

the tight line®

An underwater photograph showing a squid in the lower left, its tentacles reaching towards a red and yellow lure in the center. The background is a deep blue-green water with some light reflections on the surface.

Shallow Water Squidding

PNG Black Bass

Threadfin Salmon

Megabass Arms Rods

Inshore Trevallies

New AFTA Tackle Releases

Vol 3



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Shallow
Water
Squid
Games



By Duncan O'Connell

Shallow water and sight fishing aren't the first things that normally come to mind when I think of squid fishing. Mostly I have associated squidding with night times around jetties, or in my younger years casting over kelp beds around Sydney's deep water sandstone ledges. Nowadays I keenly look forward to the arrival of winter and the clear water that the associated westerly winds bring to Moreton Bay in SE Queensland. These conditions really appeal to the squid which move into the shallow waters en masse to feed prior to breeding in late winter and early spring. Substantial parts of southern Moreton Bay are now off limits to trawlers and tunnel nets (shallow water commercial netting), which has not surprisingly coincided with an increase in the numbers of many species and particularly squid in these areas.

Cephalopods (squid, octopus and nautilus) are a rapidly growing type of Mollusc; which range throughout the oceans of the world. It is believed that

due to the depletion of the world's fish resources, numbers of squid have actually increased over the past 30 years.

The northern calamari (bigfin reef squid or tiger squid: *Sepioteuthis lessoniana*), which is one of the most common angling species in temperate and tropical waters of the Indo-Pacific has been known to eat up to 30% of its body weight in a day! They become sexually mature at just 6 months old and commonly grow from 0.4-2.2kg. Maximum life span is estimated at just 18 months to 2 years. The calamari love a habitat rich in structure like weed and rock and the shallows of Moreton Bay has this in spades. As squids are exceptional visual hunters, shallow clear water suits them perfectly.

Most of our trips are based around a rising tide. It is still possible to catch good numbers on a falling tide, but their general foraging pattern appears to be that they move up across the shallows with the rising water, penetrating as far as possible into the mangroves and rocky shoreline



the lures but not the same number of solid hookups.

As we work our way up across the flats, we fan casts around the general area, but particularly focus on rock bars, gravel patches and weedy areas. Once we are along the shoreline, the focus changes from prospecting a wide area to peppering all the small bays along the shore as well as pitching jigs in under the shade of mangrove trees. Like bream fishing in similar areas, the squid are frequently stationed in water so shallow that it can be hard to believe that anything could be there. Some days they are so well camouflaged that they can follow jigs all the way to the boat and the only thing that gives them away is seeing the jig take off sideways across the bottom. On other days, the squid are less concerned with camouflaging themselves and more interested in charging out and grabbing the jig before their mates get to it. On these days it can be possible to see the large tigers lurking at the base of mangrove

feeding actively as they go. Once the tide begins to fall they will still take a jig most of the time, however, the squid seem to lose much of their aggression as they move back out to deeper water. This tends to result in plenty of looks and touches on

stumps or cruising a rocky shore. Flicking a jig a metre or two out from them usually receives an instant response. Another giveaway in the shallows is the presence of small baitfish or jelly prawns nervously flicking about. I used to think that this was mainly down to bream hunting the shore, however I now see this more as a sign of squid activity in many areas.

The common method to work a squid jig

these days is quite aggressively, compared to how most of us would have fished a couple of years ago. The standard retrieve goes like this: let the jig sink to the bottom (or almost all the way if the bottom is really rough). Give it a couple of really vigorous rips to make the jig leap up a metre or more. Then let it sink back down, winding out the slack line as you go and then repeat. The leaping of the jig attracts their



attention while the glide back down allows the squid time to shoot in and grab their prey. This does still work in the shallows, but sometimes the water is too shallow to execute this kind of retrieve. A slow steady wind alternated with a faster twitching retrieve gets the jig performing an enticing 'walk the dog' kind of zig zag action with most quality lures. The slow wind allows the squid time to attack without letting the jig sink too deeply. Some days the squid won't attack straight away but it does attract them out of the shallows following the lure. Simply pausing to let the lure sink usually provokes a bite at this point. Tiger squid in the shallows rarely travel as individuals, where there is one

more are usually close by. Flicking a jig beside a hooked squid usually ensures a double hookup. On a recent trip I had two squid in the net. I flicked my mate Mike's jig out of the first squid and then tossed my jig overboard to make it easier to deal with the two nice tigers in the net. Just as I was about to lift them into the boat, my jig



dangling over the edge took off attached to another nice squid. With both hands full I looked over to Mike for help but he was already hooked up to another one!

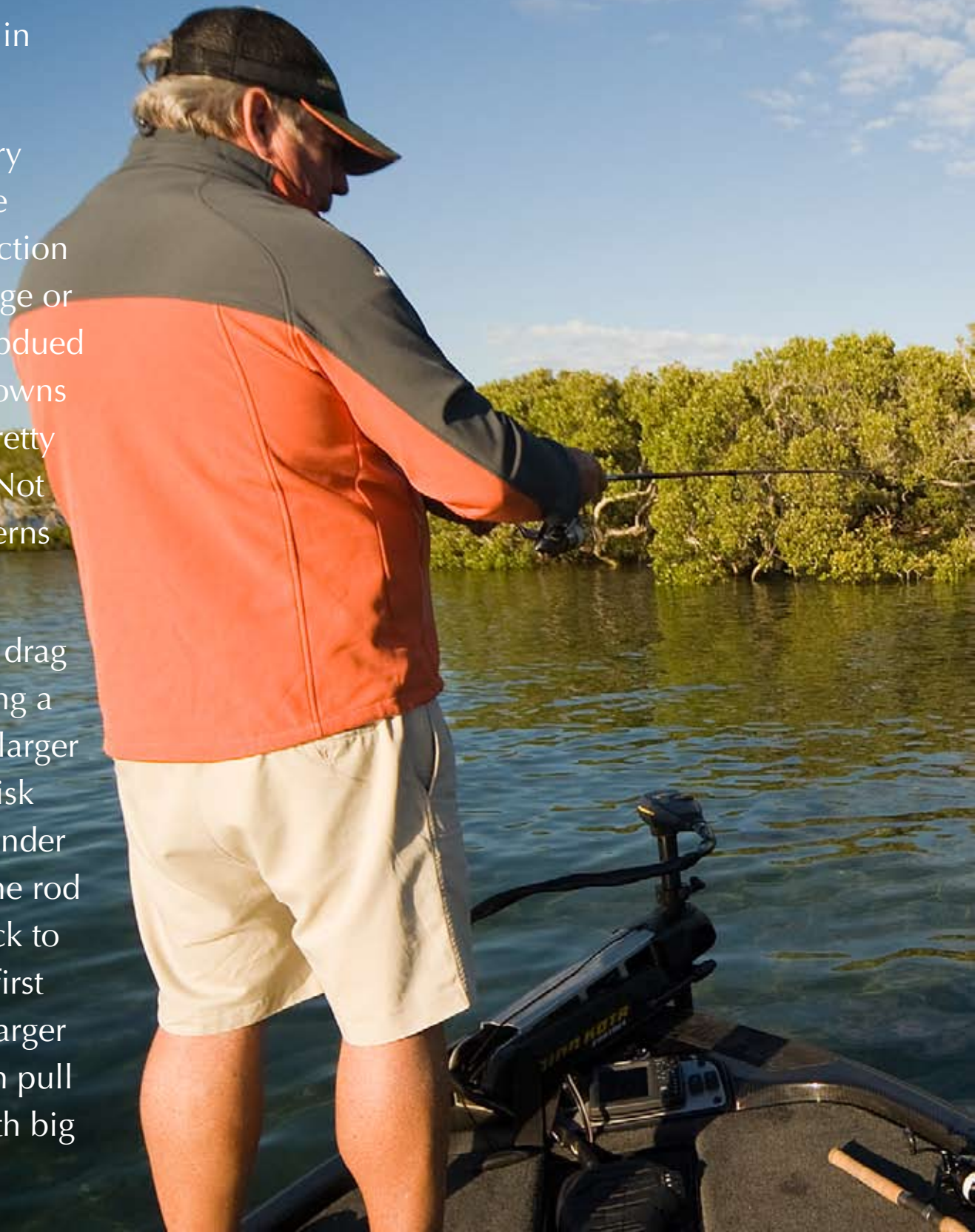
In many areas, #3.5 size jigs are the most popular. Not surprisingly, smaller jigs are perfect for this kind of fishing. Some manufacturers offer smaller jigs down to #2.0 and 1.8 sizes. When there has been a fair bit of fishing pressure, these really small jigs come into their own but most of the time I prefer to fish a bit larger in the #2.2 to 3.0 size range. There are a couple of reasons for this. Firstly, the larger jig allows you to cast further away from the boat or shore to cover more ground easily and secondly because the smaller lures sometimes don't get noticed as easily next to their bigger more obvious brethren. Ideal lures include the Breaden #2.5 Shallow models and Yamashita Naory 2.2 Slow Sinkers. I commonly use standard weight #2.5 and 3.0 jigs from Yamashita, Daiwa, Breaden, Yo-Zuri and Sumizoku as well

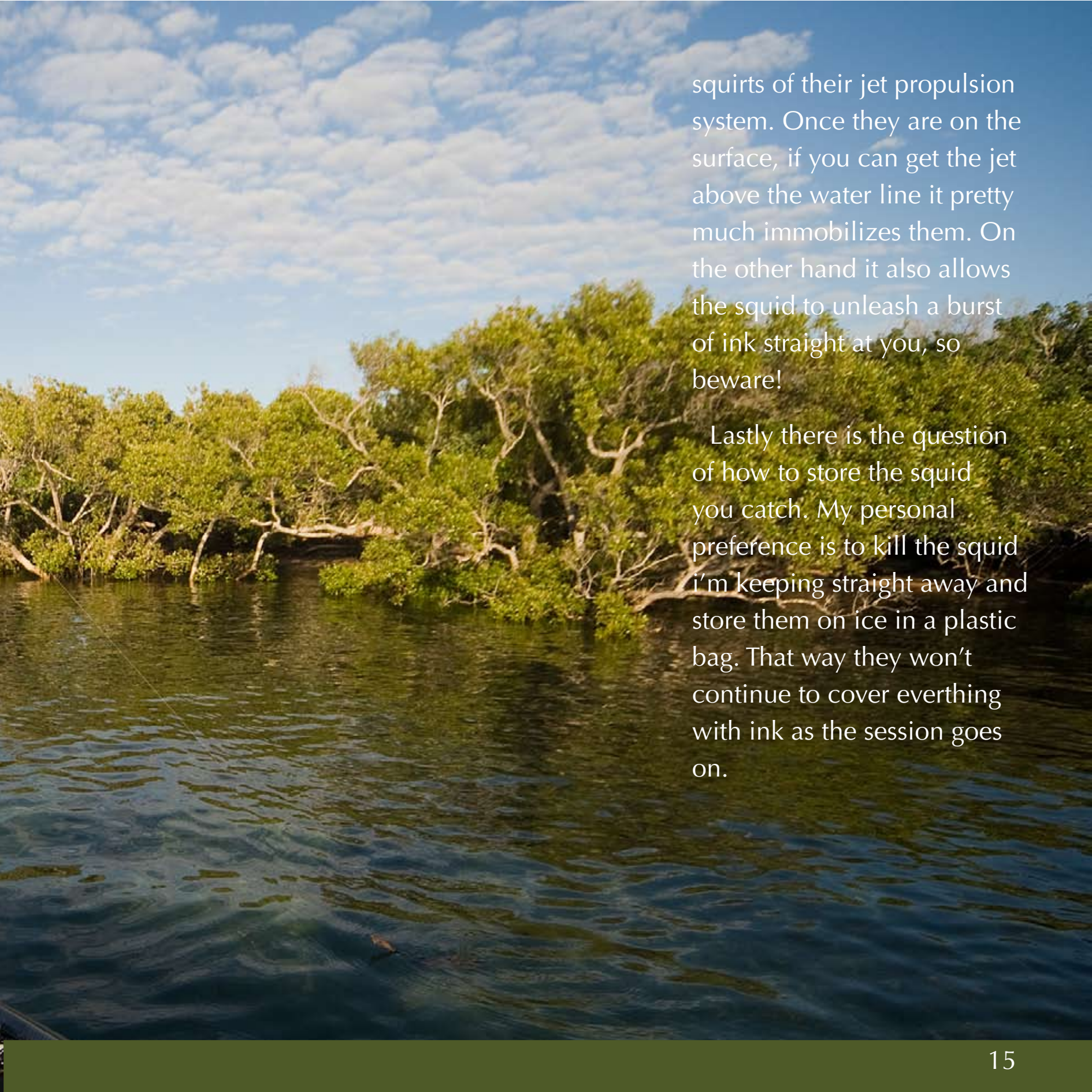


for their extra cast weight, but they do need to be worked faster to avoid snagging in some locations.

Colour preferences vary from day to day with the squid, but having a selection of 'attractor' fluoro orange or pink as well as more subdued natural looking reds, browns and greens will cover pretty much all eventualities. Not surprisingly, prawn patterns work very well also.

Generally, a very light drag setting is ideal for fighting a squid because with the larger specimens there is the risk of pulling the pins out under heavy load. I still give the rod a pretty aggressive whack to help set the pins in the first place though. When a larger squid hooks up they can pull a fair amount of line with big





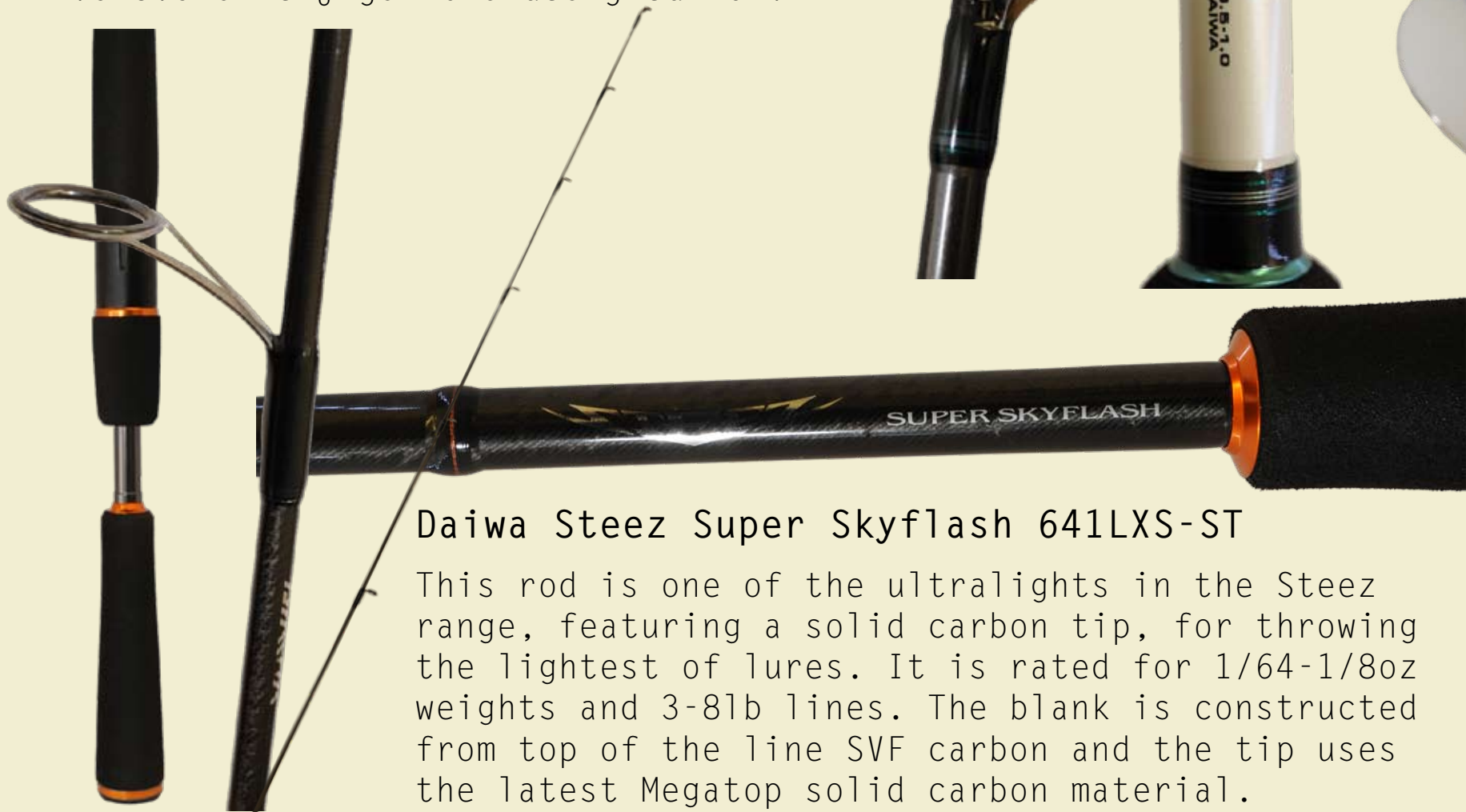
squirts of their jet propulsion system. Once they are on the surface, if you can get the jet above the water line it pretty much immobilizes them. On the other hand it also allows the squid to unleash a burst of ink straight at you, so beware!

Lastly there is the question of how to store the squid you catch. My personal preference is to kill the squid i'm keeping straight away and store them on ice in a plastic bag. That way they won't continue to cover everything with ink as the session goes on.

Random Tackle Moments

Daiwa Emeraldas Interline Telescopic:

This is the ultimate in portability for the travelling squid angler. With no guides to get in the way, it can be stowed or unpacked equally quickly. The length and mid weighted tip makes it ideal for the shorebased angler tossing 15-25g lures around for tailor and trevally as well the 2.5-3.5 size jigs it's designed for.

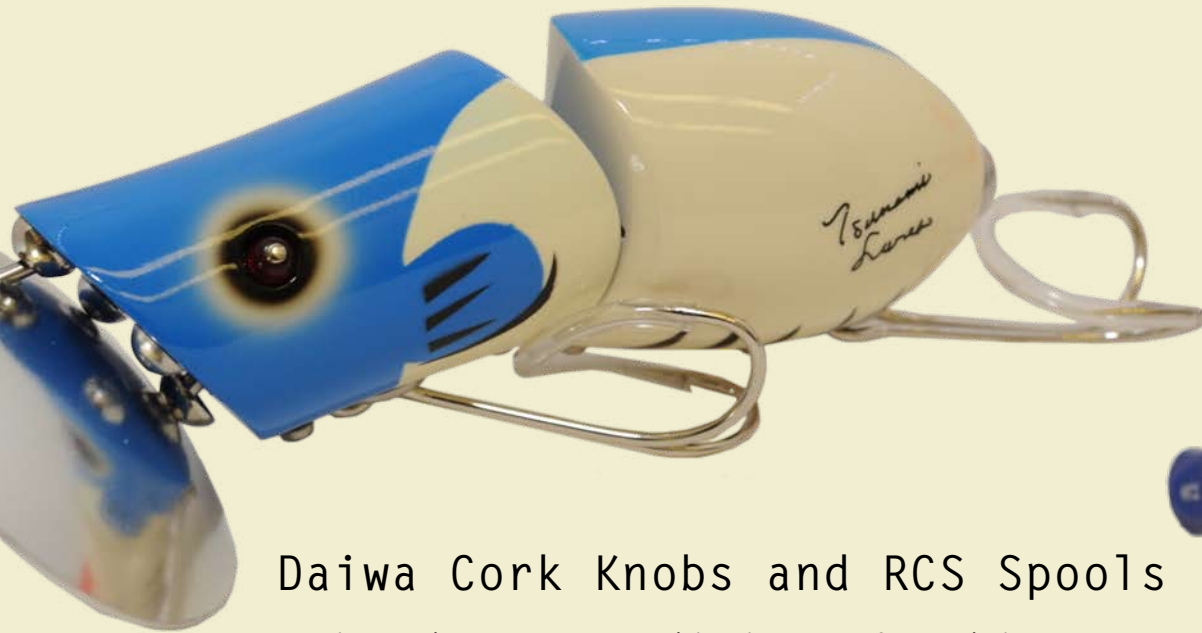


Daiwa Steez Super Skyflash 641LXS-ST

This rod is one of the ultralights in the Steez range, featuring a solid carbon tip, for throwing the lightest of lures. It is rated for 1/64-1/8oz weights and 3-8lb lines. The blank is constructed from top of the line SVF carbon and the tip uses the latest Megatop solid carbon material.

Tsunami Beat Queen Jointed

Masami Motoki of Tsunami creates beautiful handmade bass and cod lures for collectors enthusiast topwater anglers. These are made in very small quantities with just one design produced each month. Everything about these lures is exquisite from the paint work to the action and the bespoke fittings.



Daiwa Cork Knobs and RCS Spools

Daiwa has a tradition of making accessory parts for their reels - this seasons releases include the return of their cork handle knobs as well as some funky new blue and red cork knobs and matching spin spools.



In the shadow of the Father
Fishing Baia, Papua New guinea
by Dale Sinclair





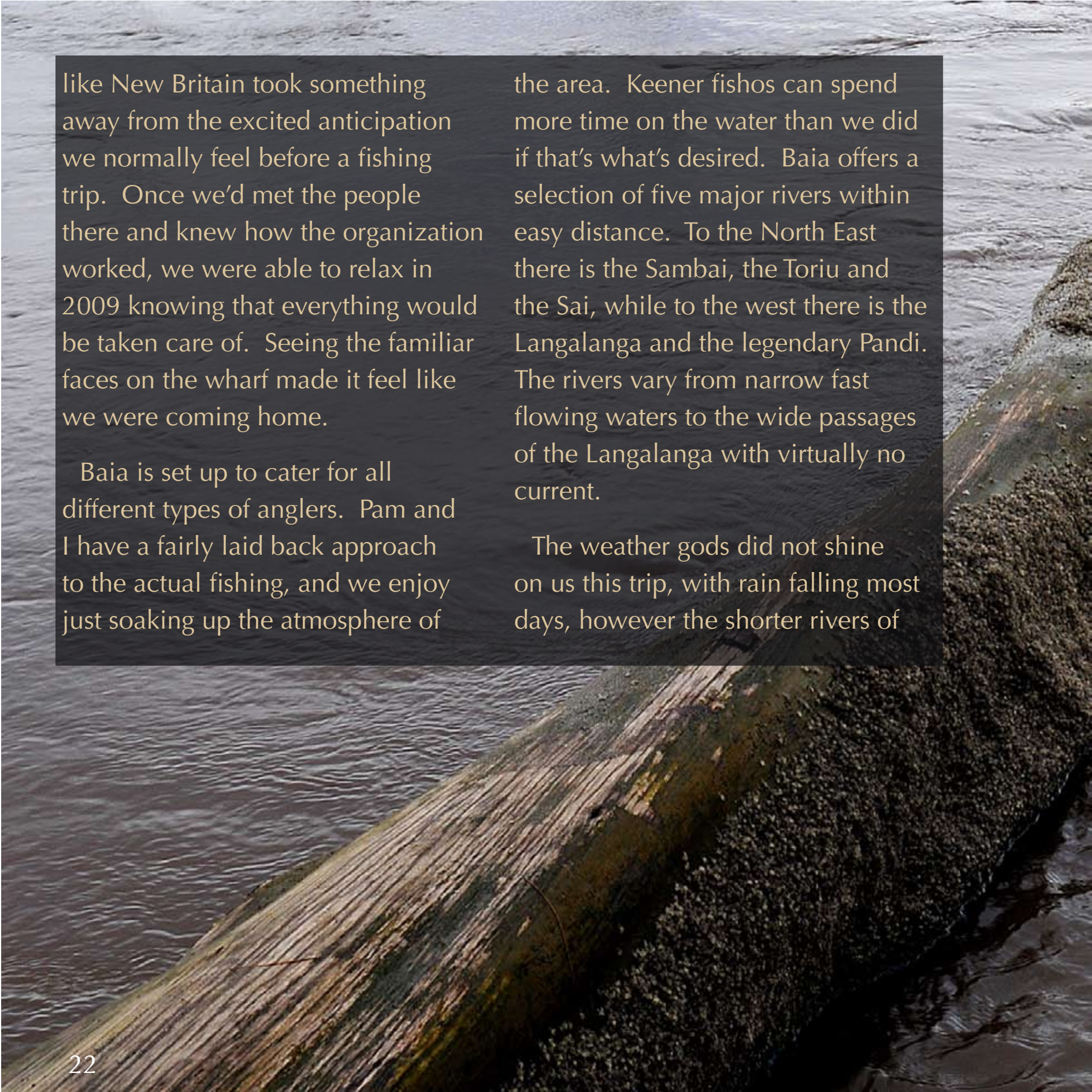




There are few places in the world filled with as much mystery and curiosity as Papua New Guinea. There are a myriad of islands, mountain ranges, volcanoes, rainforest and rivers filled with all manner of unusual rare creatures. The rugged geography created cultures which had been largely isolated from each other and relatively untouched by Europeans until recent times.

Baia Lodge is located on New Britain, a large island on the Eastern side of PNG. The lodge was started in 2004 as a partnership between local communities and sportfishing mad businessman Riccard Reimann. It was conceived as a sustainable source of income for the locals and an alternative to large scale logging, which has destroyed many remote parts of the country.

Our return to Baia Lodge was much more relaxed than our first visit. In 2008 Pam and I had traveled to PNG for our first visit. The apprehensions of fishing a remote area

A large, weathered log floats in a river. The log is covered in green moss and has a dark, charred section. The water is dark and rippled. A dark, semi-transparent text box covers the upper half of the image, containing two paragraphs of text in a light-colored serif font.

like New Britain took something away from the excited anticipation we normally feel before a fishing trip. Once we'd met the people there and knew how the organization worked, we were able to relax in 2009 knowing that everything would be taken care of. Seeing the familiar faces on the wharf made it feel like we were coming home.

Baia is set up to cater for all different types of anglers. Pam and I have a fairly laid back approach to the actual fishing, and we enjoy just soaking up the atmosphere of

the area. Keener fishos can spend more time on the water than we did if that's what's desired. Baia offers a selection of five major rivers within easy distance. To the North East there is the Sambai, the Toriu and the Sai, while to the west there is the Langalanga and the legendary Pandi. The rivers vary from narrow fast flowing waters to the wide passages of the Langalanga with virtually no current.

The weather gods did not shine on us this trip, with rain falling most days, however the shorter rivers of



West New Britain clear quickly and with 5 to choose from the guides knew which would be best on any given day.

With the prevalent, unseasonable rain this year, most of our fishing efforts were concentrated on the Sai River which was the cleanest. As our trip coincided with the New Moon, we were privileged to see the monthly White Bait run. One afternoon session of lure casting from the beach saw us land 17 Trevally up to 6 kg and 6 Black Bass to 4 kg. The excitement of seeing XOS fish gorging themselves on Whitebait but not striking our lures and flies became so frustrating that I was even able to kick a Black Bass away from my feet, while Pam had Trevally crashing into her legs.

The daily runs from the Lodge to the rivers give ample opportunity to tow a variety of saltwater lures if you are so inclined. On this trip we encountered Yellowfin Tuna, Skipjack Tuna, Queenfish, Trevally, Rainbow Runner, Wahoo, Mackerel and some deep reef fish. During one session I was casting to what I believed to be Giant Trevally only to have my popper chopped up by an unhappy Sawfish.





The infamous black bass and spot-tailed bass are what most anglers come to this region for. Casting at snags is our favorite method of fishing for them, although live baits can be very successful-particularly on monster bass. We mainly cast the largest size Rapala Skitter Pops and Skitter Walks with both producing spectacular surface strikes. The Smith Saruna is another very successful lure along with the sinking Jackall Doozer.

My favorite rod in PNG is an Egrell B8-5 fitted with a Daiwa Zillion PE, while Pam uses an Egrell B6-5 with a Daiwa Hard Rock Fish. A good quality 30 to 50lb Braid main line is tied to a 30 to 60lb Flourocarbon leader using a Slim Beauty knot. I prefer the coarser braids like Bionic and Fins as they seem to be more resistant to the abrasion encountered in the timber. In the open salt water I used an Egrell B10 fitted with a Daiwa Pluton while Pam likes her Daiwa Heartland HL74HXHFB fitted with a Blue Backer 200. If you are a flyfisherman, a good quality 12wt outfit with an intermediate line should see you get by.

If you normally fish for Barramundi or Murray





Cod, your existing outfits are probably suitable for Baia, however an overseas excursion is a pretty good excuse to justify the purchase of some new gear. I've got my eye on a couple of rods from the Smith stable that look like they'll fit in nicely at Baia.

I know I haven't told you much about the fish, as it is difficult to describe them. Rod Harrison describes them as the toughest fish in any river in the world. Well known American fly angler Lefty Kreh also rates them as the hardest fighting freshwater fish he's tackled. With Black Bass and their cousin the Spot Tail Bass, there is very little finesse required. The fight is more like Mohamed Ali than Kostya Tsui. These



fish have taken the rule book and torn it up. When you finally get a 3kg example to the boat you wonder where it gets all of its energy from. Imagine this, you catch

a Mangrove Jack of about 1kg and the guide says he'd like to use it for live bait. He pins it to two 8/0 hooks and you throw it into the snags under a balloon. After 30 seconds there is a sound reminiscent of someone dropping a bullock into the water from a

helicopter. Line peels off from the locked drag, removing the fingerprint from your thumb as it goes, you lose about 5 metres of line and 2 square centimeters of skin in less than a second. If you're lucky you get your hooks back. That is what keeps me going back to Baia. One day, one of those monsters will make a mistake!



Want to Fish Baia?

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DEFI MUTHOS 96 HH

9'6" 2PC 210G MAX CAST WT PE 3-5

GLANZ S68 TECHNICAL

6'8" 2PC 14-90G CAST WT PE 1-2




Releasing Threadfin

King threadfin salmon (*Polydactylus macrochir*) are a large estuarine fish found throughout the northern half of Australia. This magnificent species has featured heavily in magazine articles, on internet forums and other popular fishing media around SE Qld for the last few years due to their apparent increase in numbers and their increasing popularity as a recreational angling target in and around Brisbane.

There is anecdotal evidence of

a thriving population of threadfin salmon in the Brisbane River in the early 1900's, around which a substantial gillnet fishery is believed to have existed and there have been reports of local recreational anglers catching them as mullock by-catch since the 70's. However, these fish started coming into the eyes of the angling public as a recreational fishing target around the late 1990's and early 2000's, when a large boom in their population occurred. Since that time



the number of anglers chasing these fish has rapidly increased. I myself have been fishing for the Brisbane River threadies for a couple of years and have fallen in love with these wonderful fish.

The biology of king threadfin salmon makes it very important that we treat this resource responsibly. Local angler and researcher Brad Moore, has been conducting a study on donated threadfin frames for a number of years. Preliminary data indicates that threadies

begin changing sex from male to female, just as barramundi and flathead, once they reach around 90cm total length.

The largest fish Brad looked at was 130cm and 14 years old. The average age for a 117.5cm fish was 10 years, and only 5 years for a 100cm fish. The size at which 100% of sampled fish were female was 120cm, which gives an indication that many of the breeding females take 10-11 years to reach their status. For these reasons the large breeding size fish are very important and I urge anglers to reconsider taking 100cm+ fish for a feed, as it can be seen the growth rate between 100cm and 120cm is quite slow.

The increase in angling pressure, and the vulnerability of the large breeding females, has generated some concern about the future of this species, and for this reason I have been asked to write this article about successful

release techniques.

There are a number of issues encountered when attempting to release threadies, and I will attempt to explain them and the best way to counter them below.

brought quickly into shallow water, the gases in the swim bladder expand as the water pressure decreases and the swim bladder blows up like a balloon, making the fish float and unable to dive back down. This is probably the number one issue encountered with the release of these fish.

Dealing with this problem is actually very simple, using a release weight or dropline. Some will suggest deflating the swim bladder by inserting a hollow needle from the outside, however, this is quite risky and is not recommended as it can lead to infections. Damage to vital nerves and organs can occur and as well it can

place considerable stress on the fish.

A release weight, such as the one pictured on page 39, is inserted through the top lip from the outside in, while the fish is held motionless in the water.



Firstly, the large swim bladder in threadfin often makes it difficult to successfully release fish caught in deeper water, which is where they are often found in the Brisbane River. When the fish are



Above Left: A fish which arrives at the boat upside down can indicate a blown swimbladder, necessitating use of a release weight for a healthy return.

Above: when holding fish up for a photo, cradle the mid-section to minimise stress on the spine.

Attached to a handline with heavy mono, the release weight is allowed to drop to the bottom dragging the fish nose down through the water. This not only gets clean oxygenated water flowing through the gills, it also returns the fish to deep water where the pressure in the swim bladder is neutralized by the increased water pressure. Once the weight hits the bottom, the line is given a good tug and the fish is free to go or as often happens, the fish will get itself off the barbless hook halfway down once it is able to swim again.

This is a very simple process and can be done by anyone: a release weight is

inexpensive, can be readily made at home and should be a part of every anglers tackle bag who intends to catch and release these fish.

Another important issue is to minimize the fight time by using appropriate tackle. Threadfin are a fish that will run, and run, and run and just in case you're not tired of it yet, run some more if given the chance, completely exhausting themselves in the process.

I personally use 30lb mainline on a 12-20lb baitcast outfit and around a rod length of 60lb mono leader. This allows me to knock over a metre plus fish in less



Another fine Brisbane River threadfin on the brag mat

than five minutes, which is a good number to aim for as the less exhausted they are, the better they will release and recover.

Lastly, handling techniques and time out of the water also play a huge role in the successful release of these fish. For fish up to about 100cm, I use a large size environet to land the fish. Anything larger and I lift the fish in (if I am tagging) by placing one hand in the jaw (don't worry, they don't have any teeth) and the other supporting the midsection. If the fish is not being tagged, I will de-hook boat side and avoid taking the fish out of the water at all.

It is important when lifting threadfin and posing for photos etc, not to place any strain on the jaw or tail joints. At all times the midsection should be supported and time spent holding up the fish should be minimised. My tagging procedure is to keep the fish in the water until all the gear is ready and the brag mat is laid out. The fish is de-hooked in the water, then quickly lifted in and placed straight on the brag mat, tag inserted and measurements

taken, then supporting the midsection the fish is placed gently back in the water. If droplining is required then the release weight is inserted and the fish sent to the bottom. Otherwise, I will "swim" the fish in the water until it kicks off strongly. If a fish is quite "green" and kicking about on the deck, a towel soaked in river water placed over the head is a good way to calm it down and prevent the fish from injuring itself. Make sure the towel is soaking wet and not dry.

Using this method and keeping out of water time down to 20 seconds or less I have not had any weak releases or questionable results.

We as Brisbane River and SE Qld anglers should count ourselves lucky to have these majestic fish on our doorstep. Using safe release techniques, and recognising the importance of large breeding size females, we can work to ensure a healthy population of threadfin in the river for years to come. I hope that in the following decades our children and grandchildren



can appreciate the awesome sight of a 110cm Threadfin Salmon stalking a lure with its long whiskers flared out, or boofing defenceless jelly prawns and disappearing back into the depths. These are truly amazing sights that I will never forget, and they make up some of my fondest memories in fishing the River.

Written by Dan Watters in collaboration with Stephen Poole

For anyone that is interested we will provide updates on Brad Moore's research into the biology and populations of king

threadfin. In the meantime, the following article makes for some interesting reading:

Halliday, I.A., Robins, J.B., Mayer, D.G., Staunton-Smith, J., Sellin, M.J., (2008) Effects of freshwater flow on the year class strength of a non-diadromous estuarine finfish, king threadfin (*Polydactylus macrochir*), in a dry tropical estuary. *Marine and Freshwater Research* **59**, 157-164

Release Weight in action, this time on a jewie



Heirloom Fishing Tackle

Megabass ARMS Rods by Yuki Ito

For many years, the idea of fishing tackle which transcends everyday functionality into a work of art, was largely restricted to fly fishing gear. Brands like Hardy's and Ari 'T Hart have been famous for making tackle as collectable as it is fishable.

In recent times, there has been a surge of interest in bass fishing tackle which is as beautiful as it is functional. Yuki Ito, the driving force behind Japanese tackle company Megabass has designed a slowly growing range of rods under the ARMS banner for the last couple of years.

These rods feature some of the finest blanks in the megabass arsenal, mated to the most distinctive butt sections ever seen in fishing rods. The skeleton reel seats are cast alloy and handles are made from fine timbers such as





Rosewood, Teak and Maple. The rods are shaped to fit either left or right handed casters. While these rods are definitely suited to those looking for a collectable, they are no slouch in the field either. The handle gives a glovelike fit in the hand when both casting and retrieving. Primarily designed as bass rods, they have proven to be deadly on barramundi as well, knocking over a number of metre plus specimens.









Light
Tackle
Line
Burners:
Inshore
Trevally

By
Dan
Fisher

The pages of fishing publications are often littered with images of thirty kilo plus giant trevally, or GTs as they're affectionately known. Many of us dream of tackling these most challenging of sport fish and a lot of time and money is spent in their pursuit. All of the press about these reef dwelling, popper crunching monsters has overshadowed the light tackle potential that smaller trevally hold, especially for anglers fishing south of tropical waters.

Few other fish will provide the entertainment of trevally, especially when chased on gear usually reserved for bream and flathead. They are a species that will hunt down a large variety of lures and once hooked up, have few peers in estuary waters for outright speed and stamina.

The two most common trevally encountered in southern QLD and northern NSW are the bigeye and giant trevally species. Big eyes are generally more prolific and easier to find, though with a little hard work and perseverance GTs are also a viable target species. The key difference in feeding habits of the two is that big eyes will school in large numbers

herding white bait or prawns, whereas GTs tend to roam in smaller schools looking for more substantial prey such as mullet and herring. Some of the other species less commonly captured in these waters are the golden, bluefin, silver, diamond and tea leaf trevally, but the two most likely are the ones we will focus on.

Bigeye Trevally

When chasing bigeye trevally there's nothing better than finding surface action to indicate they are both present and actively feeding. Bridge pylons and the ends of rock walls create water turbulence providing great places to find bigeyes chewing into bait concentrations.

If you're fortunate enough to find a school of bigeyes feeding on white bait, the first lure of choice would be a 3" minnow type soft plastic. You'll usually only need to be working the top metre of the water column, so your jig head weight should be as light as possible whilst still achieving the casting distance required. Berkley Powerbait 3" minnows are dynamite white bait imitations and Snap Back Finesse Minnows are also worth a try. If it's a new moon





and you're seeing concentrations of small prawns skipping around it's worth trying the same technique with 2" and 3" shrimp imitations.

Many of us have experienced the frustration of casting to a school of fish out of reach. On ultra light tackle tiny metal slugs with a slim, minnow like profile are ideal for this situation and allow for extreme casting distances to be achieved. During daylight hours, working small slugs in the five to fifteen gram weights at near burning speeds can be highly effective on bigeye trevally, though once the water is covered in darkness you may find that a slower, twitchy retrieve will gain more attention and a better hookup rate.

Another technique which can be effective, as well as highly enjoyable, is to make long casts past the school with small surface stick baits and work them back with a steady walk the dog retrieve. Occasionally bigeyes will take a surface lure on the pause, so mixing things up if the constant retrieve isn't working for you is a good idea.

A final proven method for fooling bigeye trevally is to work small shallow diving hard bodied minnows up to eight centimetres through the bait schools. A slow roll, slow twitch, burn and kill, or just a brisk roll will all be effective at different times. Hard bodies can be especially effective on larger fish over forty centimetres which won't turn their nose up at a more substantial meal. Some suggestions to try are the Megabass Stepcat or X70. For something a little different the Sebile Magic Swimmer 95 is a versatile little lure that can be allowed to sink to the required depth then worked up the water column at any speed you wish. The relatively new bibless - jointed swim bait design is something pressured fish won't have seen too often and has already been having great results on a whole variety of species.

Every session will be different and it is always a good idea to experiment with various techniques to find what's working on the day. Whilst bigeyes can grow up towards the metre mark, the vast majority are between thirty to fifty centimetres. Being a relatively clean fighter, four to eight pound spinning tackle will allow

you to land most fish you hook as well as present the finesse techniques they often require. By fishing light you'll also be able to fully appreciate the fast runs and erratic direction changes these spirited little fish achieve.

Giant Trevally

With their mind blowing surface strikes and line burning runs, GTs present themselves as a premium quality sportfish even in their junior ranks. Southern GTs

pose a challenge to anglers as they move around constantly and you will often only get one or two chances to show them a lure before they have darted off again. They can travel up and down estuaries on a daily basis and be tricky to locate, posing the question "how do we find them?" Unfortunately there's no magic formula and it is often a matter of covering a lot of

ground, looking for concentrations of small mullet or other likely food sources and keeping your eyes peeled for any signs of feeding.



Whilst commonly known to inhabit headlands and shallow reefs, at times GT will move a long way up estuaries, especially when they haven't been flushed out by rain for some time.

In fact, it may surprise some to read that it isn't uncommon to catch GTs in the same waters that hold bass in winter. Likely structure to try in the upper reaches are shallow banks which empty out on the falling tide into deeper water. If there's GTs holding in the area then there's a good chance this is where they will be. Giant trevally are one of those species you just

have to work a bit harder for. Once you discover a spot that holds these great fish you'll find it will often produce again in future, it's then just a matter of being in the right place at the right time. Some other proven haunts for GTs are cane drains, jetties, creek mouths and areas where current pressures meet such as junction points between two arms of a river.

The plus side for chasing GTs is they can be just as effectively targeted during business hours as in the typical peak low light feeding times. Another bonus is if you find one GT then it is highly likely there will be others roaming that stretch of water. Once an area has been identified as holding GTs good success can be had by casting shallow diving minnows up into schools of small mullet and burning them out as

fast as possible. Like many pelagic species, giant trevally respond exceptionally well to speed and will turn and chase a fast moving lure from a great distance. High quality lures come into their own when speed is required as they will track

straighter and resist the tendency to pop out of the water. Generally, as long as the lure has lots of flash and can run straight and fast you're likely to incite a chase down.



The oversized blooping poppers which are so successful at calling reef dwelling GT up to the surface tend to be less effective in shallow and spookier estuary situations so anything over ten centimetres is unlikely to draw a strike unless the fish are in a frenzy. Surface stick baits however are highly effective when worked at a fast

pace or even skipped along the surface as fast as possible. For the majority of situations, stopping your lure when a GT is following will cause it to turn away. This isn't always the case and there are times when your lure will get taken on the pause (often to the shock of the unsuspecting angler), yet you're still much more likely to get a hookup by running your lure for as long as you can. Arguably the best stick bait on the market is the Megabass Dog X Jnr, it casts further and walks more consistently than anything else. More importantly the Dog X has that intangible quality which simply makes fish bite. Some alternatives are the Sammy 65 or Luckycraft Gunfish and as a cheaper option for when toothy fish like tailor are around, a few Prial First Pencils are always good to have on hand.

Finding GTs at night can be difficult, but your chances are increased if you focus on areas with good concentrations of bait and a source of artificial light. Bridges and boat harbours are classic for this type of structure and it is no coincidence that trevally are consistently caught in these areas. Like many other predatory fish, GTs love to hang out of sight in the shadows

then dart out to attack any prey which has been attracted to the lights. Casting surface stick baits into the darkness and then back into the light pools can be one of the most effective forms of drawing a GT out to strike.



As effective as surface luring can be, eventually the fish will see your presentation one too many times and begin to ignore it. This is when soft plastics can really come into their own. A fish or shad type plastic rigged on a 1/8 jig head cast

out into the shadows and drawn back into the light can turn things around. Interestingly, speed isn't always critical and a slow roll can actually be more effective, especially when combined with a long and light leader. TT lures jig heads



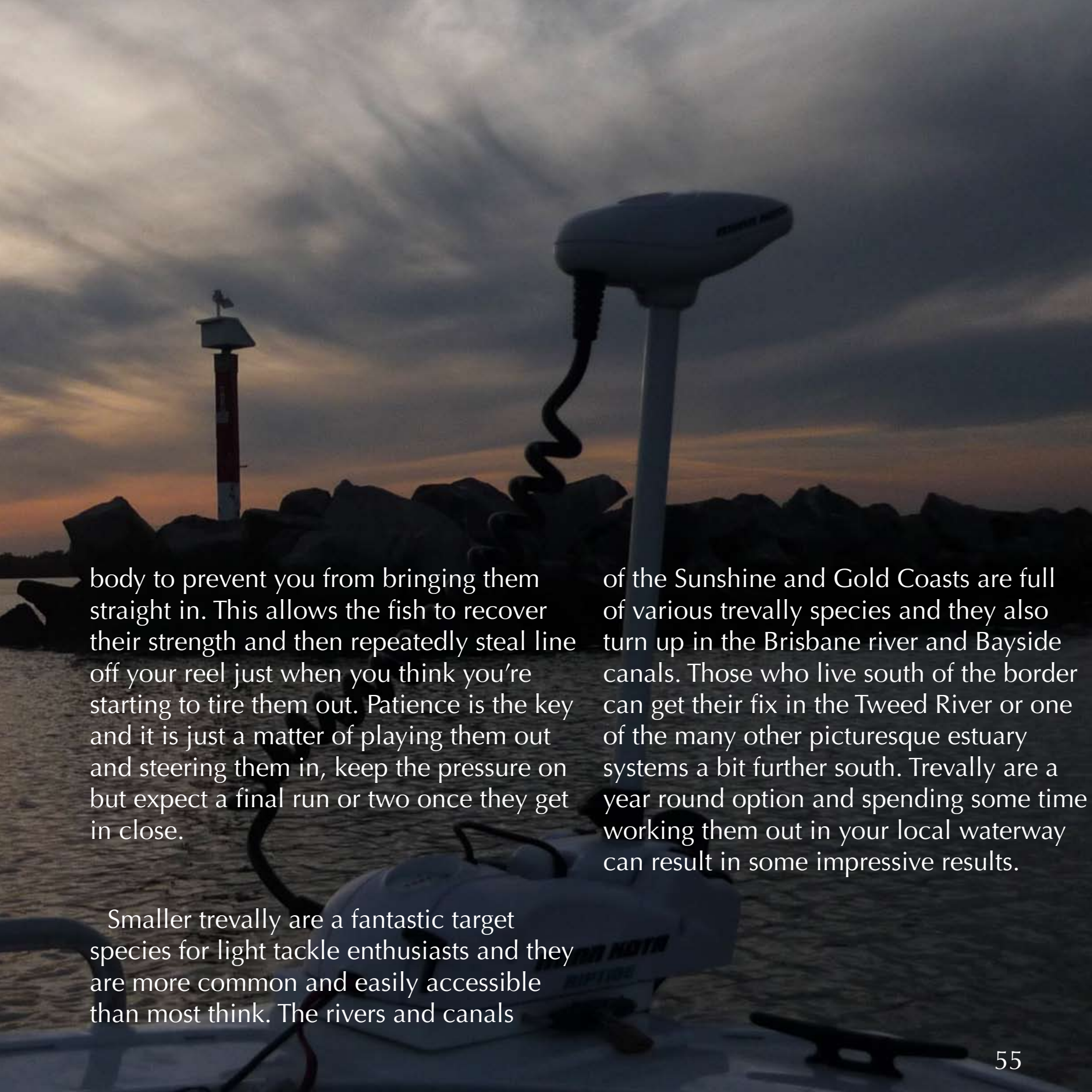
come in a stronger gauge making them the ideal choice as even small GTs will crush light wire hooks designed for bream and flathead. Look for the models with an (H) such as the ultra sharp Gamakatsu 2/0H. It is important to remember to strike hard enough to set the heavier duty hook when

using light tackle.

The big issue with such spots as bridges and harbours is they are easily spooked and can go from a hive of activity into a barren wasteland in seconds if care isn't taken. Extra long casts can be made with 1/8 ounce rigged soft plastics and 70mm stick baits, so hang well back to avoid revealing your presence to wary fish. If you're working light pools around man made structure be sure to stay in the darkness and be aware of casting shadows on the water. It might sound pedantic and unnecessary, but stealth can mean the difference between fish shouldering each other out of the way to chase down your lure and frustratingly timid follows or outright refusals.

Seeing as they will often respond to bigger lures and more aggressive techniques than bigeyes, anglers can use heavier tackle to really appreciate the immense power even the smaller members of this species possess. Medium weight bait cast tackle with a fast gear ratio of around 7:1 is ideal for long sessions of burning minnows. For the situations where more

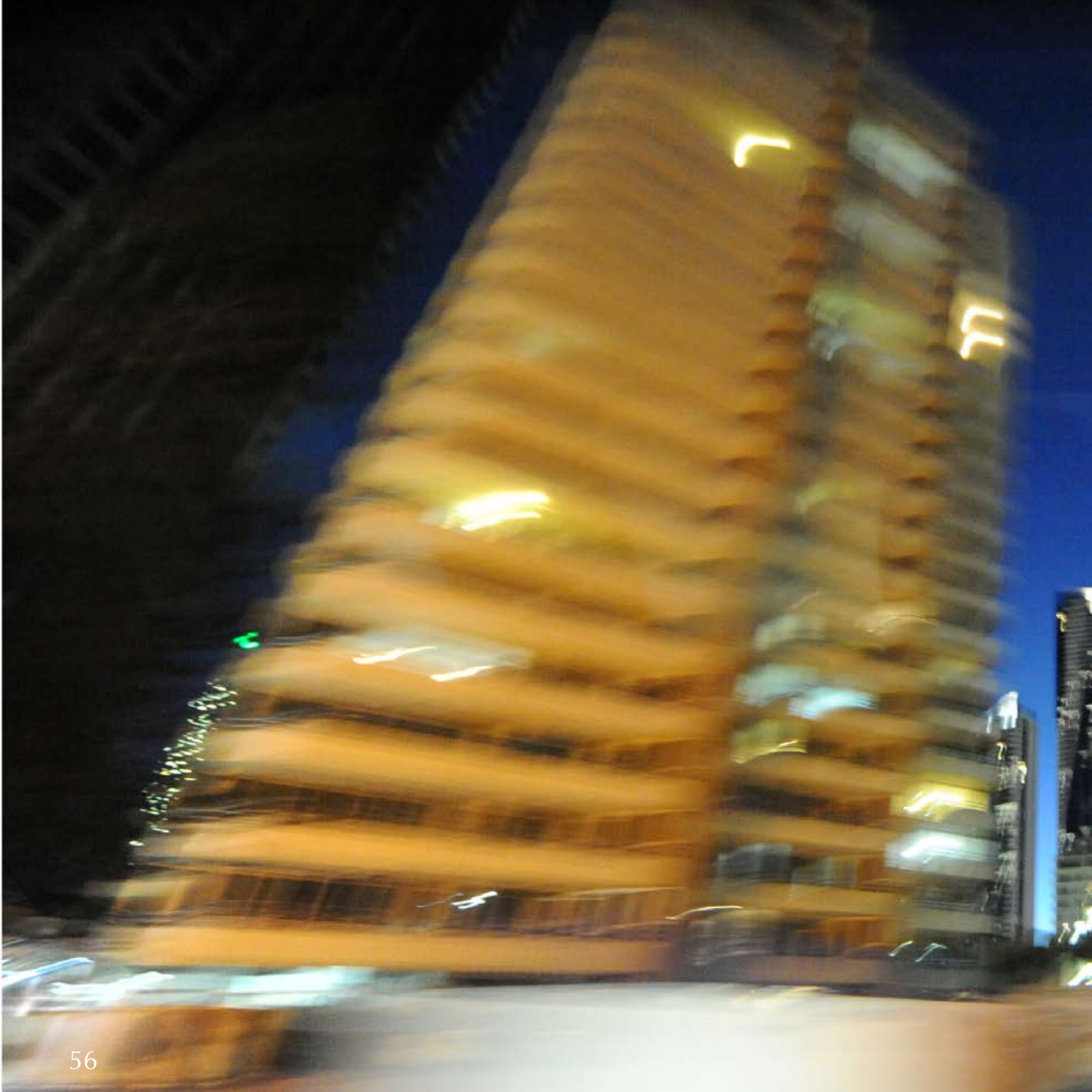




body to prevent you from bringing them straight in. This allows the fish to recover their strength and then repeatedly steal line off your reel just when you think you're starting to tire them out. Patience is the key and it is just a matter of playing them out and steering them in, keep the pressure on but expect a final run or two once they get in close.

Smaller trevally are a fantastic target species for light tackle enthusiasts and they are more common and easily accessible than most think. The rivers and canals

of the Sunshine and Gold Coasts are full of various trevally species and they also turn up in the Brisbane river and Bayside canals. Those who live south of the border can get their fix in the Tweed River or one of the many other picturesque estuary systems a bit further south. Trevally are a year round option and spending some time working them out in your local waterway can result in some impressive results.





AFTA 2010

Australian Fishing Tackle Trade Association Show

Date: 14-16 August
Location: Gold Coast

August is the time of year when the Australian fishing tackle trade descends on the Gold Coast for three days of oogling, drooling and fondling... of new gear that is - not a Meter Maid or bikini clad backpacker in sight!

Nano is the buzzword in fishing tackle this year. Advances in Nano resin technology has allowed manufacturers to make graphite fishing rods significantly stronger, lighter and more durable. Rather than improving the carbon in the fishing rods, this strengthens the bond between the layers of carbon. Nano technology is starting to appear in a few manufacturers lineups, notably Abu and Gloomis at this show. Abu has already extended the concept to use the resin in reinforcing the body of their new flagship spinning reel, so Nano Tech is something that we are likely to see a lot more of in future. The technology improvement has been likened to the difference between glass and graphite, so along with other tackle enthusiasts, we are going to be watching these developments eagerly.



Above and Below - New 'Nano' offerings from Abu





Loomis NRX lighter, stronger and unmistakably blue!



Daiwa has launched a bunch of new rods and reels at this show. The most notable is the debut of the new Saltiga spinning reel! At this stage, the 4500 and 5000 sizes are scheduled for release in November, with the remainder to arrive over the next year. These reels feature the Mag-Seal technology seen on the 2010 Certate, new Zaion rotor, as well as improved gears and drag.



The other release in the Saltiga reel range is the new lever drag overhead. They range from a small 20 size through to 50 size. The smaller reels have a 12kg max drag while the bigger models run out to 19kg of drag. Other reel releases include the new Pixy, seen in Japan earlier this year as well as the Seagate Light reel from the Japanese catalogue as well.

The Daiwa Interline rod range has been extended to include an ultralight 6'6" for finesse bream fishing and a heavier 7'6" for snapper and light pelagic fishing. The Steez range has new models too: the Chilli Dog is a longer 7'10" version of the popular





The much anticipated new Daiwa Saltiga reels





Atomic's cool new Semi Hardz sinking stickbaits are soft plastic on the outside with a wire skeleton down the centre.



Spellbinder - Daiwa's new mid-price rod range

The Smith Paddlist has a removeable butt cap which houses a lanyard ring



Edge Rods is the name of a new collaboration between Gary Loomis and EJ Todd



Shimano Curado 50



Shimano Trinidad



New Stella



**The current D series Baitrunner (L)
next to the new CI4 Thunnus (R)**



New Hardbodies from Shimano



Shimano Sephia Squid Jigs

HotDog, for kingfish, snapper and longtail tuna, while the Steez Feral Kat has a ultra light solid carbon tip matched to a powerful 10kg bottom end. This will be one of the most radical rods to hit the Australian fishing scene, so it will be very interesting to see it on the water.

Shimano has also released a big range of new tackle this year: the new Stella FE reels that came out in Japan earlier this year are finally coming to Australia. The Stella has Shimano's new X-Ship gearing system, which improves gear strength, smoothness and tightens tolerances. This all adds up to a whole new level of smoothness when winding under load.

The ever popular Trinidad overhead has undergone a makeover with cool silver and gunmetal cosmetics, X-Ship gearing, improved corrosion resistance and increased drag pressures. On looks alone, this reel will be a winner, though it will be interesting to see how long the white handle stays that way!



Megabass Snagless Squid Jigs



Smith Keoro 3pc GT rod



Need a bigger blade? try this TT beast





A sample of Berkleys new hardbody range

Squid fishing is one of the fastest growing aspects of the sport in Australia and even moreso in Japan over the last few years. Shimano have brought to Australia their latest jigs which feature UV reflective finishes, making them highly visible and attractive to squid. They have also released a range of Ian Miller designed squidding rods to suit Australian conditions.

Abu have gone upmarket with their latest spinning reel, the Revo Premier. It has smoothness and strength unmatched in an ABU spin reel until now - the feel being more reminiscent of their popular Revo baitcaster range.



Izumi jointed shads now come in a tiny 50mm size

GLoomis had been a little quiet in recent years with no major changes to their lineup of blank materials. This year however, they have released the flagship NRX range featuring super light Nano reinforced (theres that word again) blanks.

The team at EJTodd have teamed up with Gary Loomis to design a range of high quality rods for Australian species and



Megabass handbag. Or possibly an Egi bag for urban squidding missions



The Nomad guys working the lure testing pool on the Sebile Stand

Megabass Zonda



angling styles. These top quality rods will be marketed under the name Edge.

Although Sebile have been available in Australia for a little while now, this is the first time they have exhibited at the AFTA show. Head honcho Patrick Sebile was on hand to explain the details of new lures such the micro sized Cranksters and Flat Shadds.

Megabass Caiyen



The
amazing
solid
carbon
tip on
the Steez
Feral Kat



Edge Rods



Fuji K guides
- expect to see
plenty of these
no tangle guides
on rods over the
next year



Daiwa PX68 - the new Pixy

New Saltiga reel seat





Shimano Sephia AU rods



Sculpted grip design on new Nitro Tuna Tamer rod - built for big southern blufin





Monster TT Jig head



Sebile Spin Shad



Berkley Hardbodies



Somerset Dam



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