



February 2006
Volume 2, Number 2
Upperkeysfishingclub.com

Upper Keys Fishing Club
P.O. Box 370484
Key Largo, FL 33037
Founded February 16 2005

Dock Talk

The Upper Keys Fishing Club Newsletter

Next meetings – Wednesday February 1, 7:00 PM, Yellow Bait House,
Mini-seminar –Outboard maintenance

Wednesday February 15, 7:00 PM
Chili-cookoff following general meeting

Upcoming events - Visit the Upper Keys Fishing Club booth at the Nautical
Flea Market Saturday and Sunday February 27 and 28
Founders' Park, Islamorada



John Rowe, during the calm seas.

Rockin' and Rollin' on the January Tortugas Trip

President's message by Capt Doug Jeffrey

Great things are in the wind for the Upper Keys Fishing Club. There will be a major announcement made at the meeting on Feb 1st. I encourage all members to attend and share in this news. For those that are not able to attend this meeting there

will be a follow up e-mail announcing the big news. Now is the time to renew your dues for 2006. The final nomination for club officers will be at the 15th meeting, though we will start taking nominations at the next meeting. If you would like to hold a club office please talk to one of the club officers, or if you feel there is someone out there that would be able to help the club advance, please bring their nomination forward. Elections will be held during the first meeting of March. As we close out our first year, I think we have come a long way. I also feel we still have a long way to go. We have had a great first year and I expect better things for 2006. I hope to see you all at the meeting this week. At the meeting on the 15th we will be having our 1st annual UKFC chili cook off. So chili cookers bring your best pot of chili and let's see how we all stack up. If you bring a pot of chili please bring the recipe written out on a 3x5 card for possible use in a future news letter. For those of you that do not cook chili do not worry, we have not forgotten you, we will also need chopped onions, grated cheese, and crackers. Bowls and spoons will be provided by the club, I hope to see you all there.

Dry Tortugas January trip

The December trip went catching... the January boats went fishing. The weather did us in and two of the three boats came back the next morning. The third, with the the real die-hards, stayed for most of the next day. I fished aboard the Emily Anne captained by Toby Brown. The ride out wasn't bad, just long, we took a couple of strikes and boated a bonita. Tom Mulligan boated the monster. We had a great "Happy Hour" and then started fishing at dark. The first drop produced a few fish, snapper, bluefish, and one decent grouper taken by John Rowe. The action died. We hit another spot and it was a dud. As the say three is the charm. On the third drop we landed on the yellowtail. Of course by this time, the seas were building and it was just tough to move around. But if you got any bait back 15 feet the yellowtail hit. However, the crew started to feel the impact of moving up and down, and over and around. **They say you'll never forget your first time!**

I've fished all the Great Lakes in all kinds of seas, I've fished the Keys, Outer Banks and other ports of call. Never in 40 plus years have I felt like I did the night of January 16th, on a boat. The fish were biting and all I wanted to do was curl up in a fetal position in the cabin. Most everyone eventually gave up and did the best to find a place to sleep. Dawn eventually came (It seemed like a 24-hour night). One by one most of the crew spent a few moments in prayer over the side of the boat. Not everyone was successful but it wasn't for lack of trying. John Rowe's quote of the trip "These seas will separate the men from the boys". Well just call me Shirley. John proved to be correct. His wife Beverly was the only one not to attend services out back. However, she did stay in the same seat head down on the table from 9:00 PM on the 16th until we landed Tuesday afternoon. I think she was just too sick to join her male companions.

Captain Brown was great guy and we all thought he did an excellent job under the circumstances. The Emily Anne had a few problems. No air conditioning, fans that didn't work and a disabled microwave. Lucky for us, eating never got into the planned activities. If you are considering a trip I suggest you make the Andy Griffiths people aware that if the boat is not checked out and fully operational, you don't leave the dock and get a full refund. When you get there, first thing, check everything out before you leave the dock for three days. Contact me and I'll be happy to share a list of items I suggest be checked.

What the fishing lacked, the good company and great crew made up for. Lets all hope for calm seas and great fishing right here in our backyard for the rest of the winter.

Captain Ed Stell

Catch of the month – Clark Boggs - 23# African pompano



Clark caught this infrequent catch on ballyhoo in 155 feet of water near Pickles Reef on December 28, 2005. Congratulations Clark!

Offshore Fishing Report, Capt. Doug

The wahoo have been a little slow showing up this year; however the kingfish are as thick as fleas. There are still a great number of dolphins hanging around. Normally the majority of dolphins are far south of here by now, but with the warmer than normal water temps there are still plenty hanging around. The full blitz of sailfish is still to the north of us while we still have good numbers around a couple of good cold fronts should give them that little push to get them down to us.

Reef Fishing Report, Capt. Doug

There are plenty of really nice yellowtail coming from 105 to 140 feet of water. The reef is also giving up some great catches of mid sized grouper; most of them are falling between 20 and 40 pounds. While on the reef do not forget to flat line a bait for the kingfish that will be patrolling the reefs and will follow that chum line right to the back of your boat.

The patch reefs have been giving up good numbers of mangrove, muttoms and hogfish. There have also been some 26 to 30 inch grouper being caught. Most of the grouper have been caught trolling rather than by anchoring up and chumming. There have also been a lot of cero mackerel finding there way into the chum line and are a hoot on light tackle, do not forget to use a small piece of wire in front of the jig to protect from cut offs.

Back-country Fishing Report, Capt. Doug

With the cooler water the trout are stacked up in the deeper holes where the water is a little warmer. As the sun warms the flats the redfish will be up there tailing in search of shrimp and crabs. In the cuts there are some really good snook being caught, and while they are still small there are a lot of tarpon that are willing to take a bait.

Shrimp Report, Capt. Doug

Who knows, when I think they will run they don't, and when I think they wouldn't they will. Maybe I will get luck and figure them out so far they have been smarter than me.

Upper Keys Fishing Club News

The big news this month are the upcoming officer elections. At the club meeting on January 18 2006, club members voted to amend the Upper Keys Fishing Club by-laws and split the combined officer position of Secretary/ Treasurer into two separate positions. This change was anticipated. The original combination of the two duties into one position was needed at the club's origination because of the limited

size of the founding membership and the scarcity of members willing to assume the club responsibilities. At the upcoming meeting, the club will start taking nominations for President, Vice-president, Secretary, and Treasurer. Elections will be held on March 1 2006. You can also email any nominations in to me at frankovich@virginia.edu. Election shall be by simple majority of members present at March 1 meeting as per Upper Keys Fishing Club by-laws.

It is also membership renewal time. At the end of this newsletter is the bill for the 2006 membership. Dues have remained the same, \$25 for individual membership, \$35 for family membership (immediate family members 16 and under). Bills are due by Mar 1 2006. An initiation fee of \$20 is being charged to all new members joining the club after January 11 2006. New members who have paid the initiation fee and joined the club on or after Sept. 1 will not be required to pay the following year's dues. All members who have joined prior to Sept. 1, or who have not paid the initiation fee at the time they joined, will be required to pay the following year's dues.

Following the upcoming February 15 meeting, a club chili cook-off will be held. Please bring your best chili, club will provide bowls and spoons.

On Sunday January 22 at 7:00 PM a welcome-back party for our winter resident club members was held at Carolyn and Mike MacDonald's home. About 30 members had a great time, got re-acquainted and feasted on ribs, chicken, pasta, chili and cake.



From right - Carolyn MacDonald, Capt. Dick Meade, and Tom Vogel



From left - Sara and Scott Kallis, Ann and Harold "Fishtalker" Cliff

At the January 4 club meeting, Barrie Wantz instructed club members how to achieve a razor-sharp edge on all your knives. Members brought their dull rusty knives in and returned home with sharp ones that would fall through a tomato with only the slightest of pressure. Some of the knives with softer steel came out scary-sharp. For those of you interested in purchasing the diamond hone kit with angle guides. The kit can be purchased from smokymountainknifeworks.com. It is the Frost Cutlery Blademaster Diamond Sharpening Kit part # FRBMD and is \$41.99 + shipping.

KEYS DAYDREAMING Vice-President's report, Mike MacDonald

The more I learn about fishing, the dumber I have gotten. Has this happened to anyone else? I know so many knots, special rigs, live baits, etc. I believe I could write a very short book.

This winter started out GREAT in December; then came January. I mean to tell you I'm riding a DRY STREAK! I go out trolling in perfect sailfish weather with live pilchards and catch a triggerfish. Oh well, at least it gives me a story to tell.

On a very positive note Scott Kallis invited me and my two boys (from Michigan) to take the inaugural trip on his new Hydra-Sport. What a nice boat. The new 4-Stroke motor makes my 2-Stroke, oil-burning, noisy monster seem like an old car with vent windows. Scott landed a nice King (approx. 20 lbs.) and yes, much to the amazement of certain people, I gaffed the thing.

I'm optimistic the next time "Big Wally" will be waiting for me and that is enough on these windy days to keep me "KEYS DAYDREAMING"!

www.upperkeysfishingclub.com - website changes

We recently added a "**Members only**" section to the website. You will find an updated membership directory there as well as a bulletin board. Use it to post fishing reports, ask questions, or hook up with a fishing partner. If you have any questions or problems using the board let me know ejstell@a-zwww.com . You folks that like to shrimp lets keep in touch. If they ran last night there is a good bet they'll be there tonight.

Members only sign-in and passwords are sent to all members in the accompanying email to this newsletter.

There is a **Wanted - For Sale** section. This will have wider readership than the newsletter. Drop me an e-mail if you have something.

If you haven't got any e-mail from the club lately it's possible we have an incorrect address or no address for you. Contact Rob at robstew@bellsouth.net with your correct address. If you have a spam filter that works off your address book make sure you can receive mail from; Rob, Tom and Me. Check addresses on the WEB.

Send me pictures and stories for the WEB so we can keep it interesting and informative.

WEBMASTER Captain Ed Stell

UKFC Winter Fishing Tournament

Winter tournament is now open in all categories – kingfish, wahoo, grouper. Be sure to weigh your fish in at the Yellow Bait House and fill out the entry form available at the bait shop or online at www.upperkeysfishingclub.com. Any questions contact Capt. John Ohlsson at 305-451-3667.

Kingfish –	Open -	Your name here!
	Light tackle -	Your name here!
	Ladies -	Your name here!
	Junior angler -	Your name here!
Wahoo –	all categories open	
Grouper –	all categories open	

Anglers Helping Anglers

(A new forum for members. We encourage you to use this forum to let other club members know you appreciate their acts of kindness.)

It has been almost a year since we first gathered at an undisclosed location in upstate New York and formed this "thing of ours" (actually, it was at the Yellow Bait House here in Key Largo). I look back and I am grateful to all that made our Upper Keys Fishing Club much bigger than the sum of the parts. It has required a lot of effort to keep seminars scheduled, newsletters written, minutes taken, checking account balanced, and making sure the limousine is ready to pick up and drop off President Capt. Doug for the meetings, but all that pales in comparison to what I have received from others. The friendships that have developed make it all worthwhile.

I thank Capt. Doug for teaching me to yellowtail, now all I need is a good bottom machine, Sally and Paul for the yellowtailing trips on the Royal Tease, John Pieklo for what may be the biggest blackfin of my life, Tom Mulligan and Rob Stewart for twisting my arm and forcing me to go kicking and screaming to some bar of ill repute after the club meetings, John Ohlsson for the memorable dolphin, tuna, and tripletail trips (not to mention the scotch), and to Carolyn and Mike MacDonald for sharing conversation and tuna tacos.

With the start of our sophomore year, there will be greater opportunities to become more involved in the Upper Keys Fishing Club, especially as a club officer. Last year this time, I thought to myself "What am I committing myself to?, If the boss finds out what I am using his computer for, I might get fired". Taking a little risk has rewarded me with so many experiences and new friendships that I never thought of, so if anyone is thinking they can become more involved, I can say, with almost certainty, that they will probably get a tremendous return on their investment. Thank you all.

Tom

P.S. The boss hasn't found out yet.

Fish of the month – Sailfish - *Istiophorus platypterus*

Sailfish are often an angler's first billfish requiring the celebratory and mandatory throwing of the successful angler into the drink back at the dock. The habit of these fish to gather just in front of the our reef tract during winter, make these fish easily accessible even with flats boats getting a chance during the brief calm weather between cold fronts. Sailfish, like all the billfish, belong to the Family Istiophoridae. Sailfish occur in the tropical and subtropical waters of all the oceans and achieve their adult size in four years! Our Atlantic sailfish are on average smaller than the Pacific sails caught along the Central American coast; our sails average about 30 - 65 pounds. One of the best locations to catch sails in our area is the wall in front of Conch reef. The best techniques are either to kite fish with live goggle-eyes, pilchards, pinfish, blue runners, even grunts! or to slow troll live ballyhoo. These fish provide tremendous sport on 20# spinning tackle. This is one of our best months for sails, so give it a shot and send us a picture.

Bait of the month - Bigeye Scad (Goggle-eye) - *Selar crumenophthalmus*

Appropriately, the bait for the month of February is the goggle-eye or bigeye scad. The goggle-eye is the preferred bait for sailfish. The large eye of this small jack distinguishes it from other related jack species (Family Caranjidae) such as the speedo (*Decapterus tabl*) and the cigar minnow (*Decapterus punctatus*). The relatively large eye of this fish indicates that this species feeds predominantly at night. In fact, most of these baitfish are caught at night along the reefs. They can also be caught inshore along structure. In either case, they are brought to the boat using chum and caught using sabiki rigs or small baited single hooks.

Fish Feast – Recipes from the Deep - Smoky Salmon - Lenore Wimmer

2 lb. salmon fillet
2tablespoons brown sugar
2 teaspoons salt
1/2 teaspoon pepper
1 to 2 tablespoons Liquid Smoke

Put salmon, skin side down, in a pan. Sprinkle with mixture of brown sugar, salt and pepper rub into the fillet. Drizzle liquid smoke over the top. Cover and refrigerate 4 to 8 hours. Drain and discard the liquid. Put Pam in the bottom of the baking pan. Bake 45 - 55 minutes at 350°F. Cool. Cover and refrigerate 8 hours or overnight.

That's all there is to it.

For Sale

Video - Quest for Giant Tarpon with Stu Apt \$1 or a beer

contact Tom at 852-2668

If any club members have items for sale that would be of interest to fellow anglers, please send these to Tom at frankovich@virginia.edu for future inclusion.

Tip Corner – Boat Trailer Lights - Roy Fabel of the Fiberglass Shop

In last month's newsletter (Dock Talk vol. 2 number 1) we discussed more than you may ever wish to know about boat trailers and alluded to this month's tip about constructing removable trailer lights. Well, we lied, sort of.

After 15 years of replacing trailer lights at what may be 6 month intervals, I may have finally wised up. I am a slow learner, just ask my boss and don't tell him how you know me. Try ditching your submersible lights and using a removable light and harness kit that never has to go in the water instead. This past week, I was at the Fiberglass Shop in Roy Fabel's office waiting for the bill for two bottom jobs (for the boats!). I noticed two magnetic trailerlights on his shelf and thought that this would be excellent for the boat trailers and would be a whole lot easier than constructing one as we suggested in last month's newsletter. So with that fortuitous and timely discovery, the tip of the month is the magnetic trailer light kit with harness. Roy says these are available at Harbor Freight Tools on US1 in Cutler Ridge for around \$20. These can be kept in your truck either in back or behind the seat and used for all your trailers. You only need one This will save a lot of money, effort and headaches. For example:

Replacement lights at local vendor	\$40 (no kidding)
wiring harness	\$20
Marine heat shrink, solder	\$20
Fire ants eating your legs while crawling underneath trailer	free
X 2 trailers	\$160
X twice a year	\$320
X 10 years	\$3200
Ticket from Monroe County Sheriff	\$100

Realizing you should have ditched those #*?! submersible lights 10 years ago

PRICELESS!

Upper Keys Fishing Club Membership Renewal Application 2006

___ Individual Membership \$25.00 ___ Family Membership \$35.00

Name _____ Spouse _____
Child _____ Child _____
Child _____ Child _____

Address 1 (until when) _____

Address 2 _____

Home Phone 1 _____ Work Phone _____
Home Phone 2 _____ Cell Phone _____

E-mail _____

Boat Name _____

Favorite type of fishing _____

Favorite fish to target _____

Willing to fish on other members boat _____ Yes _____ No

Willing to invite members to fish with you _____ Yes _____ No

Seminars or things you would like to learn

Please make your check out to the Upper Keys Fishing Club and complete this renewal form and mail or give it to:

Att: Rob Stewart, membership chairman
Upper Keys Fishing Club
P.O. Box 370484
Key Largo, FL 33037

Special Thanks to our members and friends that have supported our activities

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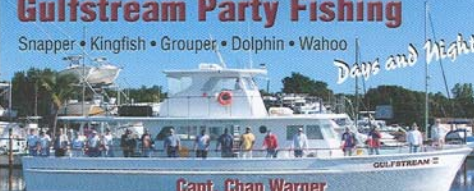
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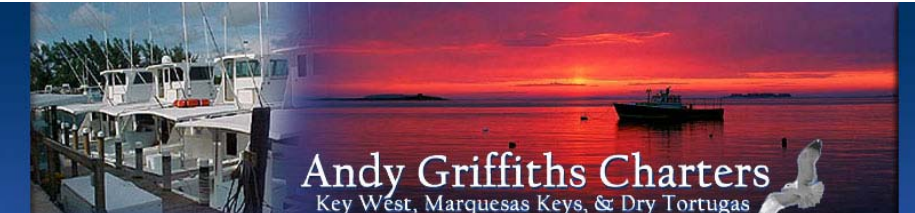
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