

What A Way To Break In A New Fishing Boat

BY JAMIE MILLIKEN

5:18, 5:19, 5:20... My hand was reaching for the alarm clock before it had a chance to shatter the silence. You know, I never sleep well before a bluewater fishing trip.



CAPTAIN JAMIE'S OFFSHORE FISHING REPORT

On this night I had watched the clock a good two hours; the anticipation and excitement of the next day were just too much.

Scott Taylor and I had been invited to fish aboard Capt. Gene Parker's new Blackfin. The "Tossin' and Turnin'" was some fishing machine. She is powered by two Cat diesels that generate 300 horsepower each. Boy, those Cats will skat!

The ocean was beautiful, and Gene had his boat averaging 24 knots, so it was not long before we found a nice weed line. The line was in 117 feet of water (a little shallow), but we thought we might pick up a few dolphin.

Scott and I set the bait spread. We trolled the weed line for about 20 minutes and decided that there was nobody home. Gene made the call to pick 'em up, and in a few moments, we were back under way.

Our destination and game plan called for us to start at the 30 fathom break and then troll west down the break to that sacred fishing spot, the "Georgetown Hole." It had been two years since I had been to the "Hole." James Taylor's lyric "Isn't it nice to be home again" was running through my brain like a stock market report.

The wahoo made a huge swirl as he struck the starboard outrigger. In a flash, the Penn International reel screamed to life. Oh, man. Fish ON!

Scott set the drag and I closed a few lines. Gene worked the boat gracefully as Scott worked this "souped-up kingfish" to the transom. It was all high-fives and back slaps as the 30-pound-class wahoo was placed in the box. This was the first fish ever aboard Gene's "Tossin' and Turnin.'" What a way to start!

One hour had passed since the wahoo when, without warning, the line snapped from the shotgun rigger clip. This strike was so hard that the clip sounded like a .22 rifle going off. The Penn reel made a two-second blast, and then grew silent. The fish had missed the hook.

I stood and stared for what seemed like two minutes. I think I was mumbling under my breath as I picked up the reel and started reeling in line to change the bait. The Merritt Sparrow bird was doing his thing as I retrieved the line.

All of a sudden, BAM! The rod and reel just about left my hands. He's back! Gene hurriedly strapped into his back harness and rod belt. I was screaming and Scott was laughing. This was a nice one. Everyone knew it was a tuna.

Gene was using every ounce of strength as he pumped the rod to retrieve the line. Scott stood ready to "wire" this brute, and I jocked the boat into position.

Thirty minutes passed when Scott got the first wrap on the leader. I pushed the "Tossin' and Turnin'" into neutral and grabbed the gaff. I think it was when I missed a great opportunity to gaff the fish, and Scott's right arm was stretched like it was going to leave his body, that I got that "don't-do-that-again" look from Scott and Gene.

The opportunity again presented itself, and I felt the three-inch hook sink deep into the fish. Got him! This yellowfin tuna was truly beautiful, his broad golden strip and his yellow finlets looking like gold against the deep black color of his back. He was a mule, easily in the 50-pound class.

Thank you, Gene, for the great trip to the bluewater. And isn't it nice to be home again? Good fishin' and good luck, Jolly Mon!

Tennis Tournament Winners

Framed certificates were presented to winners in five divisions at the open tennis tournament held April 9 and 10 at the West Brunswick High School courts.

In the men's open singles division, Lamarr Hardy defeated Robin Dale, 7-6, 6-4, to take first place.

Hardy teamed up with Kelley Wooten to win the men's open doubles class. They beat John Coble and Jeremie Varnam, 6-0, 6-3.

Sal DiFazio defeated Jerry Small, 4-6, 7-6, 6-3, to win the men's senior singles class.

DiFazio and Norfleet Underwood

knocked off Small and Brad Singletary, 6-4, 2-6, 6-4, to win the men's senior doubles title.

In the women's open singles division, Linda Sing defeated Wendy Milligan 6-1, 6-2, to take first place.

Small, who served as tournament director, said there were 29 entries in singles and doubles.

"I think it went pretty well. Hopefully this will spur some interest in the ladder for this spring and summer," he said.

Small said he plans to start organizing the spring tennis ladder within the next few weeks.



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

Nice Grouper

Sarah Laton of New London caught this 14-pound grouper on a recent offshore fishing trip aboard the Seahorse out of Holden Beach.

Softball Game To Raise Funds For Leland Civic Center

The "King and His Court" four-man softball team will play nine local media personalities to help raise money to renovate the old Leland school building into a civic center for the area.

The event is sponsored by the Brunswick Fifth District Civic Center group, which is heading the renovation effort.

The game will take place on Sunday, May 1, at 3:30 p.m. at Legion Stadium in Wilmington. Admission is \$5 in advance or \$7 at the gate. Children under 9 will be admitted free with an adult.

Tickets are on sale in Leland at McGee's Minute Mart and First Investors Bank, and at Phoenix Country Store.

Trojan Softball Squad Falls To Lady Gators

West Brunswick's softball team dropped a 10-8 decision to East Columbus last Friday in a game that was stopped in the fifth inning due to lightning at Lake Waccamaw.

"It was the same old story with us. We just can't get it all together in one game," West Brunswick Coach Tracey James said.

The Lady Trojans, who fell to 0-3 in the Waccamaw Conference and 3-10 overall, were scheduled to host West Columbus Tuesday. West will host South Brunswick on April 26.

Coach James said the biggest problem at East Columbus was the pitching. West Brunswick's girls issued 10 bases on balls.

"The pitching fell apart, and we couldn't get anybody out," James said. "We're going to keep working on it and hopefully it will all come together for us."

Jackie Moll and Yarbi Lemon had three hits apiece for the Lady Trojans and Michelle Long and Jessica Winfree added two hits each.

In Waccamaw Conference play last Tuesday, Whiteville scored eight runs in the sixth inning to take a 12-5 win over the host Lady Trojans.

West Brunswick outthit Whiteville 15-10, but the local girls committed 10 errors while the Wolfpack made just two. The Lady Trojans gave up

six unearned runs in the sixth inning.

"The errors are haunting us," James said. "You take away that one inning and we beat them 5-4."

Lemon went 3-for-4 and Long was 3-for-3 with a triple to lead West Brunswick.

Angela Slater had two doubles and a home run for Whiteville.

This Week's Tide Table

		APRIL		
		HIGH		LOW
Day	Date	A.M.	P.M.	A.M. P.M.
Thursday	21	4:20	5:02	10:49 11:22
Friday	22	5:21	6:02	11:45 ----
Saturday	23	6:19	6:58	12:21 12:39
Sunday	24	7:16	7:53	1:17 1:30
Monday	25	8:10	8:46	2:11 2:21
Tuesday	26	9:04	9:39	3:03 3:11
Wednesday	27	9:58	10:33	3:55 4:02

ADJUSTMENTS

SHALLOTTE INLET—add 17 min. high tide, add 32 min. low tide.
 LOCKWOOD FOLLY—subtract 22 min. high tide, subtract 8 min. low tide.
 BALD HEAD ISLAND—subtract 10 min. high tide, subtract 7 min. low tide.
 SOUTHPORT—add 7 min. high tide, add 15 min. low tide.
 LITTLE RIVER—subtract 11 min. high tide, add 18 min. low tide.

Effort In Progress For Girls' Softball

Brunswick County Parks and Recreation Department is trying to form girls' softball teams in the Supply, Southport and Oak Island area.

The program will begin in May

and continue throughout the summer and will be open to girls ages 13 to 15.

Interested persons should call Joe Rosselli, athletic coordinator, at 253-4357 or 1-800-222-4790.

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