

feeding on baitfish. Lures and baits sized to imitate the available forage are what work. If you try real baitfish, like herring, it will be the most effective when rigged to spin when pulled through the water. Try a fast-spinning bait when targeting coho and a slower spin (and longer leader) for chinooks.

You can enhance the action of your herring by rigging it in combination with a spinner blade. The **101 Herring Rig** is designed for this purpose. It features two snelled hooks, beads, a plastic interchangeable clevis (that won't fray your leader) and a spinner blade. It's available in two models for fishing either cut-plug or whole herring.

Spoons, such as the **Coyote™** and **Diamond King™**, can outperform real bait when the right size, trolling speed and color combinations are employed. Remember that the forage you're trying to imitate will be smaller in the spring and increase in size as the season progresses. For example, you might start your season with a size 3.0 or 3.5 **Coyote™ Spoon** and switch to larger 4.0 or 5.0 sizes later in the summer or when targeting chinooks.

Some of the more popular spoon colors are **#0150 Nickel/Silver Prism-Lite®**, **#0188 Glo/Flo Green H&H/Nickel Back**, **#0580 Chartreuse/Fishscale™/Nickel Back**, **#1084 Cop Car (White/Black H&H/Hologram Scale/Silver Back)** and **#3132 Funky Chicken (Metallic Purple, Chartreuse Tiger & Tail/Cerise Stripe/Silver Back)**. Remember to experiment with different sizes and color combinations until results are achieved -- you'll be surprised at the difference this can make.

The right trolling speed can make the difference between success and failure. Try trolling fast, say 3.5 MPH, when prospecting areas for fish and slowing down, to say 2.5 MPH, after you locate them. Of course, speed can influence the bite. Try speeding up if you're in fish and not getting bites. If you're getting strikes but not hooking up, try slowing down some. It might be that your lure is moving too fast for the fish to get hold of.

If you're in need of a quality speed indicator, consider our **Luhr-Speed™** mechanical trolling speed indicator. It's more accurate (at slow speeds) than electronic fish finder speedometers, is corrosion resistant, reads-out in either knots or MPH and (when mounted correctly) is unaffected by wind or water action.

LAKE TROUT: As with chinook, lake trout prefer slow, deliberate-action attractors and lures. Dodger-and-fly, dodger-and-spoon or dodger-and-plug combinations are all effective provided they are fished slowly and deep with adequate leader lengths between the attractor and lure.

For lake trout, leaders should be from 16 to 24 inches (sometimes even longer) between the dodger and lure as this will promote slower action from the lure itself . . . an action often productive for lake trout. Small squids and flies, usually rigged with a treble hook if allowed, are preferred. Some good spoons to try are a **Diamond King™** or **Coyote™**.

SALT vs. FRESH WATER

When trolling in salt water, you'll find the optimum feeding and fish-catching times during low light periods and from an hour before, during and an hour after a tide change. Fish areas where birds are working on baitfish schools and troll the clean sides of rips.

In fresh water, such as in the Great Lakes, the time of day isn't nearly as critical as locating the depth of the preferred temperature level for the fish species you're seeking . . . the thermocline.

Lakes stratify into three separate layers of water in the spring and stay that way until cold weather. The middle layer, where there is a larger concentration of dissolved oxygen, baitfish and therefore predator fish, is called the thermocline and can usually be found from 10 to 80 feet down. This is a temperature layer as well as an oxygen-saturated layer and fish will relate to it as both a comfort zone and one where their body metabolism functions the most efficiently. These fish will be suspended and feeding on alewives, smelt or other forage fish.

The peak feeding and optimum temperature for coho and chinook is 54° with an active range from 44° to 58°. For lake trout, the peak feeding and optimum temperature is 51° with activity from 43° to 53°. Fish will rarely venture out of these zones, once stratification has taken place, except to catch a meal and then will quickly return to it.

One thing to remember when fishing the thermocline is that its depth can change from day to day because of wind and/or wave action. It may be several feet deeper or shallower from one day to the next so you'll have to relocate it each time you go out.

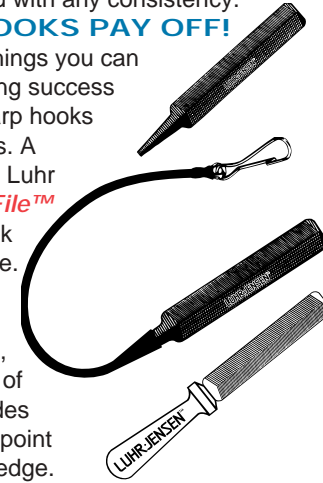
DEPTH SOUNDERS

There probably is no one accessory more important as a good quality depth sounder such as those made by **Bottomline®**, for producing optimum trolling results. A fish finder will pinpoint the depth at which fish are suspended, thereby allowing you to get your lure to the right depth with no guesswork. These units also enable you to spot underwater contour changes such as ledges,

dropoffs, islands and other structure that fish relate to that otherwise can't be found with any consistency.

SHARP HOOKS PAY OFF!

One of the easiest things you can do to improve your fishing success is to maintain super-sharp hooks on your lures at all times. A fine-toothed file such as Luhr Jensen's **Sharp Hook File™** is the absolute best hook sharpening tool available. Hold the file parallel to the hook point and with gentle, one-way strokes, remove a small amount of metal on at least two sides to obtain a sticky-sharp point with a knife-like cutting edge.



ADDITIONAL TIPS

Here are several tips to file away in your memory bank.

- Use a quality, premium monofilament line, such as **Trilene XT®** or **Big Game®** which have high knot strength, low visibility in the water, thin diameter in relation to strength and great abrasion resistance.
- Know the area you plan to fish BEFORE going out by talking with local anglers, sporting goods personnel, studying charts and maps and reading local fishing publications.
- Try to match the size and color of the baitfish in the water you'll be fishing.
- Save a lot of valuable fishing time by pre-rigging and pre-tying all of your gear at home. Leaders can be pretied with snaps or snap swivels and all you'll have to do to change lures, attractors or weights is to undo and refasten a snap or two.

Those are some of the tips, techniques and riggings which will help you become a more successful troller with dodgers and/or flashers.

This is one of a series of more than 25 detailed technique reports produced by Luhr Jensen & Sons. For a complete set, a patch for your jacket or cap, a price list and a full-color catalog featuring all of our quality fishing lures and accessories, send \$5 (\$3 credited to your first order of \$20 or more) along with your name and address to: Luhr Jensen, P.O. Box 297, Hood River, OR 97031, Attn: Customer Service.

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TECH REPORT #13

A Complete Guide On How To Effectively Troll With

DODGERS AND FLASHERS

(Revised)



Coupled with the effectiveness of trolling technique, flashers and dodgers are deadly fish attractors in both fresh and salt water. They are rigged in the line between the lure and downrigger release, diver or lead to provide attraction and impart erratic action to trailing lures such as plugs, spoons, flies or plastic squids.

Trolling with dodgers or flashers produces excellent results because you can cover a large amount of water in a very short time, thereby locating concentrations of fish with the least amount of time and effort expended. The flash and sound of these attractors draws fish from considerable distances, allowing you to cover a wider swath of water effectively with each pass . . . a big advantage when prospecting unknown waters or when fish are scattered.

Successful trolling requires a knowledge of fish and their habits, proper equipment, the ability to troll various depths and a willingness to experiment with different attractors, lures and color patterns.

Tackle for trolling dodgers or flashers consists of a stout 7- to 9-ft. trolling rod, free-spool-type star drag reel filled with 20- to 30-lb. test premium monofilament line and a downrigger, diver or selection of lead weights to get your offering down into fish territory.

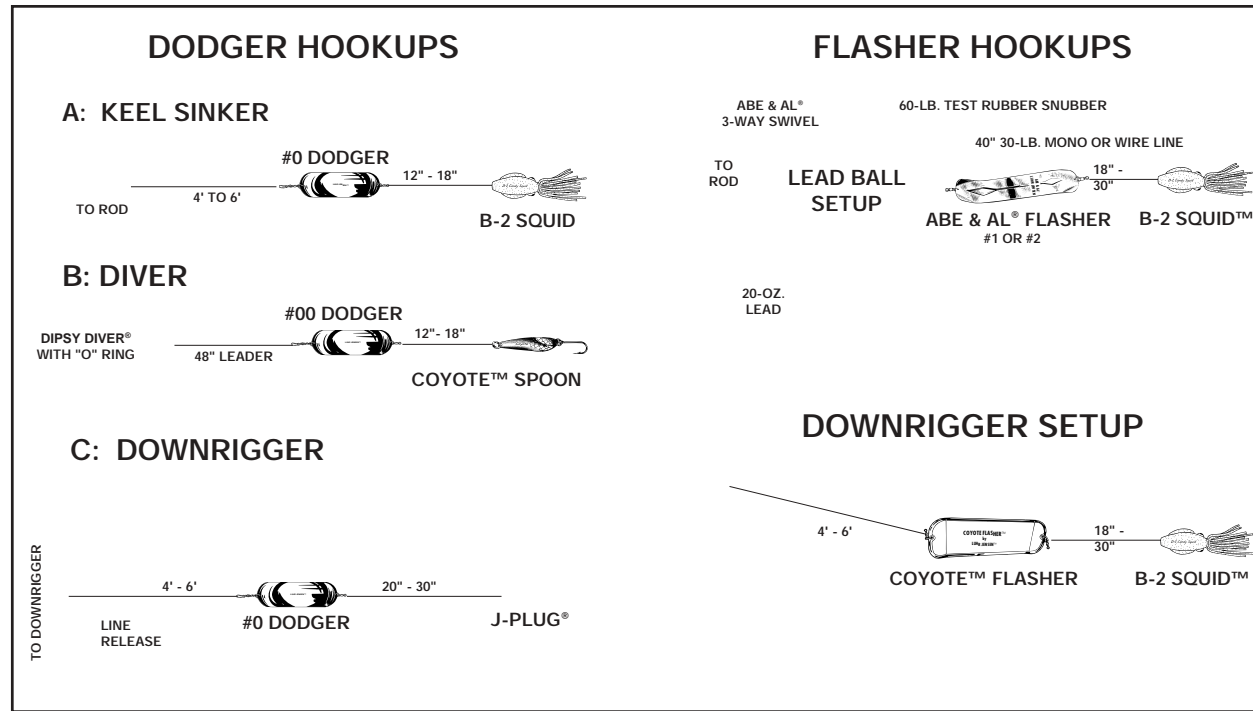
DODGERS vs. FLASHERS

The big difference between dodgers and flashers is the way they run through the water when being trolled. A dodger has a side-to-side swaying action while a flasher develops full 360° rotations. This provides you with two completely different types of attractors, each giving off specific flash and vibration patterns.

Flashers and dodgers impart an erratic, darting action to trailing lures and produce fish-attracting flash and sound. Plugs, spoons, flies and squids all can be used with a dodger, which transfers a crippled baitfish action to these lures. Flies and squids are best used behind an *Coyote™* or *Abe & Al®* rotating flasher because they have no action of their own in the water and the flasher will give them a lifelike, erratic natural baitfish action.

For dodgers, the correct fish-attracting speed and action is achieved when the attractor has a side-to-side swaying motion. With your boat moving "dead slow", place a rigged dodger-and-lure setup in the water (see illustration) and slowly increase your speed until the dodger has developed the proper action. This is your optimum trolling speed.

Optimum rotating flasher speed, on the other hand, is obtained when the attractor is working in regular full 360° rotations. With your boat in motion, place a rigged flasher-and-lure setup in the water (see illustration) and increase your speed until the flasher develops these regular, full revolutions. **Note: Flashers generally work better at slightly faster speeds than dodgers.**



DODGER RIGGING

Shown in the following diagrams are various ways to rig a dodger for trolling. Note the recommended leader-to-lure lengths and leader from weight-to-dodger lengths carefully as too long a leader will negatively affect lure action. Also, too short a leader from lead, diver or downrigger release to the dodger will restrict the action of the dodger and inhibit its fish-attracting capabilities. These leader rules also apply to flashers.

Dodgers can be used with a keel-type sinker, behind divers such as the *Pink Lady®*, *Deep Six®*, *Double Deep Six®* or *Dipsy Diver®* or behind a downrigger release, all of which are diagrammed above.

FLASHER RIGGING

The other illustrations above present two proven ways to rig a flasher for trolling. Remember that the correct fish-attracting speed for a rotating flasher occurs when it is being pulled through the water just fast enough to make complete 360° regular rotations. This will result



in a steady throb-throb-pause, throb-throb-pause action at your rod tip.

When using up to six ounces of weight, keel-type sinkers are adequate, but when more weight is required, it is suggested that you use an *Abe & Al®* 3-way swivel and round lead ball as it will maintain maximum flasher-to-lure transferred action and minimize the possibility of tangles and line twist.

The most popular color finishes for dodgers and flashers are *Chrome*, *Chrome/Silver Prism-Lite®* and *Chrome/Silver Disco Tape*. In the Great Lakes, *Silver Glow*, *Fire*, *Chartreuse* and *Kelly Green* models are increasingly popular and in the Northwest, *White* and *50/50 Brass/Chrome* are very productive.

These are only a few of the colors available for the *Abe & Al®*, *Coyote™ Flasher* and *Jensen Dodger™* models from Luhr Jensen. The smaller of the *Jensen Dodgers™*, the #040 (4" x 1 3/8") and #030 (4 5/8" x 1 1/2") are generally used for trout or kokanee fishing while the larger sizes are preferred for salmon and other big fish. The size of dodger you select should be based somewhat on the size of the trailing lure you wish to use. For instance, a large *J-Plug®* might overpower the action of a small #030 dodger so a larger one would be used

such as the #000 or #001. If you're going to fish deep, larger dodgers will provide more flash and stronger vibration which can draw fish from farther away. In clear or shallow water conditions, a smaller dodger might be used.

The *Abe & Al®* flashers are available in five sizes ranging from the smallest #006 (6" x 1") to the largest #002 (13 1/2" x 2 5/8") with the #006 best used for trout on light gear and the larger ones for salmon, other big fish and deep trolling situations. The largest (#002) should be used for deep, heavy trolling conditions.

FISH PREFERENCES

Following are some helpful tips relating to particular fish species. Although there are no hard and fast rules when it comes to fishing, there are many regularly observed fish habits and preferences that will give you a definite edge if you're familiar with them.

COHO: When the temperature is right in fresh water and during most of their life in salt water, coho salmon are surface or shallow water oriented. They generally can be found at depths less than 50 feet and are a fast fish when compared with chinook or lake trout. They especially like the fast action of a dodger (#020 or #000 are popular) in combination with flies and squids.

The rule of thumb for a fly or squid lure behind a dodger is to use a leader of about 1 1/2 times the length of the dodger. In the Great Lakes, some anglers have been successful with leaders as short as 6". These impart incredibly fast action to the trailing lure. The principle here is to use a longer leader for slower action and a shorter for faster action. Since it is easier to shorten a leader then change to a longer one, start with 12 to 18 inches and then shorten it until you get the desired lure action. A superfast action fly used in combination with a dodger is deadly for coho. Some effective spoons to try are the *Coyote™*, *Loco™* and *Diamond King™*.

CHINOOK: When compared with coho, chinook salmon prefer deeper water and larger, slower-action lures and attractors. They often shy away from unnatural movements in the water, so longer leaders are generally used. The *Coyote™ Flasher* is a proven attractor for deep water chinook and its lazy, rotating action is often exactly what turns them on. When used with flies or squids, leader lengths between the lure and flasher should be 1 1/2 to 3 times the flasher length or between 18" and 40". The longer the leader, the slower and more deliberate the action imparted to the trailing lure.

Chinook and coho grow to trophy size by aggressively