



The Newsletter of the . . .

The Reel News

Serving the Northeast Florida Fishing Community Since 1959



Volume 46 Issue 7

July 2006

Presidents Castings



**President
Pete
St. Laurent**

Recently I was invited on a ledge trip on the *infamous* Full Coverage. Bright eyed and bushy tailed I arrived at Gary's house at 3 a.m. We loaded the boat and headed for his office to pick up the Routers chart, at the price of gas these days we figured it couldn't hurt to have a good idea where the fish might be. All we needed now was some ice and we'd be unstoppable. So off to the bulk ice dispenser, and true to form, once we arrived we realized the dispenser only took one-dollar bills. As Murphy's Law goes, we had every bill of US currency except the one dollar bill so back in the truck and around Atlantic Beach we drove looking for any place that we might be able to change 5's, 10's, 20's or 50's for that elusive one dollar bill. After passing a few Jiffy stores we finally found one open and in short order we had enough ice to fill the boat. Next stop the Mayport boat ramp to pick up Greg and head for the happy hunting grounds. The Routers chart showed that there was a warm water finger in the Pikes Peak area and as this is one of our favorite blue water areas to fish it was an easy decision as to where the Full Coverage crew would test their abilities against the acrobatic and tasty Dolphin foe. The ride out was nice. We ran the 74-mile trip in near record time. Upon arrival we found that we were sitting in some of the bluest and most lifeless water we had ever seen... no boats, no rip, no temp. brake and worst of all -- no fish to be found. We looked at each other with that look of *now what do we do?* You know the look

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Fishing Reports & Other tall Tales



**Chris Rooney
Fishing
Committee
Chairman**

July Madness, "The Kingfish Craze"

This is the Month when the Kingfish Anglers get crazy, different things take priority in life, "where can we get hand caught ribbonfish?" "did you call and reserve our goggle eyes?", "and the worst question of the month, "did you hear a thermocline is moving in?". The Kingfish widows are used to it by now, they just stand back and shake their heads, hopefully seeing the humor in the antics. Let's take a bit of a look at the kingfishermen's trials and tribulations.

First thing to start and get ready are the rods and reels, were going to pray for a 50 LB fish on 15# test with 30 yards of 20 # fluoro carbon leader down to #4 wire and a #4 x-strong tremble hook rig. The rod has to be at the least 7 feet long, with a real flexible tip so we don't put undue stress on our little poggie buddy. The reel has to hold at least 400 yards of this line, with at a minimum a 6.2 to 1 retrieve ratio so if that 50 lb fish makes a run to the boat we can keep up?? Don't forget that reel better have a smooth drag cause that 50 lb fish is going to be pulling against at the least 3-4 lbs of drag and I like it tight!!

Lets get to the rigs, #4 wire, what's that 30lb test at best, and we worry about the kingfish seeing the leader! #4 hooks are the same size that are on the spinning lures I used to use for trout

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Presidents Message Cont.

I'm talking about, right. We decided that the only logical thing to do was to zigzag the brake but do we zigzag North or South? We left it up to what amounted to not much more than a coin toss hoping that God would smile upon us. As we trolled north we started to see some fish in the water column and a little jump in the water temp. We came across a very defined rip line. Without hesitation we got on that rip line and almost instantly hooked up. After a little fight a nice gaffer cow was cooling off in the box. Relief showed on all our faces. Success! We made the right decision moving north and to prove it we had 3 more fish in the box. After a little while we came across Chuck Darner fishing with his sons Rob and Scott. They had been there for a while and had picked up a Cuda and 2 Kings but couldn't get the Dolphin to bite. I told Rob that over the last 3 weeks or so I had heard that most of the fish had been hitting on dark colors being pulled under 5 knots. The Darners pulled in their spread and refitted and shortly afterwards Rob called back and thanked us for the info. They had just had a triple and landed all three. While we congratulated them Greg said, "fish on" as the reel screamed the starboard outrigger popped and started



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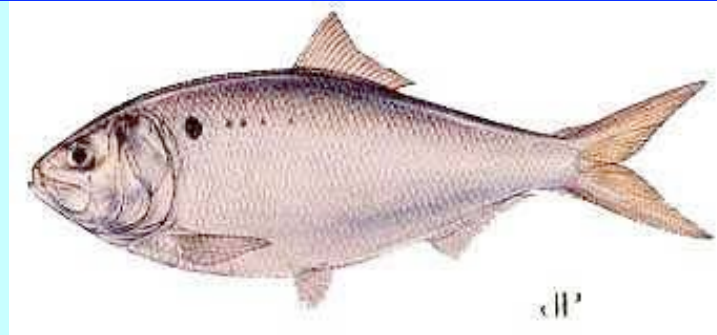
Fishing Reports Cont.

fishing in small streams. This is not to mention that an average kingfish strike comes at about 60 miles an hour, I need a magnifying glass to see the rigs when I tie them up, but this fish is going to see them at 60 miles and hour and not going to eat our little Poggie buddy that is swimming un-stressfully at 1.5 knots. All right, the kingfish are here and our pogies are still intact, what's next.

Lets rig a Ribbonfish, and fish some goggle eyes or blue runners, well we've moved up in the world of the kingfishermen. We just went from free bait to another C note a day for fishing on top of the gas to run past were that thermocline is effecting the fishing. Well at least now we can cover more ground, cause we can troll at 3 knots and these baits aren't like our little poggie buddies they won't drown. Wait, Oh Man we finally have a strike and a fish on man listen to that reel scream!! You gotta love this light line he's on his third run took the down line with a big Blue Runner man this is a big fish!!! He saw the boat and took off again for the 5th time, we have never had a King this strong, its gotta be the magic 50 lber, I know it, 25 ' Contender hear I come!! All right take it easy, I got the gaff, I see color, OH DARN IT, IT'S AN Amberjack man he's 45lbs if he's an ounce. Well that was a wasted 2 hours, let's get the lines back in.

Hey we got a shot that's why were waiting in line the mystery prize chest is still there and we get a key for this snake so we can try and open it. 2 and a half-hours in line and the key didn't fit, oh well that's the way it goes. Boy I can't wait till next year! Anybody want this Kingfish? The weather is going to be great tomorrow guys lets go for the heck of it, Anybody Got A poggie Report?

I know most of you saw the humor but not much in the way of exaggeration though. I'm ready for the big show lets get some of the membership in the top 25 this year what da ya say. Good Luck to All, catch 'um'up!!!



Atlantic Menhaden
Brevoortia tyrannus

(A.K.A. - Alewife, Bunker, Pogy, Bugmouth, Fat-Back)

A member of the herring family, Clupeidae, Juveniles primarily feed on zooplankton, but adults are mainly herbivores, but retain the ability to feed on zooplankton. The adults are very adaptable and will feed on several species of phytoplankton, as well as suspended organic plant detritus.



Rob's Fishing Lore

Rob Darner

Marker 24

"I don't want to do any offshore fishing. Besides, we can do it any time in Jacksonville, let's keep doing what we doing tonight," reasoned my wife.

Just what were we doing begs the question. It had something to do with a trout and an artificial shrimp after sun set. Yet with three kids, I might guess what some of you are thinking but you all need to get your minds out of the bilge. We left Jacksonville behind on our Spring Break vacation. We traveled south toward Ft Myers to a little town called Bokeelia. Bokeelia is located on the Northern tip of Pine Island. As for what we were doing in the dark with artificial, well we were Snook fishing.

Our Snook fishing adventure took shape due to the help of a few folks. Our first day of fishing in Pine Island Sound yielded little fishing success. We had caught only a few trout and catfish. The family spent some fun filled hours relaxing on an island beach in the Gulf. The kids had a great time but we did not fill the box filled with fish. I felt like a stranger in a strange land trying to find that perfect fish catching day like one reads about in all the fishing magazines. Upon seeking advice on fishing Pine Island Sound, Capt. Rick Ryals stated that a guide would be useful.

After day one had come and gone and the fish were not jumping in the boat like all the magazine articles proclaimed, Rick's advice seemed pretty sage to me. The family was back at the cottage discussing dinner plans when Capt. Jerry Smith took pity on me. Jerry was a former charter captain and took me out to teach me about catching Snook. Capt. Jerry departed a bite of wisdom and that was to think like a Snook. Jerry departed this pearl of knowledge that Snook are ambush predators; they feed best during a tidal flow and during dusk and dawn hours. Then he showed me how this was done. The lesson was not lost nor was the location of one of his top producing Snook spots.

Marker 24 had it all. It was next to a mangrove island which jutted out into a large mud flat. The creek channel flowed past the island and turned around it. The mud flat has a minor channel cutting through it. This channel was located about fifteen feet off the mangrove island we were fishing. As the sun set the tide flowed out. It was the perfect blending of conditions. The current was not too strong and the islands protected us from the wind.

Marker 24 Continued

We would tie off to Marker 24 and toss our baits ahead of the boat near the mangrove island. In fact we spent 4 nights there catching Snook. We did venture up and down the creek seeking other fish and we did find some trout there plus I did have one monster Snook strike which ended up in a cut leader.

The fourth night was something special. Again, we had decided to forgo a formal dinner in hopes of catching more Snook. We started our day in typical fashion by sleeping in and piddling around the morning. Just after lunch, we decided to load the boat and head off to the beach for some fun. The beach was still great but it was getting that time. With a quick excursion out to Boca Grande Pass just to look around and discuss the possibilities of fishing offshore tomorrow. On the way back in, we noticed fish breaking the water like poggies do during the summer. Upon investigation, we found schools of large ladyfish busting glass minnows. The kids caught ladyfish for about ninety minutes when we decided to return to Marker 24.

Let the games begin because we were now tied off to Marker 24. The sun still had some traveling to do before the Snook would come out to play. In order to fill the time, the sea trout volunteered to fill in. The fish were killing our DOA Shrimp. Capt. Jerry had asked if we had any and thanks to the *Florida Sportsman Show* with Capt. Rick on 930 AM he had sent some. (We ended up spending an additional \$36 on more DOA Shrimp because the original pack was lost during our previous night activities.) I struck first by boating the first of our six trout however, my wife struck last. She had this ingenious plot. Her line fouled on the reel and she asked if I could fix it. Of course I could not refuse. We traded rods. Her next fish turned out to be a four pound trout.

The sun was now setting and the tangle was being resolved when the cell phone rang. It was my father back in Jacksonville wanting the latest update. Connie was on the phone with him when she had a vicious strike. Mr. Snook was on the line and running hard. This fish was not the garden variety fourteen/ sixteen inch Snook. The fish erupted in white water. The cell phone was quickly passed from anglerette to want-a-be fisherman. With excited voices we were yelling Snook! The sun provided enough light to allow us a great view of the fight. Minutes passed and the fight went on. The fish made several passes at the boat but with the light fading it was hard to keep track of the fish. Finally the fish was boated. The Snook weighed about seven pounds on the Boca Grip. What more could one want, a four pound trout and a seven pound Snook. Well, how about another legal slot size Snook measuring twenty-eight inches. If that was not enough, when the sun was completely gone then it had hit. The seven pound Snook fought and fought well but this fish took the battle to a higher level. Since there were no corner street lights, all we could do was to listen to the fish scream drag and

Continued page 4

Marker 24 Continued

bust the water. Knowing this was likely a larger than slot size Snook, Connie made every effort to land this dark monster from the mangroves. Eventually, the fish threw the hook and returned to its realm.

Needless to say, our time spent in Bokeelia was well worth it. Just like in the fishing magazines, we had our day. However, this day would not have been if it were not for the assistance from Capt. Jerry and Capt. Rick.

Best Wishes for Fishing,
Rob Darner



Captain Of The Year Race

News Flash!
News Flash!!

Eddie McGowan is NOT in second place! Finally, Eddie has moved out of his dreaded "Brides Maid" spot! Now, Granted, he is moving in the WRONG direction, but he isn't in second place! The Standings with four of nine tournaments done are:

- | | |
|-------------------------|---------|
| 1st - Chris Rooney | 27 Pts. |
| 2nd - Rob Darner | 26 Pts. |
| 3rd - Eddie McGowan | 25 Pts. |
| 4rd - Danny Del Rio | 23 Pts. |
| 4th - Frank Grassi | 23 Pts. |
| 5th - Vernon Summersiel | 20 Pts. |
| 6th - Tony Benevento | 12 Pts. |
| 7th - Mike Coldwater | 10 Pts. |
| 8th - Mike Snyder | 9 Pts. |
| 9th - Mike Murphy | 6 Pts. |
| 9th - Bob Dorough | 6 Pts. |
| 10th - Andy Proescher | 5 Pts. |
| 11th - James Teter | 4 Pts. |
| 11th - Pete St. Laurent | 4 Pts. |
| 12th - Bob Hughton | 2 Pts. |
| 13th - Gary Newman | 1 Pt. |



Top's Tips
Safety First

Top Ingram

As we move into the warmer months with more daylight hours, and increasing temperatures, we must be alert to the ever increasing afternoon thunderstorms. In order to have a safe outing, boaters have a special need to know and understand the weather. On land, the effects of storms can be devastating. At sea, they can be even worse. High winds, lightning, rough seas and poor visibility are some of the side effects of storms at sea. The first step in avoiding weather related problems is "know before you go." This means you need reliable weather information before you go out on the water.

Even if good weather is predicted, it can change while you are out. At least as important as knowing what weather to expect on your trip, is knowing how to tell when the weather is changing for the worse, or how to read the obvious signs. Therefore, we must understand how high and low pressure air masses impact our weather. Air masses with high pressure contain cool, dry air and low pressure contains warm, moist air. In the US, these air masses move mainly from west to east.

In the Northern Hemisphere, air flows clockwise around a high and counterclockwise around a low. Therefore, since a high moving toward a low may have high winds, the area between the high and low may have stormy weather. Thus, it is important to know where the highs and lows are in relation to your location on the water.

To locate the highs and lows in our area, stand with your back to the surface wind. Then, turn 45 degrees to your right which will align you with the winds aloft. After you have turned 45 degrees to the right, the low-pressure area will normally be to your left. The high area will be to your right with the resulting pressure area to the west the one that will reach you and the one to the east has already passed you. Therefore, if the pressure system to the west is low, weather conditions may deteriorate and you should make plans accordingly.

Clouds also tell us when bad weather is approaching. The one you want to pay close attention to is the cumulonimbus thunderhead or anvil shaped cloud. It usually signals a cold front moving at 10 to 30 knots with winds as high as 30-60 knots in a squall line. Gusts of wind may exceed 80-100 knots, which present dangerous boating conditions with heavy rain followed by clearing.

Know before you go, pay attention to changing weather conditions and continue to enjoy safe boating throughout the year.

Top Ingram
Fish Tales



Loud Hailings

Newsletter Editor Bill Breen

I would really like to feature PICTURES of club members with some good catches. Either give me a hardcopy at a meeting (I will return it to you) or E-mail me your pictures at:

breenw@bellsouth.net

Don't forget to include your name spelled correctly and the fish weight.

OK Dan Parker, pay attention, this is about your favorite bait. Below is the article on how to catch and brine your own Ribbon Fish.

Anyone can submit an article for the Reel News just send or give it to me at any time.

Catching Ribbonfish

With July here and the numerous Kingfish Tournaments to compete in, here is a handy bit of information on how to catch and brine your own bait, Kingfish candy, the Ribbonfish.

The undisputed number one way to use a Ribbonfish is to run it on a downrigger, about 35 feet back and about 10 feet above the bottom. This does two things, #1, it puts the Ribbonfish in the zone where most of the BIG Kings hangout, and #2, it puts it below and behind your surface running live Pogies, and makes them very nervous and active so they attract more attention from the Kings.

Now, take a look at a Ribbonfish's intimidating assortment of dental equipment and it's easy to see that this guy's built for grabbing live prey. Needle like canines line the top and bottom jaws, with elongated lances protruding from the front. Therefore, sturdy rigs are a must. Eight to 20 pound main line with 30 or 40 pound mono filament leaders tied to 2/0 long shank hooks will suffice, but adding a 6-inch trace of No. 3 wire will minimize bite-offs. For simplicity, use pre-rigged wire with barrel swivels for attaching to the main line and snap swivels for hanging the hook.

Ribbonfish thrive in estuaries and other muddy bottom environments from Maine to South America. In Florida waters, they're found more commonly on the East Coast, particularly in major inlets such as St. Johns, St. Augustine and Port Canaveral. Although ribbons occasionally turn up in castnets full of menhaden (pogies), it's tough targeting these fleet-finned hellions with anything but hook and line. It mostly entails night fishing because, like goggle eyes, that's when they feed most. Fortunately, hook and line operations can produce 100 or more in a good night.

Ribbons follow schools of smaller bait fish from the open water to sea walls, jetties, piers and bridges. To find the concentrations, work chrome or blue Rat-L-Traps in the likely areas. Their shiny, hi-vis profiles appeal to kingfish.

Ribbonfish experts congregate the critters by hanging a fluorescent light tube, connected via alligator clips directly to

their boat's main battery, from the stern. Casting an eerie green glow, the light attracts small forage fish, which in turn draw in the ribbons. Once you've located a concentration of ribbonfish, thumbnail size chunks of fresh shrimp or previously caught ribbons will bring plenty of action. These perceptive hunters will sniff out anything edible, but mini light tubes clipped to the hook shanks add just enough visibility to make the baits stand out in dark water.

Medium-action 6 1/2- to 7 foot spinning rods, the same ones you'd use for sabiki (gold-hook) duties, will handle most ribbonfish. A hooked ribbon fights a respectable fight, but it's wise to get them in fast. Intense feeding competition reaches cannibalistic heights when the struggling commotion of a hooked ribbonfish presents an easy target for its brethren. Reeling up half a ribbon is nothing rare. Maximize this aggression by tossing in rigs with fresh bait near the point of attack.

Ribbonfish are almost always fished dead, but handling the fresh catch requires planning. Prior to the trip, prepare a brining solution, which toughens the big baits for freezing. Without this step, thawed ribbons turn mushy and wash out quickly. In a 70- to 130-quart cooler, mix two 1-pound boxes of baking soda, three 3-pound boxes of coarse Kosher salt (not iodized) with a 5-gallon bucket of sea water and an 8-pound bag of ice. Initially, the brining solution should sit just above the cooler's drain plug.

Add more ice as needed to maintain a chilly slush, but don't let the ice form a solid sheet over your ribbons, premature freezing prevents thorough brining. Conversely, leaving ribbonfish in the brining solution for more than 24 hours tends to blow out their stomachs and ruin the baits. After 8 to 12 hours of brining, remove and freeze.

Plastic food storage sleeves closed with a vacuum sealer will keep ribbonfish in good freezer condition. Depending on the size of your ribbonfish, freezing multiple baits in the same sleeve works fine as long as baits lie flat with at least 1/4-inch of surrounding space. Lacking this option, double wrap them in heavy-duty aluminum foil and be sure to force out all of the air.

To thaw, just put the fish on the deck for a few minutes. (Tip: It's actually easiest to rig bait fish when they're still partially frozen as the rigidity facilitates handling. In the water, the bait will thaw quickly.)

When it comes to rigging ribbonfish for king mackerel, a stinger rig with multiple trailing segments is the way to go. A common setup uses a 1/4-ounce jighead as the lead hook, because a jig keeps the bait tracking straight through the water. Run through the bait's lower jaw and out the topside.

However, some people also rig ribbons with a single lead hook, which allows the baits to flutter and flow erratically. Personal observation has shown that ribbons don't always swim straight. Very often, they dart and dash in varying angles, and occasionally turn perfectly vertical to target surface meals.

With the right handling and preparation, ribbonfish will add a productive facet to your kingfish arsenal, they seem particularly attractive to big smoker kings. And this is one bait fish that's also a blast to catch.



Instant Crew, Just Add Water

<u>Name</u>	-	<u>Phone</u>	-	<u>Availability</u>	-	<u>Can call the Night before.</u>
Pete St.Laurent	-	220-9199	-	Most weekends	-	Up to 8:00 pm
Bill Breen	-	254-2791	-	Any day	-	Up to 10:00 pm

Associate Member of the Month

Avid Angler

2101 N. Ponce De Leon Blvd
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Avid Angler is our shop of choice in the St. Augustine area. They are located right on the way to the boat ramps, and have everything that you forgot to bring, or used up on the last trip, but didn't replace before taking off for this big fishing expedition.

They carry that Ice, and Live Bait that we all need to take on every trip.

You can also just stop in and get the latest information on what is biting where and the How - To of catching what is biting.

Remember to at least stop and pick up your ice and support our sponsors, This is another good shop supports our club!



Cigar Minnow

Cigar minnows, cigarfish, or hard tails are all "Round Scad", *Decapterus punctatus*. They grow commonly to 6 inches but can be as large as 12 inches. As the name belies, they are cigar shaped and have a line of enlarged scaled running the length of the body on the sides and a tiny finlet behind the dorsal fin and behind the anal fin. You can catch them in a cast net or with gold hook rigs in the same areas that you find sardines or threadfin. They are in the same size range as sardines so if you are using a Sabiki rig to catch them a # 8 is a good size to use. They are also sold frozen and are an excellent cut or whole bait for almost everything. For live bait fishing, hook them in the cartilage in the nose and troll away. They are a hardy fish in the well and on the hook, and like the blue runner, can out swim the boat if you are not careful.

Tips for using Cigar Minnow

Use a circle hook through the nose fished on the bottom, or on top drifting.



Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thur	Fri	Sat
		<h1>July</h1>				1
2	3 Board Meeting	4 Independence Day	5	6 Club Meeting	7	8
9 Kingfish Tune-up Tournament	10	11	12	13 Club Meeting	14	15
16	17 <i>Bellsouth</i>	18 <i>Greater Jacksonville</i>	19	20	21 <i>Kingfish Tournament</i>	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

Coming Events:

NOTE the Kingfish Tune-up Tourny will be Sunday, July 9th
 NOTE - The SECOND meeting for July will be on July 13th, the SECOND Thursday. Because of the Greater Jacksonville Bellsouth Kingfish Tournament which is - July 17 - 23

Tournament Schedule for 2006

Tournament	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	Date	-	Rain Date
Kingfish Tune-up Tournament	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	July 9 th	-	July 15 th
Powder Puff Tournament	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	August 12 th	-	August 19 th
Light Tackle Tournament	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	August 26 th	-	September 2 nd
The Bottom Fishing Tournament	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	September 9 th	-	September 16 th

Associate Members

• *ACM Electronics* • *Adventure Landing* • *Wild Adventures* • *American Transmission* • *Anthony & Sandra Spa* • *Arlington Bait & tackle* • *Avid Angler* • *B & M Bait & Tackle* • *Baitmasters of South Florida* • *Boaters World* • *Boathouse Discount Marine* • *Bryan McGowan Charters* • *C & H Lures* • *Cabelas* • *Cannon's Bait & Tackle* • *Carey Chen Art* • *Custom Marine Components* • *Deonas Boatworks* • *Dexter Russell Cutlery* • *Dockside Inn* • *Donovan Heating & Air* • *Fulton Fish Company* • *G & W Marine* • *Gear 4Fishermen* • *Greater Jax Kingfish Tournament* • *Guy Harvey Publishing* • *Hydro-Shield* • *Power-Pro* • *International Crew* • *Jacksonville Scuba Center* • *Kershaw Knives* • *Knight Electric* • *Lindgren-Pitman, Inc.* • *Mac's Prop Savers* • *MacMedia Graphics* • *Mann's Bait Company* • *Maxima America* • *Ocean Get Away* • *Ocean Waves Sunglasses* • *Okuma Fishing Tackle Corp.* • *Penn Tackle Mfg.* • *Roffers Ocean Forecasting Service* • *Salty Styles* • *Sea Tow Jacksonville* • *Seafood Galore* • *Southern Propane* • *Speedy MacTwist* • *SSI Custom Plastics* • *St. John's Seafood & Steaks* • *Strike Zone Fishing* • *Surefire LLC* • *Team Fish Industries of America* • *The Billfish Foundation* • *The Florida Sportsman Club* • *Thrifty Outdoors* • *West Marine* • *Workman's Kwik-Fix Plumbing* •



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