

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

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(A)

DUPE NEGATIVE TO:

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FINE GRAIN TO:

MCM

NBC-TV

UNDERWATER DEMOLITION UNIT DEMONSTRATES NEW HIGH-SPEED TWIN SLED PICKUP METHOD

(Official Navy footage released by Department of Defense)

First official films show the Atlantic Fleet's Underwater Demolition Unit at St. Thomas, Virgin Islands, demonstrating the new Mark 5 Scuba gear and new high-speed twin "sled" pickup method.

The new system being used for high-speed placement and recovery of UDT swimmers utilizes two fiberglass "sleds" which resemble ordinary rowboats with the transoms removed. The absence of a transom permits easy access and exit by swimmers and also permits water to flood the sled so that it sits low in the water. Each sled can accommodate up to ten swimmers. The sleds are connected at the bows by a long tow cable having a buoy at its center. With the swimmers on board, the sleds are released simultaneously from a canvas sheet trailing from a speeding boat.

When the swimmers have completed their assignments, they assemble in the sleds for pickup. The tow cable connecting the sleds is stretched taut with the buoy marking its center. The pickup boat extends a "sword" forward from its bow and speeds toward the buoy. On contact with the sword, the cable rides up to the bow of the boat and into a winch where it is immediately engaged and wound in. The sleds trail behind the boat as they are gradually hauled in and pulled on board over the canvas.

The Underwater Demolition Unit which is based at Little Creek, Virginia, is in the Virgin Islands briefly to train new men in diving physiology and the use of underwater breathing apparatus of various types including underwater swims by compass as long as 2 1/2 miles. This particular class recently completed its gruelling 16 weeks of basic training and "final exam" which included an eighteen mile run, a seven mile swim and practice raids involving actual demolition.

Sequences show:

- (a) UDTs being briefed on the beach, St. Thomas, V.I.
 - (b) Two fiberglass "sleds" being towed.
 - (c) The pickup boat extends a "sword", the cable rides up to the bow of the boat and into a winch where it is immediately engaged and wound in.
 - (d) The sleds trail behind the boat as they are gradually hauled in and pulled on board.
- NOTE TO EDITORS: PLEASE CREDIT DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE IN TITLE OR COMMENTARY

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