

ESKIMOS TAKE BIG CATCH

Mid-summer, when most anglers are taking it easy, Eskimo fishermen at three centres in the north are shipping the biggest catch of Arctic char since they began fishing two years ago.

A young Arctic industry, started as an experiment among Eskimos with no experience in commercial fishing, will be consigning 75,000 pounds of char to a Montreal fish-broker between mid-August and the end of September.

The catch is the product of two Eskimo fishermen's co-operatives at George River and Port Burwell, Quebec, and fishermen at Frobisher Bay on Baffin Island. The Frobisher Bay group, where the project was pioneered, may form a co-operative next year.

The char season is short (about a month), and while the fish are running everyone works furiously to get the catch landed, flash-frozen, wrapped, boxed and on the way south. The first shipment this year - 10,000 pounds from Frobisher Bay - arrived at Montreal August 15. It was consigned to the fish-broker who had handled distribution since 1958. From here it will re-appear on gourmet menus in hotels, restaurants, and clubs in Montreal, Toronto and other Canadian cities, New York, Chicago and Detroit. The first overseas shipment went to Paris in May, served at a banquet of the French Nature Protection Society, a body that takes pride in serving its members something new - if possible exotic - in the way of foods. This year it was Arctic char. Char was on the menu too when General de Gaulle visited Ottawa.

BEGINNINGS

This all started in 1958 with a modest consignment of 1500 pounds shipped to Montreal to test the market. Within days a repeat order came in. There wasn't any more - then. But the Industrial Division of Northern Affairs in Ottawa, sponsor of the project, had established that a market existed. Eskimos, to whom the idea of commercial fishing was wholly new, were interested; from then on it became a case of solving the many technical problems involved in setting up commercial fisheries in the Arctic. The present partnership between Eskimo fishermen and their Northern Affairs advisers will continue until the fishermen gain the experience to operate entirely on their own.

Char is more than a gourmet fish; it's a fisherman's fish, full of fight, fast, tricky, tenacious. If a fish has flavour plus fight, it's a winner in any waters, and this one is already luring sportsmen into the Arctic, thereby encouraging another lively, new venture, a tourist industry for the Northwest Territories.

A special recipe-book is in the making. Leading Canadian chefs, clubs, and restaurants have been invited to contribute their favourite ways of cooking "Ilkalu", the char, and these will be given the art treatment they deserve. If experience with other Arctic products - Eskimo stone-carvings and graphic art - is any guide, a blend of Arctic char and exotic recipes could turn out to be a best-seller.

BACK TO SCHOOL IN EUROPE

Teaching staffs of the RCAF Air Division schools in Europe are preparing for a record number of students when the fall term opens on September 6. More than 4,500 Air Force Youngsters are expected to turn up for the first day of school, according to Dr. Harold Campbell of Victoria, British Columbia, superintendent of schools for the Canadian NATO components in Europe.

This is an increase of more than 750 over the registration last autumn and the largest number of students ever to attend the Department of National Defence schools maintained within the Division for children of the European-based Air Force families. The teaching staff of the six Air Division DND schools also hits a new high of 220 this term, an increase of 21 over last year. The DND schools are staffed by Canadian teachers, borrowed from various school-boards across Canada.

AIMS OF CURRICULUM

In most instances, schooling from kindergarten to grade 13 is provided. The curriculum of the schools is designed to provide the Canadian youngsters with a sound education during their three-to-four-year overseas stay and to enable them to fit into any of the various school systems in Canada on their return. In grade 7 and above, the Ontario curriculum is used.

Schools are maintained at the headquarters in Metz, at the four Fighter Wings in France and Germany, and at the Sardinian-based Air Weapons Unit in the Mediterranean.

Canadian teachers are also on the staffs of international schools maintained at Supreme Allied Powers Europe, Versailles, France, Allied Air Forces Central Europe, Fontainebleau, France, and Tactical Air Force, Ramstein, Germany. RCAF personnel serve at all three headquarters.

At the Division logistics base at Langar, England, the Canadian youngsters attend English schools through arrangements made with U.K. school authorities. Canadian teachers are provided, however, in the upper grades to provide instruction in Canadian curricular requirements.