

Get'n Hooked



Fishing action rises as fall continues

Fall is officially here and most anglers along the gulf coast know what that means - both saltwater and freshwater fishing is about to heat up. Hopefully, within the next few weeks, we will experience a cold front or two that will really change the feeding habits of most species along the gulf coast. The cooler temperatures, along with lower humidity, will cause fish to be much more aggressive, as compared to during those hot summer months.

Flounders are showing up well around the bridge pilings and the jetties in the Pensacola pass. A one or two ounce slip weight with a live bull minnow or pinfish on a 1/0 or 2/0 hook is a guaranteed dinner. The redfish are still hanging in and around the deeper holes up and down the Santa Rosa Sound and Grand Lagoon areas. A golden colored spoon is great for working these holes, but good live bait is always best. Once the fronts begin to cool the water temperature down a little, the larger redfish will begin schooling around the Pensacola Pass.

Offshore waters are excellent for blue water trolling. There have been reports of sailfish being caught as close as 10 miles offshore. There have been quite a few reports

of white marlin near the 29 edge and around the nipple. The water 20 to 30 miles offshore is as pretty as any you will see in the Caribbean. These are perfect conditions for Wahoo and dolphin as well.

Last Sunday, aboard the Entertainer, we had caught our limit of Vermillion snapper and proceeded over to a larger wreck to try some live bait for amberjack. The first live bait in the water didn't produce an amberjack, but did catch a 35-pound bull dolphin.

Later in the week, we were bottom fishing for Vermillion snapper and scamp, and the same thing happened. We were moving from spot to spot and came across a free drifting buoy. I recognized the buoy and its markings from the Dry Tortugas, which lies 70 miles west of Key West. Yes, it had drifted away from its home, some 450 miles to the north.

We tossed out a Wahoo lure and made a pass by it, but nothing happened. So we turned about with some live bait.

Yabo, our fill-in mate while Rusty plays down in St. Thomas, tossed a live pinfish over to the buoy and a 10-pound triple tail jumped on it. He turned and handed it to a female angler and quickly got another bait to cast out. In the mean time, the triple tail spit out the pinfish and a 25-pound bull dolphin took the bait. Yabo then threw out another bait and we had on dolphin number two. There is now total chaos aboard the Entertainer, and another angler tosses out a third bait and dolphin number three is on. After several jumps from each dolphin, and some untangling of lines, all three were boated. They were all 25- to 30-pound fish and a nice bonus for the days catch.

We then rigged up for the



By Capt. Jerry Andrews



Above: Jason Riley and friends with a nice catch of amberjack and grouper aboard the Entertainer. **Right:** Riley shows off a 45-pound gag grouper. Captain Andrews says bottom fishing for the Vermillion snapper, grouper, scamp, triggerfish and amberjack will continue to get better and better in weeks to come.



triple tail and did manage to catch three of them using cut squid. They averaged about 8 to 10 pounds apiece. These fish fight a lot like a flounder on top of the water. They put up a pretty good fight and are excellent on the dinner table.

Bottom fishing for the Vermillion snapper, grouper, scamp, triggerfish and amber-

jack will get better and better in weeks to come. I know its getting close to hunting season and football season is in full swing, but fishing is going to be its best here along the gulf coast for the next two months. Take a break and let's go fishing. As we always say aboard the Entertainer, "May the good fishing be yours!"

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