



[www.tackletactics.com.au](http://www.tackletactics.com.au)  
[info@ttlures.com.au](mailto:info@ttlures.com.au)



[www.z-man.com.au](http://www.z-man.com.au)  
[info@z-man.com.au](mailto:info@z-man.com.au)



[www.ttlures.com.au](http://www.ttlures.com.au)  
[info@ttlures.com.au](mailto:info@ttlures.com.au)

## in this issue...

- Inshore Snapper on Plastics
- Catching on CrabZ
- The Testing Ground
- Southern Bluefin Tuna
- Namotu Adventure
- WA Bream Classic

Angler: Will Lee

Species: Sunshine Coast Snapper

Lure: ZMan 3.75" StreakZ (Nuked Chicken Glow)

Jighead: TT Lures HeadlockZ HD 1/4oz 2/0

Scent: Pro-Cure Super Gel (Inshore Saltwater)

# Inshore Snapper on Plastics

By Will Lee



In the last decade finesse fishing with soft plastics has shone in the spotlight, particularly for bream. The trend has now evolved into a lot of different species and inshore snapper is definitely high on the list for light tackle enthusiasts. Snapper hit hard, grow large, are readily available, taste good and are a perfect to target on lures! Let's take a look at how to catch this iconic sports fish.

## Tackle

Having multiple rod and reel outfits on board when chasing inshore snapper is certainly an advantage as bite periods generally come in short stints and there is nothing more frustrating than having to retie during a hot bite. Fish size and the size of the soft plastics used differ from day to day, so having a range of different rods will help match your quarry.

Rod	Reel	Braid	Leader
Spin 7' 2-4kg	1000-2500	4-6lb	6-8lb
Spin 7' 3-6kg	2500-3000	10lb	10-15lb
Spin 7' 5-8kg	3000-4000	20lb	20-30lb



Quality snapper are great sport on spin gear.

## Leader

A high quality fluorocarbon leader with good abrasion resistance and knot strength is very important when chasing snapper. Six feet of leader material is perfect in most conditions but a slightly longer leader can help get a bite in ultra-clear water and calm conditions. To attach your fluorocarbon leader to braid, a 'double uni' or 'improved albright' knot are both quick to tie and if you search for these knots on You Tube you will find how to videos.

## Soft Plastics

**Grub Tails** - Plastics like the ZMan 2.5" and 3.5" GrubZ are a very user friendly plastic for snapper. This tail design works at ultra-slow speeds and starts to effectively fish from the time the plastic lands in the water. Grub tails made from the ZMan Elaztech, buoyant material are a great option when fishing a 'lift and drop' technique - when paused on the bottom, the tail will float up and move with the slightest bit of current or water movement.

Depending on your location quality snapper can be readily accessible from small boats at different times of the year.



**Jerk Baits** - ZMan do a range of 'Jerk Bait' style soft plastics, ranging from the tiny 3.75" StreakZ right up to the big 8" StreakZ XL. The 3.75" StreakZ and 5" Scented Jerk ShadZ are a great size for chasing inshore snapper, where the bait tends to be smaller. Snapper just love eating soft plastics on 'the drop' (when the plastic is sinking) and jerk bait style plastics when rigged dead straight on a light jighead have a gliding action that big snapper can't resist.

**Paddle Tails** - With a fish shaped body and a 'paddle tail', plastics like the ZMan MinnowZ and ZMan PaddlerZ have a super lively action and are a versatile option when targeting snapper in shallow water.

### **Jighead Selection**

It pays to carry a wide variety of jigheads when fishing for snapper. Large snapper are regularly caught by bait fisherman using a technique called 'float lining', which involves using a lightly weighted sinker and large bait such as a slimy mackerel or pilchard. A similar technique can be used when targeting snapper with soft plastics, by keeping your jighead ultralight and allowing your soft plastic to naturally fall through the top half of the water column. This is a deadly technique for catching better than 'average quality' snapper on plastics.




A pan size jerk bait snapper.



A river mouth snapper on a ZMan curl tail.



Early morning and late arvo are prime bite times.

A man with short dark hair, wearing a dark jacket with reflective strips, is smiling and holding a large, light-colored snapper fish. The fish has a prominent dorsal fin and a large head. The background shows the ocean and the rigging of a boat.

The author with a nice snapper on a TT blade.

If it is table fish that you're after, using a heavier jighead will get you to the bottom quicker which is generally where you'll find the majority of smaller fish.

It is also very important to match your jighead hook size to your soft plastic. As a general rule, the shank of the hook excluding the weight should be about a third of the length of your chosen soft plastic.

### **Blades**

TT Switchblades and Ghostblades are fantastic lures for chasing snapper when the fish are widely dispersed. Blades cast a long way and can be fished a little quicker than a soft plastic. The most effective way of fishing blades for snapper is by throwing them out on a long cast, allowing them to sink to the bottom or close to the bottom and then with two or three quick rips of the rod tip get the blade moving, before pausing for five to ten seconds. It's normally on the pause, when the blade is fluttering back down to the seabed like a wounded baitfish, that a snapper will engulf it - so watch your slack line for any takes.

Another victim of the TT Lures blade with Pro-Cure scent added.



## Scents

Snapper are a fish that respond well to burley when targeting them with baits so it makes sense to add some attractant to your lure. Adding some Pro-Cure Super Gel to your blade or soft plastic can make the difference between landing a few fish and missing out entirely, particularly if the water is clear and the conditions are calm. A lot of the ZMan soft plastics have a 'belly slot' which is just perfect for inserting a good dollop of smelly stuff.

## When

First light is a prime time to target snapper and they will generally bite well for the first half hour of light, once the sun hits the horizon. It pays to be at your location early to have the boat positioned and ready to go for this peak bite period.

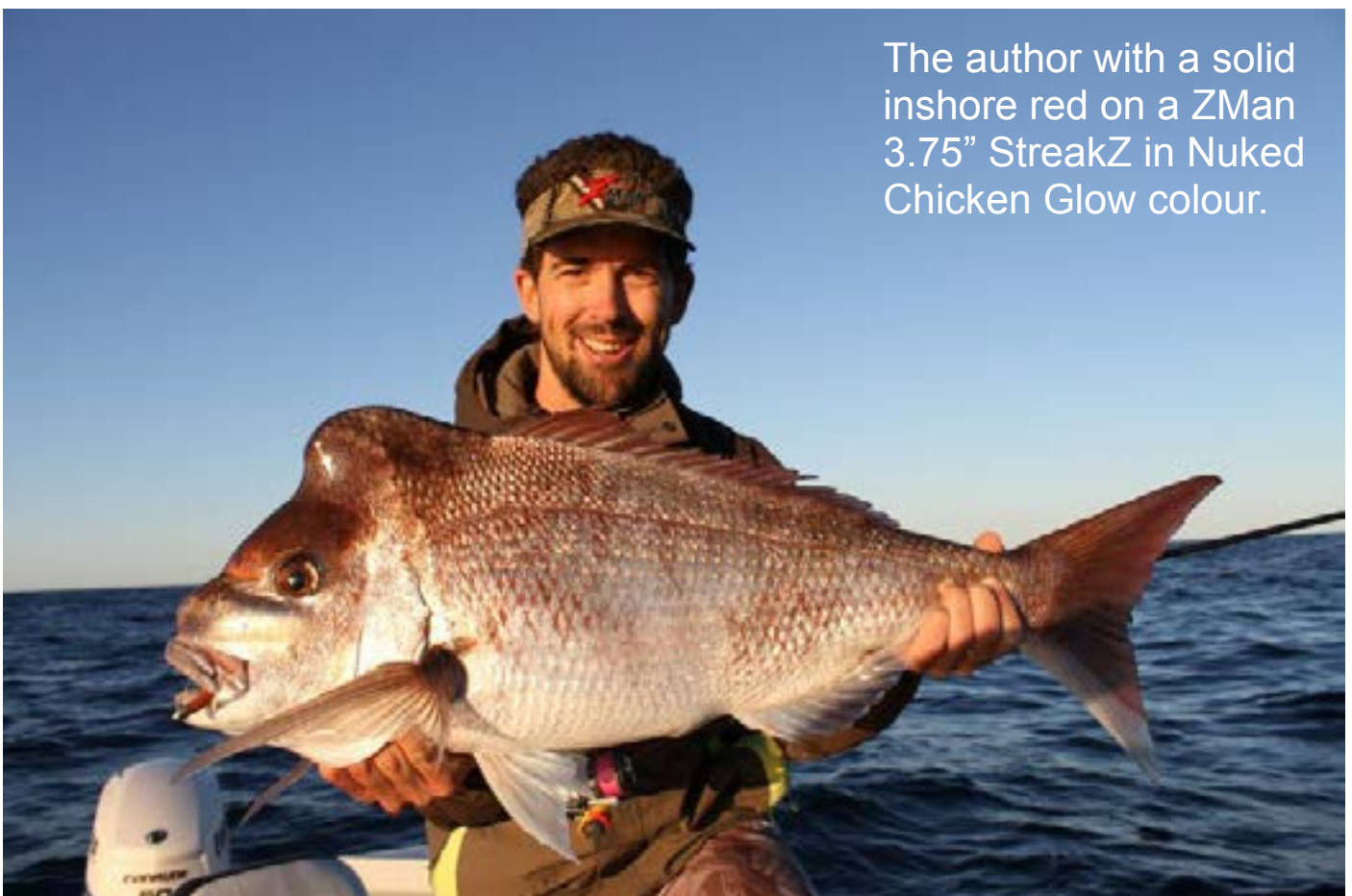
Dusk is also a great time for snapper. One advantage to an afternoon snapper session is that you can allow yourself time to sound around the area and get set for the last hour of light when snapper tend to fire up.

## Where to find Snapper

Snapper are found right around the bottom half of the Australian Seaboard and their habitat can differ slightly from region to region. Predominately snapper can be found around reef, rocky bottom or headlands.

Artificial Reefs and boat wrecks are fantastic structure for holding snapper. Locate schools of bait on your sounder when searching around these structures and you will generally be in with a good shot of bagging a few.

Thankfully, state governments have seen the long term value of the snapper fisheries and in some cases increased size and bag limits to ensure this great fishery will continue. Next time you're heading out to chase some reds, make sure you've packed your ZMan plastics, TT blades and jigheads and some Pro-Cure scent...you won't be disappointed!



The author with a solid inshore red on a ZMan 3.75" StreakZ in Nuked Chicken Glow colour.



# Catching on CRABZ

A close-up photograph of a fisherman on a boat. The fisherman is wearing a black baseball cap with the word 'Fishers' visible, and blue-tinted sunglasses. He is holding a large, silver fish with a crab in its mouth. The fish has a prominent eye and a slightly open mouth showing the crab. The background shows the ocean and a clear sky.

**By Vinnie Versfeld**

To my knowledge there aren't too many fish species out there that don't eat crabs and I don't blame them, I myself find it hard passing them up. Crab imitations have recently started making a resurgence and I honestly feel it's been a long time coming. I have been fishing and refining my crabbing technique over the last few months with some surprising success.

It all started after a jigging trip a few months ago where a few fish were kept for a feed, all the fish that got filleted had crabs in them. This clicked the old thinker into gear and I remembered a packet of ZMan 3" Scented CrabZ in the shed that hadn't been touched since the day I got them. Next weather window my big girl was hooked up and ready to roll. I still remember everyone was already in the car when I remembered them, "crap, I forgot something..." I went and grabbed the CrabZ and threw the packet in my hat. Needless to say I was met with "what the hell you going to do with them?"

We took off over the liquid horizon and I didn't touch them until later the next day. The jigging bite slowed down and we were quietly drifting around on the slack of the tide when I remembered them. I dug around in my tackle box, found a 1oz 5/0 HeadlockZ HD jighead and threaded the crab onto the hook width ways.

The author with a trevally that couldn't resist a Rootbeer Gold coloured ZMan CrabZ.



Golden trevally love CrabZ!



After a short while the CrabZ had travelled the 27m to the bottom. I flicked over the bail arm and was still trying to think whether I should hop it, slow lift and drop it, or how I could impart some action into it... when I got absolutely jammed! After a decent battle I had a solid golden trevally boat side. How cool is this!

I was then promptly reminded by my boat buddies that it was most likely a fluke and for me not to go and get too excited. Determined to prove them wrong I straightened the crab back up and sent it back down into the unknown. At the same time a patch of bait showed up on the sounder and while watching that, and discussing the possibilities of there being a Spaniard around, the CrabZ had reached the bottom, been inhaled by a cobia that hooked itself and then proceeded to start emptying my reel! Needless to say a longer than expected battle ensued to get the cobia boat side.

By now my boat buddies "ha ha, you've got CrabZ" jokes started subsiding. After a few pics and a short discussion the CrabZ was onto round three. It hit the bottom and I just let it sit there... dragged it along the bottom and BANG it was on again. This time it was a nice tea leaf trevally... GAME ON!!

As the day went on and during further trips out wide I mucked around with different methods and techniques and here are short descriptions of the two techniques that I have found the most successful so far:

### 1.) The Drift

As mentioned before I rig the CrabZ width ways and there are two reasons for this. Number one - with the hook slot moulded in I find they seat better this way on the HeadlockZ jigheads. I rig them on jigheads suitable for the depth and current that I'm fishing in. I try and keep constant contact with the bottom and this is achieved both with the weight of the jighead and occasionally letting line out on free spool as you drift along.

With the CrabZ less action really is more - as in nature a crab's best defence is to remain unseen, but if it fails then its second line of defence is to get those nippers up and fight. That brings me to the second reason why I rig them across the width, this allows the crab to be dragged backwards with its nippers floating upwards, just like a real crab trying to back out of a fight.

Crabs are a cobia favourite and this one ate a ZMan CrabZ in Blue Glimmer colour.



## 2.) The Slow Sink

I've found this method deadly on cobia, especially when you get pads of weeds or any other flotsam or FAD's floating around.

Rigged on a lighter jighead, say 1/4oz or 3/8oz, I will cast the CrabZ next to the flotsam and then simply just let it sink through the water column. This represents a crab that has lost footing on whatever it was hanging onto and now is an easy meal with no escape.



That's how I fish my CrabZ in a nutshell. Go grab a packet and give them a go!



This nice trev slammed a Blue Glimmer CrabZ.

# 5" POP SHADZ

Walk it!

Pop it!

**BOOF!!!**



The 5" Pop ShadZ is a revolutionary soft plastic popper that floats due to the natural buoyancy of the 10X Tough ElaZtech construction. It can be rigged with a treble or with a standard 'J' hook through the nose and out of the belly to keel the plastic, but the Pop ShadZ really comes into its element when rigged weedless on a TT Lures ChinlockZ jighead, allowing you to fish weed, timber, mangroves, lilies and other structure without hanging up or fouling.

Below is a quick guide to rigging the 5" Pop ShadZ with a treble or 'J' hook for maximum hook exposure and a TT Lures ChinlockZ for fishing in and around structure.

***Rig it weedless so you can fish anywhere - timber, weed, lilies, mangroves, etc.***

## TT Lures 6/0 ChinlockZ

1. Tie on a TT Lures ChinlockZ and feed it in through the centre of the cup face and out between the gills at the centre of the Pop ShadZ throat.



2. Pull the ChinlockZ through so that the chin lock fits snugly behind the gills, locking the Pop ShadZ in place. The leader knot is now concealed inside the Pop ShadZ for minimal fouling on weed and other flotsam.



3. Measure where the hook needs to lay and feed it upward through the plastic, then pull the point and barb down into the rigging channel to reduce snagging. Fish on!



***For open water add a stinger to your ChinlockZ or here's a couple of other options.***

## Standard 'J' hook

1. Tie on a standard 'J' hook (straight not offset), in a size that is suitable for your target species. Feed it in through the centre of the Pop ShadZ cupped face and out of the belly slot so that it is rigged straight. Fish on!



## Treble hook

1. Tie on a worm or 'J' hook, or bait needle. Thread it through the centre of the cup face and out of the belly slot.  
2. Pull it through completely, cut it off and tie on a treble that is suitable for your target species.  
3. Pull the treble back up inside the belly slot and feed one hook point up into the plastic, via the slot, locking the treble in place. Fish on!



# New Gear

---

## 2" CRUSTEaZ



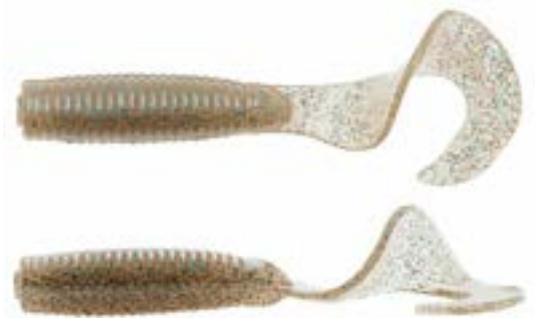
Is it a prawn, crab, shrimp, yabby, insect... no it's the 10X Tough ZMan 2" CrusteaZ. This crustacean imitation will appeal to fish species that eat any of the aforementioned prey and that means almost anything that swims in our rivers, estuaries and impoundments! Designed with bream in mind, the CrusteaZ will also appeal to anglers chasing bass, golden perch, trout, redfin, saratoga, flathead, grunter and almost any

other small to medium fresh or saltwater species.

The body design of the CrusteaZ allows it to be effectively rigged on a small jighead or worm hook and its claws provide action and movement without aggressively spooking timid feeders. Fish it across the surface, sink it around structure on a TT HWS (Hidden Weight System) jighead or slowly hop and twitch it across the bottom and this realistic crustacean is a bite-sized snack for any predatory species. The realistic feel of the ElaZtech will keep the fish biting until they find the hook and the 10X Tough construction equals more fish per lure. Fish on! Initially available in 8 colours, with 6 per pack.

## 3.5" GRUBZ

The ZMan 3.5" GrubZ fills out the family, now consisting of a 2", 2.5", 3.5", 5" and 9" GrubZ, and it is sure to be as popular as it is versatile. Its profile and action will suit everything from bass and golden perch in the fresh, to flathead, mulloway and mangrove jack in the estuaries and out onto the shallow reefs and rubble patches in search of snapper and other reef species. Whether you are wanting to give soft plastics fishing a go, or you're an experienced plastic flicker looking for a new weapon, the ZMan GrubZ family has a proven track record on Australia's most popular target species. Initially available in 12 colours, with 6 per pack.



## 2.5" SLIM SWIMZ



Additions to the ZMan lure range are commonly driven by requests from anglers who are on the water, targeting a wide range of species and recognizing potential new products that could fill a current void... this is how the Slim SwimZ was born. The

ZMan 3" MinnowZ is a versatile, deadly and popular 3" paddle tail that has accounted for many species in Australian waters, but anglers wanted a paddle tail that had a shorter, slimmer profile, with the benefits of ElaZtech. The Slim SwimZ packs a lively, aggressive action in its little paddle tail; an action that is sure to see it punching above its weight on species that are not commonly associated with a 2.5" soft plastic.

Both bass and bream tournament anglers are excited with this new release, but it will also appeal to anglers chasing golden perch, trout, redfin, saratoga, sooties and jungle perch in the fresh, and flathead, grunter, tarpon, giant herring, tuna and other species in the salt... species that often frustrate anglers with their preference for tiny baitfish. With plenty of built-in action the 2.5" Slim SwimZ is perfect for anglers who want to give soft plastics fishing a try and a deadly addition to the experienced soft plastic fisho's arsenal. Initially available in 12 colours, with 8 per pack.

## 6" SWIMMERZ V2

The ZMan 6" SwimmerZ is now available in a dozen new colours including ZMan favourites Houdini, Shiner, Bad Shad, Opening Night and Redbone, along with awesome new colours AYU, Sexy Mullet and Breaking Bream.



The laminate colours allow more realistic baitfish colours than the original painted SwimmerZ. Lively paddle tail, with an action that needs to be seen to be believed, even at dead slow speeds. Belly slot for easy weedless rigging and adding Pro-Cure scent. Dynamite on barramundi, jewfish, snapper and other large predatory species.

---



# The Testing Ground

By Josh Dunn



Josh with a solid bream on  
the new ZMan 2" CrusteaZ.

**Let's catch up with Josh Dunn for a quick look at some of the new ZMan plastics and how he rigs and fishes them.**

My mate and I got up early to fish a nice spot that always seems to hold solid bream, good trevally and plenty more! We opened the new ZMan 2.5" Slim SwimZ, after receiving them prior to their August release and looked at each other with the same thought - these will go so good! The bulk of the new Tackle Tactics range released at the 2014 AFTA Trade Show became available from late August 2014 and this article looks at some of these new models, some effective techniques for fishing them and the right jighead to suit your type of fishing.



We arrived at the spot and were confident that the fish would smash the new plastics! We had plenty of decent follows and then I hooked possibly the first fish in Australia on the ZMan 2.5" Slim SwimZ in Blue Glimmer Sparkle colour! It was a healthy big eye trevally and one of many fish caught that day! Already the Slim SwimZ were proving successful and both Harry and I had a great session.

The trevs loved the crazy tail action of the little Slim SwimZ!



The author with a fun size big eye on the Slim SwimZ.



The best overall technique we found was to rig the Slim SwimZ with a TT Lures 1/8oz or 1/12oz 1/0 HeadlockZ HD jighead, cast or drop the plastic to the desired structure and once on the bottom flick it up a few times and then sink it to the bottom again. After doing this several times, wind up quickly and erratically to trigger the bite! Another proven technique has been using a lighter jighead and casting parallel to a nice looking pontoon. Allow the plastic to sink just under the lip of the pontoon and then slowly wind, keeping the plastic under the lip to trigger the bite from a trevally, jack, bream or just about any species.

There is a large variety in the Slim SwimZ colour range, with 12 life-like colours initially! These are ready for whatever inshore species you wish to target, from bream and bass to trevally and lots more estuarine and freshwater species! ZMan ElaZtech is 10X tougher than a regular plastic, making the lure more durable to toothy predators so you can catch more fish per plastic. They're also buoyant so there's a load of benefits!



As the day went on I changed over to the new ZMan 2" CrusteaZ in Chartreuse Sparkle, rigged up on a TT Lures 1/20oz 1/0 (HWS) Hidden Weight System jighead. I sight cast a few decent fish and then something big smashed it. It fought well and turned out to be a heavy, 37cm winter bream! It's cool to sight cast fish and watch your lure get engulfed before setting the hooks!

That day I found the best technique for the bream was to cast as close as possible to the desired structure, let the lure slowly sink (that's when a lot of fish will hit it, so watch the line), then use subtle whips with the rod tip followed with sudden pauses. After a minute or so I slowly wind the CrusteaZ back up as fish will hit it on the way up (remember to set the hook when you see a touch in the line).

Pro-Cure Super Gel works well in these situations, especially when the fish are finicky and don't want to play the game. I found the plastics are quite easy to rig, though you will need a jighead in a #2 or #1 size and rig it down with the two 'claws' or 'legs' at the end of the hook for the best swimming action. The CrusteaZ range is initially available in 8 colours, including favourites Bloodworm, Motor Oil, Watermelon Red, Gudgeon and Greasy Prawn.

CrusteaZ are deadly around structure when targeting bream.





A flatty that was convinced by this mullet imitation.



**Mulletron  
3" MinnowZ**

Another new colour to the ZMan range and one to look out for is called Mulletron. It is available in 3" MinnowZ, 4" DieZel MinnowZ, 4 & 5" Scented PaddlerZ and 7" Scented Jerk ShadZ. This colour plastic is already showing positive results and its mullet colouration of a dark, blackish back with silver glitter and translucent silver-white underbelly is sure to appeal to a wide range of species. I normally rig the 3" MinnowZ on a TT Lures 1/4oz 3/0 HeadlockZ HD jighead when flathead fishing and I cannot wait to use this colour in summer when the jacks are on!

Flathead can't resist a poddy mullet imitation.





The 3.5" GrubZ is a versatile profile.

Last but not least I threw the new ZMan 3.5" GrubZ in Blue Glimmer Sparkle around for a flathead. This large tailed, 3.5" curl tail is like its little brother in the range – the 2.5" GrubZ, but with a larger body and tail to entice plenty of jewfish, flathead, bream, snapper, bass, trevally and many more species!

After a few casts I was already into a nice low 50's flatty, which fell to the 3.5" GrubZ in Blue Glimmer Sparkle rigged on a TT Lures 1/4oz 2/0 HeadlockZ HD jighead. From that and the encounters that followed I found that using the same technique as I use with the 2.5" GrubZ proved successful. Simply cast, let the plastic hit the bottom and when it is at rest erratically whip the rod tip up a couple of times, then pause and allow it to hit the bottom again. Repeat this whip, whip, pause and sink. The 3.5" GrubZ range will initially be available in 12 colours, including favourites Watermelon Red, Pink Glow, Bloodworm and Motor Oil, along with cool new colours like Smoke Hologram and Smoke Purple.



Don't forget to keep an eye out for the new TT Lures HeadlockZ Finesse jigheads - built on a fine wire Japanese hook instead of the heavy Mustad hook that the HeadlockZ HD jigheads are built on. The HeadlockZ Finesse are good for the light line and light drag guys that are all about maximum penetration for the hook, as opposed to a brutally strong hook.

These new lures, jigheads and colours are now available at your local tackle shop, just in time for summer when the red dogs (jacks) and flathead come out to play! These new plastics have you covered for some magnificent fish around the country, from FNQ's jungle perch and sooty grunter, to southern trout and redfin, the humble bream and flathead... in fact pretty much any fish that swims in our creeks, rivers, estuaries, bays and impoundments.



A trev on one of the new 4" Scented PaddlerZ colours.

**ZMAN** THE SCIENCE & ART OF FISHING **NEW MODELS!**

**ZMAN HAVE ADDED 4 NEW SOFT PLASTICS TO THE FAMILY...**



**2" CrusteaZ** [8 colours] - If it eats a prawn, crab, yabby or insects this is the plastic to throw.



**2.5" Slim SwimZ** [12 colours] - A lively little paddle tail for when the bait is small or the bite tough.



**5" Pop ShadZ** [8 colours] - A revolutionary soft plastic popper. Bloop it, pop it, walk it and it floats! Rig it weedless on a TT Lures ChinlockZ jighead and fish it anywhere!



**3.5" GrubZ** [12 colours] - As deadly as the 2.5" GrubZ, with a larger profile.

**By Luke Smith**

This fish fell to a trolled skirt but the author believes fish like these are achievable on plastics... get out there!

**Southern  
Mayhem!**





I cast the plastic ahead of the drift. As the plastic was sinking I held the rod tightly in anticipation of what was about to happen next. Once the 3oz jighead had sunk the plastic into the zone I snapped the bail shut and began my retrieve. I cranked the handle and whipped the rod as I brought the lure back to the boat. Ten seconds later I was met with a massive whack and the braid began to peel off the Saragosa at lightning speed.

The above situation is something I have been experiencing on a daily basis, with one of the best southern bluefin tuna seasons I can remember. SBT's, as they are commonly referred to, migrate past the south west coast of Victoria every year from February onwards. The fish come through from South Australia and early on can be caught on the edge of the continental shelf. The season usually carries through to the end of June, with a smaller size class of fish moving in close to shore around mid May. The average size fish is 14 to 16kg but fish to 150kg are caught here every year. Another bonus of fishing at the shelf during early season is the abundance of albacore.

It's time to start planning your SBT on plastics adventure!



Now that's a welcome sight  
for anglers chasing tuna.



Tens of thousands of keen fishos try their luck for these magnificent game fish every season, with most being rewarded for their efforts. There are several experienced charter boats that operate from Portland and they are a great option when planning to chase these hard fighting speedsters. The southern ocean is an unforgiving body of water and is no place for small or unseaworthy craft. At the time of writing this it is only early May and in the last two weeks there has been six rescues made by the Portland Coastguard. Caution must be taken when planning trips offshore and it is advisable to go out with someone experienced in the area first. Apart from that, this is a world class fishery and I'm sure it is on a lot of peoples' 'to do' lists.

Whilst there are many different ways to chase these hard fighters, I am going to concentrate on two techniques using soft plastics.

The first method is one that I prefer to use when fishing on the edge of the shelf. It is a technique commonly used when chasing kingfish and involves keeping a hooked fish in the water whilst trying to hook his mate. The first and hardest part of the technique is to troll around and find some hungry fish. When one or more fish is hooked on the troll, the fun begins. The second step is to play the fish that is already hooked. When the fight is midway through, make a short cast ahead of the drift and let the plastic sink unimpeded. Once the plastic has got down to the fish begin the retrieve. The majority of the time the fish can be seen on the depth sounder (if set up correctly), and the desired depth can be easily determined. If in doubt I usually let the plastic sink to approximately 30 or 40 metres.

If you have no luck it's a matter of dropping the plastic back down two or three more times. If no luck still, put the skirts back out and try again. Like all types of fishing, sometimes the tuna do not want to play ball, but on other days they can be that thick you can bag in a matter of minutes. A handy trick is as soon as a fish is hooked, wind the other lines in and cast the plastics out the back of the boat. Don't wind the hooked fish in until another is hooked. By doing this though you are at risk of not only losing a fish but the lure it's connected to. If another line crosses the tight line, it will be all over.

Once one fish is hooked on a plastic several more can usually be caught by using two rods and not bringing the hooked fish too close to the boat until a second fish is hooked. On windy days it can be of benefit to hold the boat on top of the schooled fish with the aid of the motor. This can be the difference between one fish or ten. Another nifty trick is to have a bucket full of cubed pilchards ready to go. When a fish is hooked on the troll, chuck two handfuls of cubes into the water and keep a steady trail going whilst the bite is happening.



Tuna are built for speed, making them a popular sport fishing target.

Quality rods, reels and tackle are required when chasing tuna.



Gear of choice when trying to switch blue fin is big spin reels. I love Shimano reels as they are reliable and have a great range of large spin reels from 8,000 through to the big 30,000 size. I use an 18,000 size as it is not too big and bulky, but it is big enough to fit 500 yards of 50lb braid, just in case a barrel decides to eat the plastic. I prefer to use jig style rods as they are lightweight but extremely powerful and any rod that is around 6 foot and 15 to 24kg will do the job. I have paired my 18,000 Saragosa with a T-Curve 200 Jig Spin. This combo is fantastic for this purpose but also doubles as a great trolling outfit.

As mentioned I use 50lb braid for this style of fishing. You can use lighter line but I prefer to use 50lb just in case of a bigger fish. At the end of the braid I tie a metre long double via a bimini twist. For my leader I use three to five metres of 60 to 100lb mono leader. It's a personal choice of leader weight as lighter lines will get a lot more bites, they just have to be replaced regularly. I prefer to use mono as it has a thinner diameter than fluorocarbon and is suppler. Leader knots are again a personal choice but I use an Albright as it is quick and can be easily retied when rocking around in the southern ocean.

At the business end I use a 3oz 8/0 TT HeadlockZ HD jighead. For this style of fishing heavy is best as its important to get the plastic into the zone ASAP. Rigged on the jighead is a ZMan 7" Scented Jerk ShadZ or 8" StreakZ XL. Whilst the StreakZ are great, with a larger profile, I often opt for the Jerk ShadZ as they have a slimmer body that allows them to sink quicker. All colours will work on different days but natural colours like Baby Bass or Nuked Pilchard Glow are great and bright colours like Bubble Gum, Pearl and Electric Chicken all work a treat.

The second technique I use to catch SBT's on plastics is sight casting. When fishing over the shelf this method is very difficult as there is a lack of birds working the area, making finding fish on the surface very difficult. Therefore I use this method from the middle of May onward when the school fish push in close to shore.

For casting I use slightly different gear as casting distance is of the utmost importance. I use a rod of seven to seven foot six inch that's rated around 6 to 10kg or 10 to 15kg. Using a longer rod, with a lighter tip allows for maximum casting distance. For the reel I downsize to an 8,000 or 10,000 size and drop the braid down to 30lb. Dropping down in braid size allows more line on the reel as well as longer casts. In terms of leader size, I use 60lb max as the fish are a bit more wary and I use no more than 1.5m of leader.

Finding fish is a matter of watching for birds. When the fish are in close, between Lawrence Rocks and Cape Bridgewater, off Portland, there is an abundance of gannets and terns working bait balls as the tuna push them up to the surface. This is the easiest way to find fish, unless you're lucky enough to have fish surface beside the boat.

What you are looking for is birds diving in a very tight area. This means that they are generally on a tuna school as the tuna work the bait into a tight ball. When they are spread, diving in a wider area, they are generally diving on bait that dolphins have pushed up but on quiet days it still pays to check it out. Once birds have been spotted it's a case of getting to the area before the fish move on. Always avoid driving near the fish as they may spook; instead stop the boat up wind of the fish, kill the motor and begin to cast as you drift toward them. Sometimes you may get a hook up with your cast falling up to 30m short, generally though the closer your lure is to the bust up, the better your chances of getting a rod bent.



Find the birds and the hook ups will often follow.



It is all about persistence with this technique as your offerings may be ignored for some time and then when you least expect it, a little blue bullet will break the surface and smash your offering. Plastics I prefer for this technique are ZMan 5 or 7" Scented Jerk ShadZ rigged on a 1oz 6/0 HeadlockZ HD jighead. A variety of other plastics can be used with the same method but I opt for the above as they are very durable and have a great thin profile for casting.

Hopefully this helps to get you geared up ready for the next time these barrels visit our shores and gets your lines tight. Cheers.

A solid SBT landed on spin gear.



# WA Bream Classics

## By Luke Ryan



***Luke Ryan gives us a rundown on the WA Bream Classic Series, how it unfolded and what lures worked for him and fishing partner Alex Greisdorf during their extremely successful 2014 campaign.***

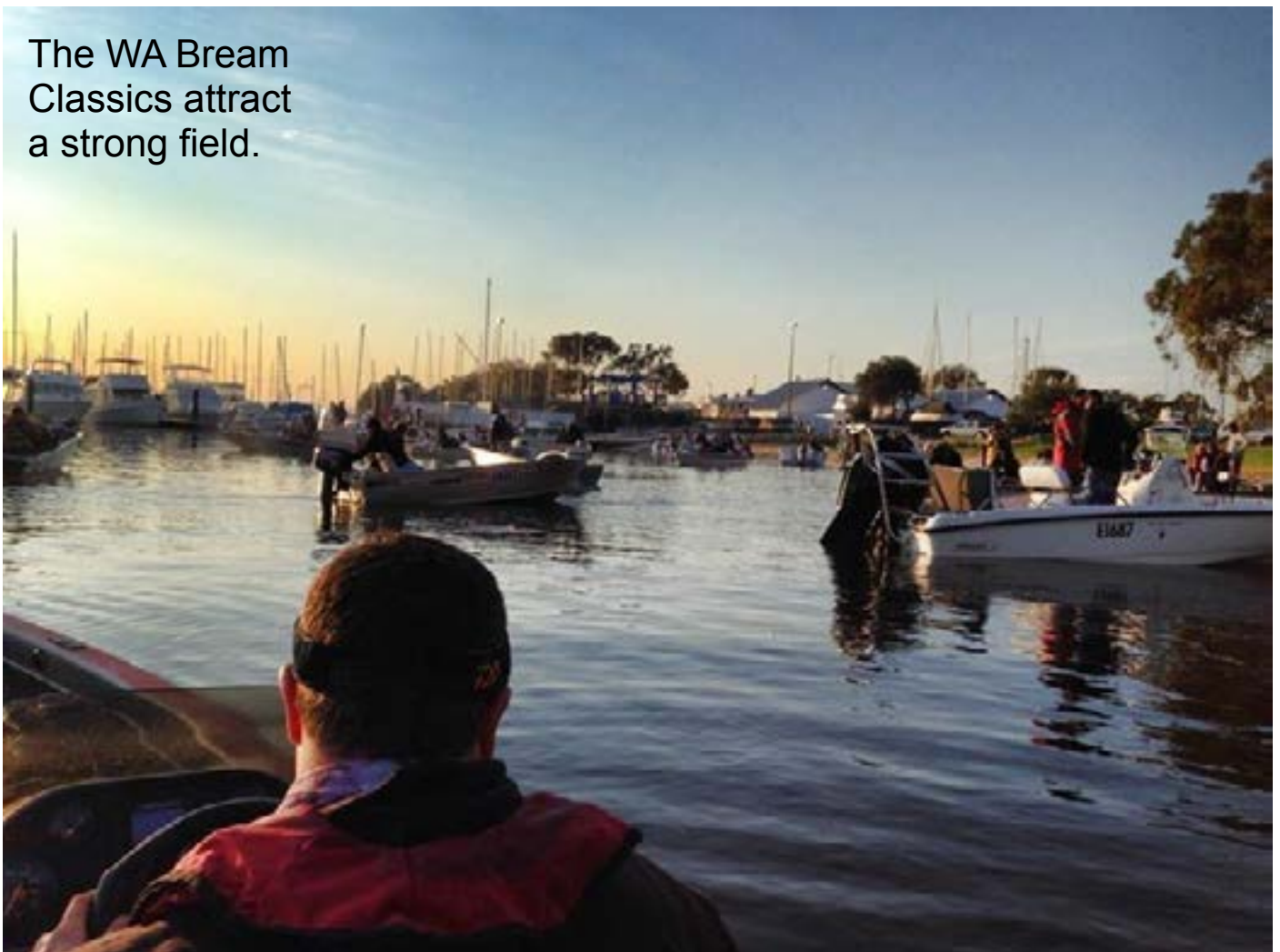
The WA Bream Classic Series has been running for 10 years now as a team competition. Throughout the year there are four tournaments held in various locations and in each round you have the chance to qualify for the grand final event if you are lucky enough to get a top 5 placing in any of the rounds. This year there were two rounds allocated to the Murray Estuary in Mandurah and the other two rounds for the Swan River in Perth.

The Grand Final event for this year was held on the Swan River. For Alex and myself we feel most confident fishing the Murray River, as Alex lives close to Mandurah and this is his local system. If Alex doesn't know something about the Murray then it is not worth knowing! I grew up fishing the Swan and Canning Rivers in Perth and have fished the systems with Alex for years, so we still have an understanding of how they work.

The first round for 2014 was held on the Swan, with 36 teams competing in the event and the fishing was extremely tough. It would have to have been the toughest event for the year. We managed to qualify for the grand final in the first event, with a 5th spot placing, with two fish for 1.395kg.

The next two rounds were both held in Mandurah. Round two saw a total of 41 teams competing and we managed to secure a second placing with four fish for 2.775kg (These events have a 4 fish bag). Team WAFM (Ian & Dror) got the drop on us in that event and took out first place. The lures we used were ZMan GrubZ in Motor Oil, Watermelon and Bloodworm, rigged on TT Lures HeadlockZ HD jigheads in 1/16oz size.

The WA Bream Classics attract a strong field.







Unfortunately for the third round I was O/S travelling. This round saw the biggest field for the year with a total of 43 teams fishing the event. Alex teamed up with a friend and secured the team's first top placing for the year. They pulled it off with a four fish bag for 2.835kg.



Round four saw 31 teams entered to fish the last qualifying event and this time around it was held on the Swan River. Staying consistent all year, the fishing was extremely tough after receiving a lot of rain prior to the event and it had pushed a lot of the fish down river, making our usual spots a waste of time fishing. We spent a bit of time looking at a few new locations and managed to put a bag of four fish together weighing in at 2.575kg. Lures used in this event were ZMan 3.75" StreakZ in Watermelon and Motor Oil, rigged on TT HeadlockZ HD 1/16oz jigheads and scented with Pro-Cure Super Gel in Blue Crab.



With a very consistent year of tournament fishing we still were not confident going into the grand final event. Both Alex and I had gone out a number of times before the comp to get some pre-fishing in and locate the concentration of fish. The fishing leading up to the Grand Final was extremely tough and in our pre-fishing we never even managed to get a bag of four fish. This really left us stumped as to what to do on the day of the Grand Final.



Alex is all smiles with a quality  
bream on a ZMan 2.5" GrubZ.



During the year Alex had marked a number of spots on the Lowrance HDS where we had noticed fish were holding. Although they wouldn't bite at the time we knew the fish were there and they were spots worth fishing when the conditions were right.

On the day of the Grand Final we decided against heading too far up river, instead hanging around some of the areas we had marked on the HDS. Areas where we knew there were fish sitting. The fishing was still quite tough on the day, but there was a small period throughout the morning when the fish were on the chew. After checking out a few locations with the Structure Scan and spotting fish, we concentrated on a couple of spots. We were travelling between spots so as to give them a 15-20 minute break, then we'd head back and fish them again. This proved to work well as we landed fish on the 2nd and 3rd passes at some of these spots.

We had three good fish in the well and one rat that we tried really hard to upgrade by fishing a number of big fish locations... however we were not able to tempt a big one to eat. With ten minutes to go we made the call to head back to the weigh in and see what our bag would pull the scales down to.

We packed up and got ready to go... and the engine wouldn't start! With a bit of a panic and my trusty bush mechanic's side coming out in me, I quickly determined that we had a problem with the starter motor not engaging. Off came the gear cover and here I was down the back of the boat wrapping a rope around the gear and attempting to pull start a 135hp engine, great fun! Luckily on my third attempt and with half a shoulder left, we got it started and raced back to the weigh in.

Getting back with one minute to spare, it was a real close call. We really didn't expect to have enough weight to take out first place, however it was a very tough day for the rest of the competitors with only six teams out of twenty five catching a four fish bag. We were last to weigh in and our bag pulled the scales down to 2.795kg, beating 2nd place by only 5g! The lures we used were ZMan StreakZ in Motor Oil and ZMan GrubZ in Watermelon Red, Motor Oil and Bloodworm, matched with TT Lures HeadlockZ jigheads in 1/20 and 1/16oz, scented with Pro-Cure Super Gel in Blue Crab and Shrimp.

Along with taking out the Grand Final, we also took out the Team of The Year award for our consistent efforts this year. This is the third TOY we have won and we were super stoked to receive this award.

Big thanks goes out to our sponsors - Lowrance, Bluewater Tackleworld, Daiwa, Duffrods, ZMan and TT Lures.

Team Bluewater/ Lowrance  
Alex Greisdorf & Luke Ryan



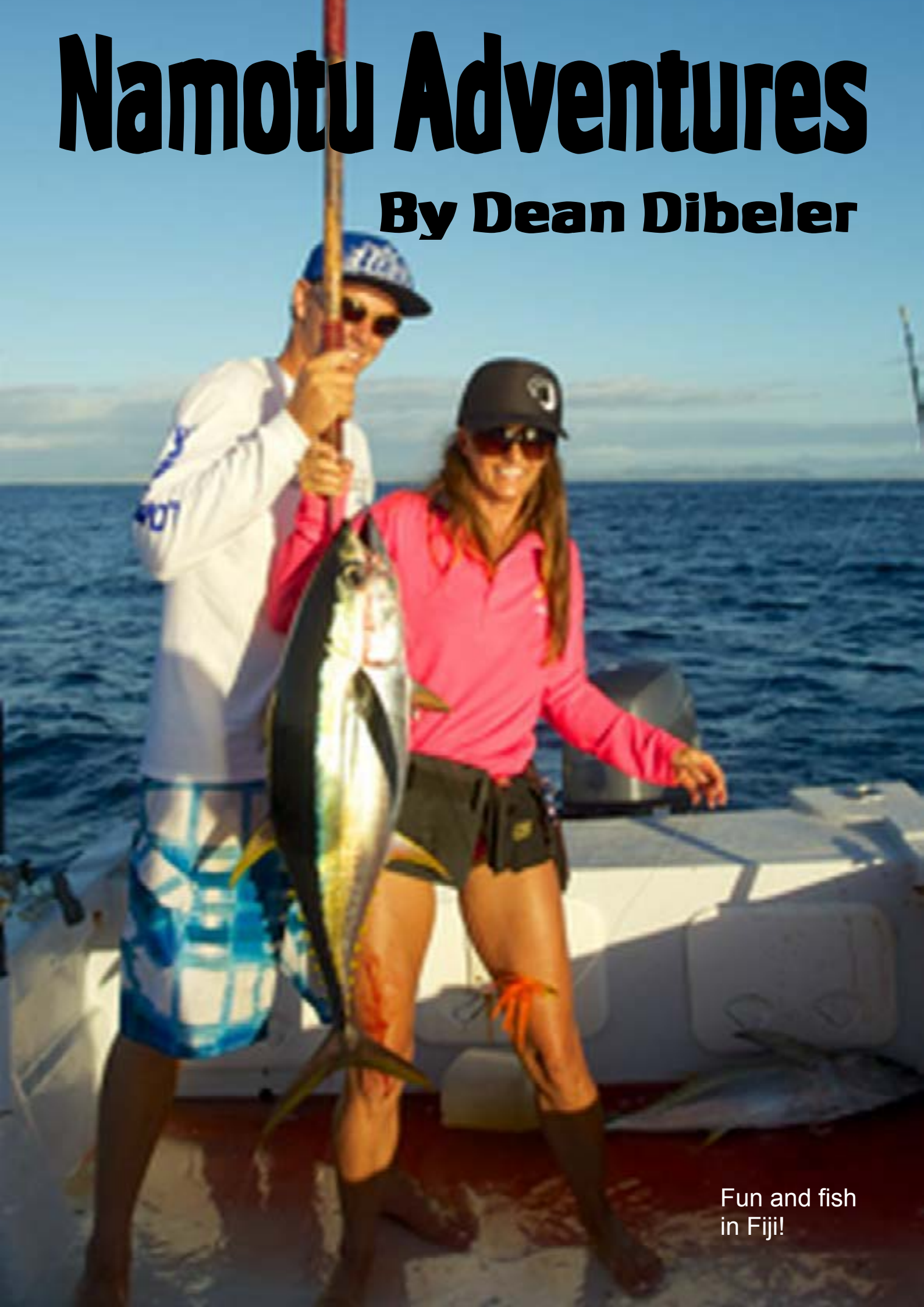
Presentation time.



The boys double up with a GF win and TOY!

# Namotu Adventures

**By Dean Dibeler**



Fun and fish  
in Fiji!

***It's time to start gearing up for your Fiji fishing adventure... let's find out more.***

When the cool weather sets in it can become harder to drag yourself out into the elements to go fishing. With frosty mornings, shorter days and fish becoming more lethargic, finding the motivation can be difficult. When faced with that winter chill it's a perfect time to leave the cold behind and go to somewhere warm, tropical and loaded with fish, and my first choice every time is Namotu island in Fiji.

Namotu is a tiny little sand island, about 30 minutes from the mainland in the Mamanuca group. I've been coming to this magic place for nearly 10 years to guide the fishing boat, surf and have a great time.

Fiji has so many options that change with the seasons. Basically summer is yellowfin tuna time and wahoo for winter, with GTs, dogtooth, walu (Spanish mackerel), coral trout, green jobfish and other reef fish available all year round.

Fish on!

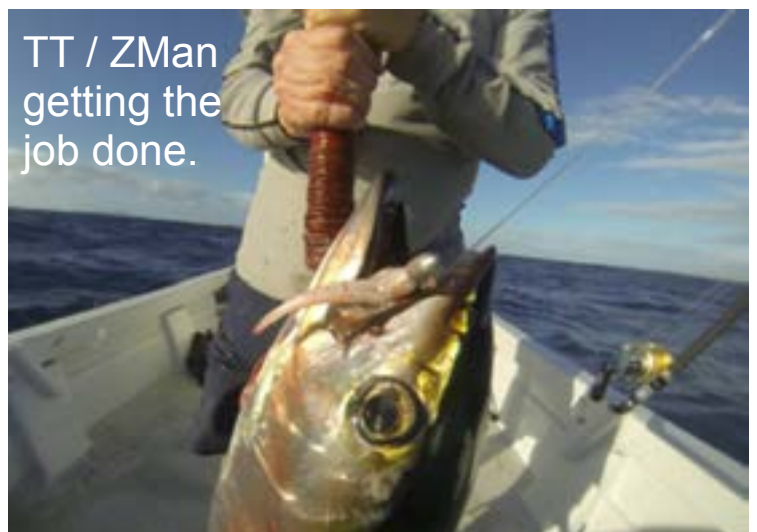


Fiji fun!



My last stint was in March this year and we had a good run of yellowfin up to 20kg, with fish to 70kg caught earlier in the season. When the tuna are on around Namotu it's quite easy to get onto them, with large schools busting bait and all of the bird action sometimes visible from the resort deck. I was fortunate enough on one occasion to see two large fin whales rising up through the school of bait, mouth open, gorging themselves on the white bait. This spectacular sight made even more so by the presence of tuna, frantically feeding on the excess bait as it spilled from the mouth of the whale. It was probably the best experience I've ever had in all my years of fishing in Fiji.

Trolling small feathers is the general method for yellowfin with guests on board but as soon as those rods go off and the guests are fighting fish the boat is stopped and I'm into the school with a ZMan 5" StreakZ or dropping down a 4oz TT jighead with a ZMan 8" StreakZ XL in Pearl, depending on wind and the distance from the school.



TT / ZMan  
getting the  
job done.

Ninety percent of the time the school will be travelling up wind, so I always try to position the boat in front of the busting fish, trolling back and forth. That way, when you do get the hook up, the boat will drift down wind close to the school enabling a cast to be put in or a jig dropped. It also keeps you a little bit closer to the school once the fish is landed so that you can get back onto them quicker.

With copious amounts of reef it can be daunting trying to decide where you would like to drop a plastic. A good starting point is an area where the current pushes directly on a reef face or pinnacle, such as a ledge in a channel as the tide pushes in. This is where the bait should be hanging and a nice show on the sounder could see you tight before your jig hits the bottom, so be aware!

My starting weight is 3oz and I'll use this in any depths from 15m to 70m. From 50m+ I'll generally use a 4oz to 8oz, depending on strength of current and it's always teamed up with a ZMan 8" StreakZ XL and some Bloody Tuna Pro-Cure as a final enhancement. Trout, jobfish, longnose, trevally, barracuda and walu have all fallen victim to the jigged plastic.



Coral trout



Dolphin fish



and GT's!

The same method in the middle of the night can see some interesting species landed. I always use a big StreakZ XL in Glow and always keep it freshly charged. Dogtooth love to chomp a charged up StreakZ but then comes the hard part, stopping him before he gets to the sharp edge to sever your braid! The first run of a large hound is something that needs to be seen to be believed; you can tighten the drag all you want and they just run harder, testing every part of your equipment and your body. I'm still yet to land one...

Then there's the flats fishing, where 1/2oz to 1oz jigheads with a ZMan 5" StreakZ or GrubZ, small poppers or shallow running minnows will entice a number of species that call the shallows home. Falling tide is best; positioning the boat way up on top of the reef to drift through the deeper channels and constantly casting downwind toward these areas. Don't bother letting the head get too close to the bottom as touching the reef is nearly a guarantee of getting snagged. If you do spot a fish honing in on your lure don't stop, keep it moving if you have room and even speed up.



Fish on!



These techniques will be sure to work all throughout the Pacific, no matter what island chain you choose to visit, so get in now and book a trip early to beat the cold of next winter.



When it's on the fishing in Fiji can be insane!

Lock a ZMan plastic on a TT Lures HeadlockZ HD jighead, add some Pro-Cure Scent and you could be as happy as Benny!



Angler: Benny Gross  
Species: 140cm Jewfish  
Plastic: ZMan 4" DieZel MinnowZ - Mulletron  
Jighead: TT Lures HeadlockZ HD  
Scent: Pro-Cure Super Gel - Shrimp

We hope you enjoyed the read.

For back issues, videos, fact sheets,  
rigging guides & more, visit  
[www.tackletactics.com.au](http://www.tackletactics.com.au)

