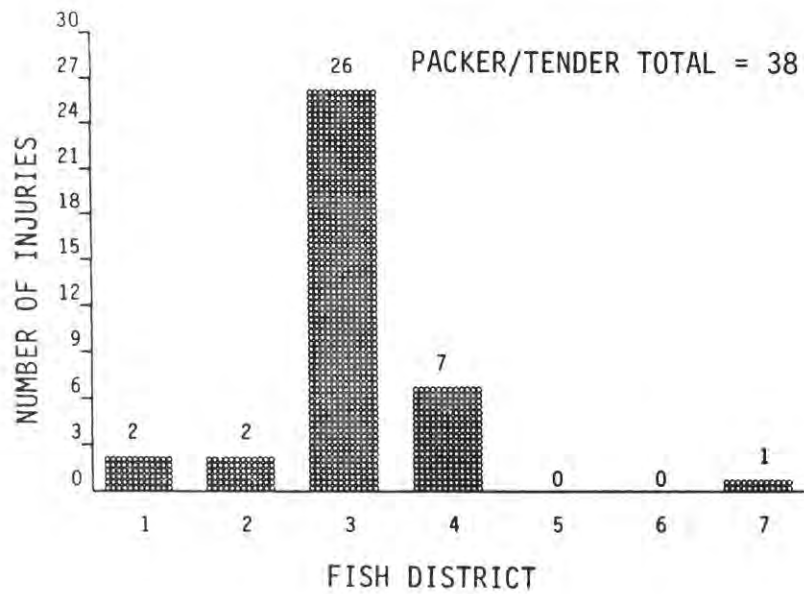
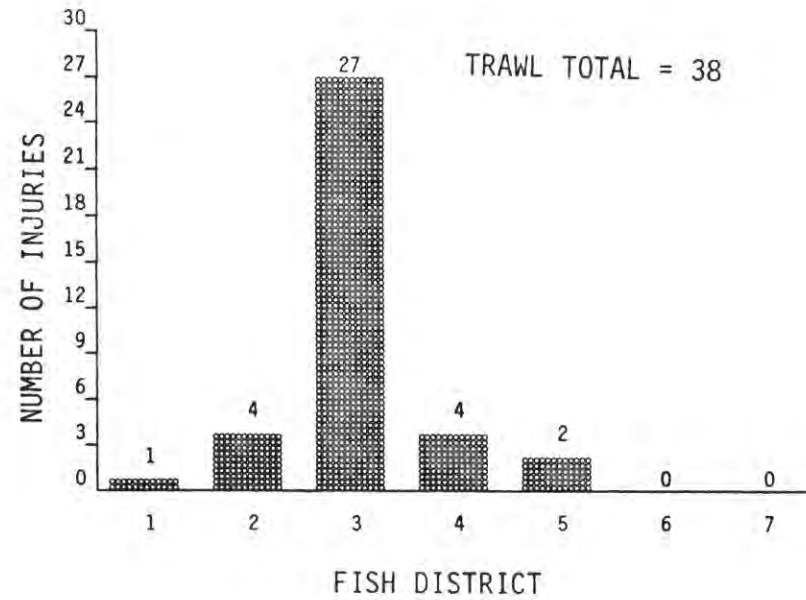
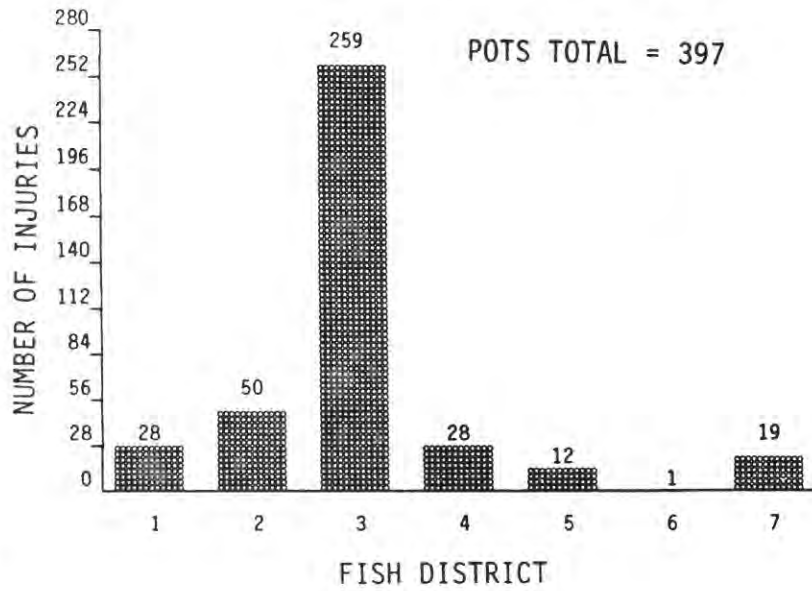




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