

## My Experience Using Father's Method of Tuna Fishing with a Hand-Line

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*Photo date and location unknown (The diagram has nothing to do with Tuna fishing)*

I was lucky enough to go tuna fishing for one season back in 1981. Unfortunately, it was the first time Father had not attended after tuna fishing at Gloucester for seven years in a row. We were very lucky, though, to have Alan Hokinson there who told us several amazing stories of being Father's 'captain' for those seven years. If anyone is in contact with Alan please get him to write those down.

The technique to catch the tuna was developed by Father over years. When he first tried to catch them he used the 'rod and reel' method and did not catch anything for 40 days. I cannot remember when he switched to hand-line but that is the method that he settled on and the one we were taught.

We would have five baskets of hand-line in the boat: consisting of half-inch line linked to quarter inch then steel leader and a large hook. The five lines had a boat fender for a float and the line dropped down at various lengths of ever increasing depth. The idea was to float the chum (cut up fish) down past each of the hooks. You had to adjust the gap between the lines depending on the speed of the current.

Tuna are a smart fish and very cautious about taking a hook. Tuna do not stop swimming, they have no swim bladder and cannot just float. So, when they find food they swim in a circle. As the chum floats down they swim in circles getting more excited then suddenly they have a hook in their mouth. They pause for a moment and think "something is not right here".

At that moment the line is pulled slightly and the clip (a clip that stops all the hand-line from floating out the basket). You start to pull the line into the boat. Is it a tuna or just a dogfish that has taken the bait? Then as you pull you suddenly feel the line go taught. You have to be quick now and pull hard setting the hook. The tuna will take off at 30 to 40 miles per hour.

There is no way you can stop it. It will empty the basket of line in just a few seconds. In those few seconds, you have to tie a buoy to the end of the line and throw it over the side.

Next, you have to pull in the other four lines; drop the anchor line; then chase after the tuna.

You pull the buoy and the hand-line into the boat. The tuna will have slowed down by this point but will take off again as soon as you put tension on the line. The line pulls through your gloved hands at speeds that would strip the skin off without the gloves.

The tuna will then try to spit the hook out. You have to keep the line taught. Sometimes it will swim toward you. You have to pull the line in as fast as you can. Others in the boat will try to get the line back into the boat as fast as they can.

(One of the stories from Allan Hokinson: If not careful, you will end up with loops of line on the deck. Step in that loop when the tuna takes off and you will be pulled over the side. This almost happened to Won Pil Kim. Father threw his arms around him to stop him going overboard and someone pulled the boat off – saving his life.)

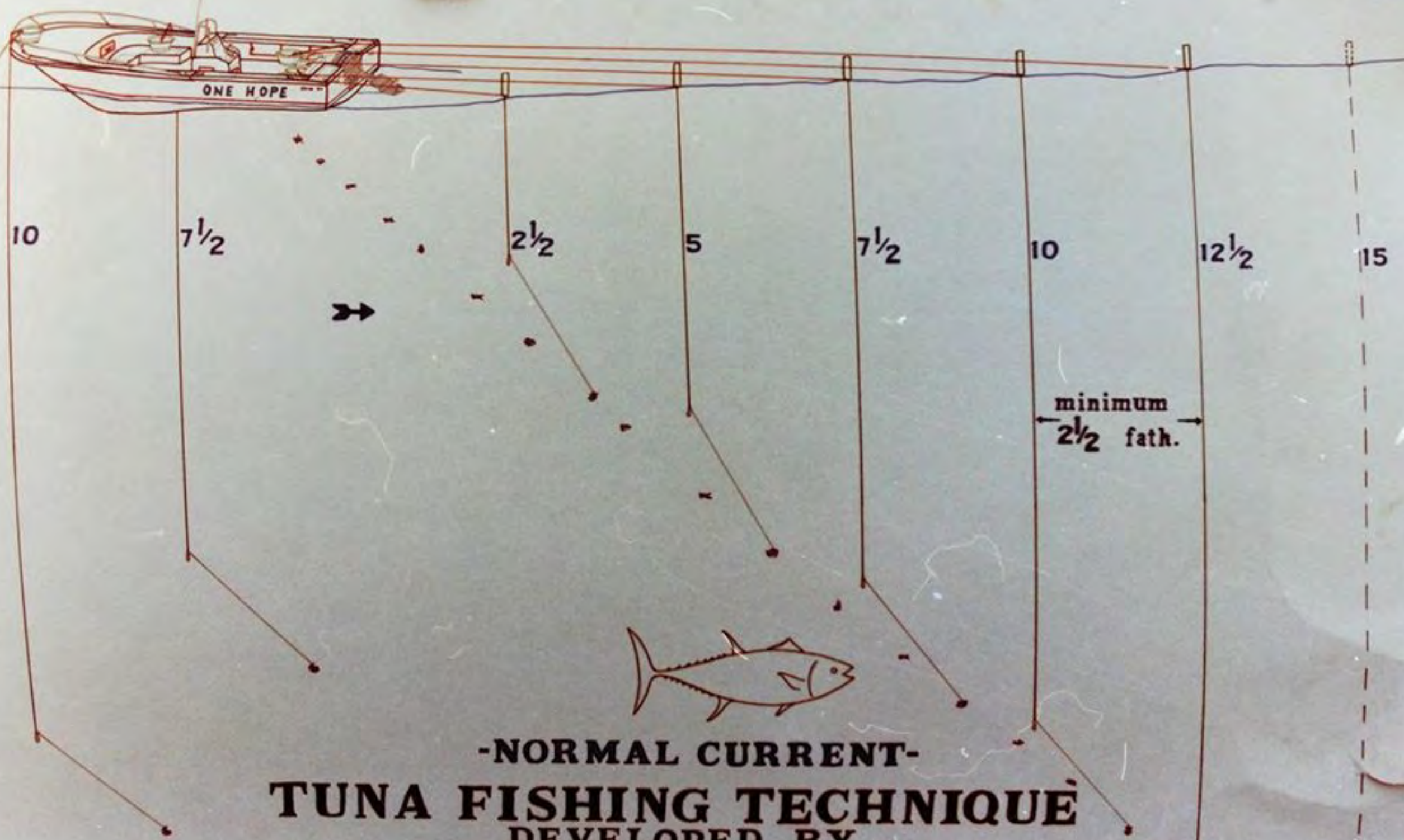
The tuna will swim away again – pulling the line through your hands again with a "zzzz zzzz zzzz" noise.

Sometimes you are up on the bow with only a small rail at your shins to stop you falling in. Sometimes he will try to swim around the anchor lines of other boats. You shout to the other boat "Drop Your Anchor Line!" They hate to do this as they have to reset all their lines. So they drop it at the last moment as you pass between them and their anchor line.

With my first tuna, this went on for two and a half hours.

When we got back to the dock Daikon Onuku came to talk to me. We were not close but sat there we shared experiences of catching tuna – at that moment I felt very close to him. It was something that we had in common. I realized that is was something that I had in common with Father and I realized how important that is. Father wants share experiences with us. That is how we understand each other.

Father has taught Sunday School, been a local pastor, city leader, national leader, pioneer, messiah. Whatever we do, we can connect it to Father (and Mother of course) and deepen our relationship with them.



**-NORMAL CURRENT-  
TUNA FISHING TECHNIQUE  
DEVELOPED BY  
REVEREND S.M. MOON**