

Cape Fear fishing Hooking up with the big one

By the first of April excitement was in the air -- a spring run of spots. A genuine spring run! On the Oak Island piers, panfishermen were loading their coolers, and in the tackle shops there was talk -- Would this be a spring like 1991, when both spots and kings beset the piers in fall-like runs?

Could this be a spring like 1994, when lunker kings took over the artificial reefs in late April?

Might this be another spring when bluefish inundate Jaybird Shoal and large, heavy-hitting blues bite off smaller ones, then go feeding in the Bald Head surf?

Perhaps.

There is nothing like a bad season to heighten anticipation of the next, and by virtually every measure last saltwater season here was dreadful -- battered by storms, flooded brown by upstate rains, freshened finally by nothing more than winter chill.

So as the beachwater temperature (ask the piers, not the radio) works into the upper 60s, pier anglers will be on keen lookout for their kings, and their Spanish; offshore trollers will be searching for schooling kings at the Fairway; and inshore live-liners will be towing

pogies over the reefs for truly big kingfish.

Blues could be hitting by then on the piers, as well as in the inlet surf, and black drum, sheepshead and flounder should be pleasing specialists in the ocean shallows, and then (in larger sizes) in the rivers.

Trout, whose name is whispered in every month, could be off the piers in June, in the holes off Bald Head, and finally in the creeks and along the grassbanks of Oak Island, Battery Island and Bald Head.

Bluewater trollers will be teasing yellowfin tuna, wahoo and dolphin, and deepwater specialists with a dual purpose will be looking for reef fish and light-lining for big kings and barracuda.

In the surf pompano will be shredding mole crabs, and on the inner Frying Pan Shoals, and in the creeks behind Bald Head, big tarpon will thrash in the shallows and roll enticingly in the deeps.

Finally the season, given an even chance which last year's weather precluded, will be ready to make its own record.

As good as '91? Equal to '94?

Perhaps not.

Maybe it'll be much better.



Southport-Oak Island fishing is good whether from boats, pier or surf

FREE DELIVERY

- BOTTLED IN WILMINGTON
- FRESH TO YOUR HOME or OFFICE
- 5-GALLON BOTTLE DRINKING WATER
- NEW 1/2 LITER BOTTLES
- MEMBER CHAMBER of COMMERCE
- 20 YEARS EXPERIENCE

457-5404

INSPECTED BY STATE & FEDERAL AGENCIES & IBWA



Indian Spring Water Company Inc.