

July 2006  
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Upperkeysfishingclub.com



Upper Keys Fishing Club  
P.O. Box 370484  
Key Largo, FL 33037  
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## Dock Talk

### The Upper Keys Fishing Club Newsletter

**Next meeting** – Wednesday August 2, 7:00 PM, Lighthouse Boat Center  
Mini-seminar – Back-country trout fishing  
July event - Night Yellowtail trip on Capt. Chan's  
Gulfstream, Monday July 17, 6:30PM



Benny Nelson and Bob Smart with a yellowtail limit, evening fishing in 60 ft.

### Catch of the month - "Killer B's clean up on yellowtail"

#### President's message by Capt Doug Jeffrey

It is hard to believe that it is already July and 2006 is over half over, in almost no time our winter anglers will be returning for some cold weather fishing. Well cold to us. Club members have made some great catches this past month. However I was not one of them. I left on Memorial Day and returned at the end of June logging over 7000 miles on the cars odometer man what a road trip. Right when I got back it was time for the clubs fish fry and for those that were not able to make it we had a wonderful time. Thanks to all the members that worked to make it a great time. Special thanks go out to Sally and Paul who again allowed up to come over and hang out, it was a great evening. I am very behind answering everyone's e-mails and questions. I had over 1100 e-mails when I finally got home I will get to them all sooner or later. This is a great month for fishing and do not forget mini-season is

slipping up on us real quick. We also have the night trip on the Gulf Stream later this month, and I hope to see all of you warm weather anglers there. Just a heads up, I will not be making sandballs this trip, I plan to be fishing. Just so all of you are fair warned I will be fishing instead of taking care of you all, well unless you are a girl with a pretty smile, then you could surely get a sandball or two. Hope to see all of you soon, have a great month.

Thanks to all of you that have been calling to check up on me. For those of you that do not know I really messed myself up on the road trip. While I am a little hobbled, I am improving, and those phone calls really kept me from getting down in the dumps. I will be out fishing and diving before you know it. Thanks Again.

Are you an active member, the kind that we would miss?  
Or are you just content that your name is on our list?  
Do you attend the meetings and mingle with the flock?  
Or do you just stay at home then criticize and knock?

Do you take an active part to help your club along?  
Or are you satisfied to be the kind that just belongs?  
Do you ever volunteer to help and get into the thick?  
Or put the work on someone else then gripe about the click?

Come out to the meetings and help with hand and heart,  
Don't just be a griper, but Please take an active part!  
Think this over and remember you know right from wrong.  
Are you an active member or do you just belong?

This is our club; we will only get out of it what we put into it. Members with skills, talents or, just spare time are needed. If you can help with anything or have an idea that would help our club improve. Please do not keep it to yourself, contact Doug, Tom, or Whit and let them know what you have to offer.

Anonymous

### **Upper Keys Fishing Club News - Whit van Cott**

On Monday July 17 at 6:30 PM, the club will be hosting a nighttime yellowtail and bottom-fishing trip aboard Capt. Chan's Gulfstream. Chan has generously offered fares for this event a much reduced rate of \$30 per person + tip for the mates. All members are asked to bring a covered side dish so we can fish and munch. The silversides and chum paté go well with crackers. Bring a rod or two for yellowtail and a bottom rod. If you have any questions about gear, give Doug a call at 451-1225. Please RSVP Tom at 852-2668 or frankovich@virginia.edu, so we can plan on how many serving tables, utensils, bait, etc. to bring. This will be our third trip and the past two were great times with fish and friends.

The June 7th. meeting was held at the Lighthouse Boat Center and the guest speaker was Capt. Gus Brugger a charter captain from the Sebastian Inlet / Indian River Lagoon area . The members discussed the May fishing bite which had sporadic dolphin 20 to 25 miles out . Sally Stribling said if you bring your shirts and hats to the meeting we could have the club logo embroidered for 8 dollars .

Gus did a good job describing the difference between fishing his area and Key Largo. He is now using braided line and fishing an average depth of 4 feet with jerk baits and DOA shrimp . He uses a double uni to connect the braid to his mono or fluorocarbon leader and runs the line through the knot 6 to 7 times . There were lots of questions and Gus did a great job providing answers . The June 24th cook-out at Sally Stribling's had a lot of very good food and fellowship . Paul Andrews, John Ohisson, and John Pieklo did a great job of cooking the fish and onion rings . There were lots of side dishes and plenty of desserts . I took a bunch of pictures, but none of them came out with the camera being on the wrong setting . Oh well , at least I had a chance to eat dinner with Bob Smart and swap some great fishing stories .

### **Offshore Fishing Report, Capt. Doug**



The news is a little grim, no real blackfins to speak of. The dolphin are a little slow, they are catching some real nice ones way off. Reports have come in about several close to 50 pounds that were caught 25 miles offshore.

Tom Dean - 25# bull

### **Reef Fishing Report, Capt. Doug**

The news here is much better. The only real downer is the yellowtails; they are biting a little slow. This is to be expected and happens a couple of times each summer and should be over in a week to ten days and then they will be on fire. Wow!, was there a mutton bite in June. Capt Chan caught over 200 muttons in 5 days; they were going crazy. Nice grouper over 20 pounds are still being caught but you have to go a little deeper; now try at least 120 feet of water. My personal favorite, the kings are hungry again and there are plenty of them. If you are interested in a couple, try live bait in 180 feet of water from Dixie to Alligator, and you should hook up.

## **Backcountry Fishing Report, Capt. Doug**

The trout are eating every thing in sight, live bait or artificials. There are plenty of nice redfish around, however, they seem to have a case of lock jaw as of late. There have been several nice cobia caught around structure on the west side of the Gulf Intracoastal, I know they taste terrible so to save you the bad experience I would be willing to pick them up. I could feed them to my cats or something. Sharks, big ones, are all over back country and they are hungry, big lemons and bulls, so don't dangle feet or hands over board, or you may be able to find a part in the next Pirates of the Caribbean movie as Hook or Peg leg.

### **Fish of the month – Great Barracuda - *Sphyraena barracuda***



Whit van Cott Sr., 85, with a nice barracuda

Most locals often overlook or disparage the much maligned barracuda, but in sport fishing circles outside of Florida, the **Great Barracuda** is a much sought after gamefish by visiting anglers. One of the questions I hear most often from visiting guests is "Can we catch barracuda here?" After answering "Yes" twenty something times. I tell them we can catch #%\*ing! barracuda everywhere! In fact, barracuda can be found on reefs, on backcountry grass beds, and offshore. There are about 20 species worldwide in the barracuda family (*Sphyraenidae*). All are extremely aggressive and rarely refuse a live bait or lure. A barracuda's teeth are legendary so there is little need to mention the requisite wire leader. With their blistering runs, ease to take baits and their widespread availability, why the bad rep'?, maybe it's because of the previously mentioned prevalence of ciguatera in larger fish (see the May 2006 issue of Dock Talk). Visitors are especially impressed with a smiling large barracuda, so if you want to score a few quick fishing points, have them cast a brightly-colored tube lure over one the patch reefs or try Tom's Wreck (See this month's hotspot). Just remember to be careful and lip gaff these fish so they can be released to accommodate other sport fisherpeople.

## Hotspot of the month - Tom's wreck - 25 11.216 80 14.392



No, I did not name this wreck after myself. Actually Capt. Tom's Wreck as it is known locally, is the wreck of the Charles W. Baird. From the picture above, you can see that this is a shallow wreck. It is located along the reefline in between Carysfort and The Elbow. Within the wreck there are lots of mangrove snapper, some black grouper, and some graysbys, just to mention a few. This place is also a great place to snorkel as the wreck is covered by beautiful gorgonians and soft corals, but this is a fishin' club, so I digress. Last time, I was there, I was swimfishing (snorkeling with a Cuban yo-yo rig baited with shrimp) for hogfish and snapper with a few friends. There were plenty of keeper hogs, but I did have one worry - the place was loaded with barracuda! Big ones, too! Every wreck edge and every patch of gorgonians was guarded by a pack of 3 - 5 barracuda, some over 20#. After catching a hog or mango, we had to quickly swim back to the boat to unload the catch. I thought, we should be catching the barracuda on some light spinners; that would have been fun and a lot less worrisome. That explains why this place was chosen for this month's feature (i.e., the superbundance of barracuda here).

### **Bait of the month - Mojarras - Family *Gerreidae***

Very few people target mojarras specifically for bait, but if you are throwing a castnet in the backcountry, you are bound to catch a few of these in your net when you are targeting mullet, pilchards, or anchovies. Mojarras are decent baits, but are not popular, likely because they aren't often in large schools. Larger ones also make good eating. They are at least 10 species in South Florida. All of these are bottom feeders, sucking invertebrates out of the mud, hence, they are often found in the

mud patches within grass beds. Mojarras are deep-bodied (i.e., they have a jack-like shape) and have forked tails. The most common mojarra in the backcountry is the aptly named **Silver Jenny** (*Eucinostomus gula*). The silver jenny is small (to 7"), silver in color, and is a good snapper bait. Two other aptly-named mojarras are commonly found in the backcountry and Hawk Channel. These are the **Yellowfin Mojarra** (*Gerres cinereus*) and the **Striped Mojarra** (*Diapterus plumieri*) and are larger than the Silver Jenny. The Yellowfin Mojarra, besides having yellow pelvic fins, has large vertical bars and is the largest of our mojarras. The Striped Mojarra has dark horizontal stripes. Look for all of these mojarras on mud bottoms where you can watch them actively feeding.

### **Profiles in Community Services - New Feature!**

This is a new feature where Dock Talk will profile people who provide services that may be of interest to our angling community. In this issue and upcoming issues we will feature local people who provide services such as rod and reel repair, canvas and eisenglass covers, fiberglass repair, and the like. As usual, we always and readily welcome contributions from our members. If you would like to see someone profiled in our community services feature, and you think that members would find their services useful, please send an interview (a few paragraphs) and a digital picture (at least 300 dpi) to [frankovich@virginia.edu](mailto:frankovich@virginia.edu) so we can include it in upcoming issues.



Marv Shaffer

Our first feature is Marv Shaffer of M&M Rod and Reel Repairs. Many of you already know Marv. He has been in the fishing equipment business for over 20 years and much of the upper keys charter fleet has their gear serviced by him. Many UKFC members are also very happy with the services that he has provided. Marv's shop is at 103530 Overseas Highway inside the U-Haul facility just north of Adams Cut on the bayside. He is in the last unit on the first row next to the cut. Marv performs repairs and maintenance on conventional and spinning reels and also replaces guides, reel seats, and butt sections on all types of rods. Prices for reel service range from \$15 to \$35 depending on the size of the reel and how many replacement parts are needed. Every reel is completely disassembled and serviced - everything from the drag washers, bail roller and gears. Marv also buys, sells, and trades all types of

fishing gear. Given the poor quality of some of the new stuff out these days, Marv is a good person to check for used but still dependable US-made Penn SS series spinners that were and still are a staple of saltwater fishing. All of his used stuff has also been serviced by him before it is to be sold.

Dock Talk has asked Marv what he would recommend to UKFC anglers. He suggests that anglers rinse down all their gear immediately after use and spray WD40 on all parts including rod guides. He says that some may protest spraying WD40 on their fishing line or rod guides, but he says that those concerns are hogwash. He also recommends that everyone service their reels once a year, either by themselves, or by a professional. If any saltwater gets inside the gearbox, the grease will clump and harden as evidenced by a crank that doesn't want to turn. So next time your gear needs some service, or you are looking for good quality used rods or the superior older Penn spinners, please visit Marv and tell him that the Upper Keys Fishing Club sent you.

### **Tip Corner – Dollar Store Treasures**



Do you unrig your rods and reels before putting them away before the next trip? By re-rigging immediately prior to each trip, we can be sure that there aren't any nicks or frays in the line or rigging that will fail when fish are on. One problem with stripping the rigs prior to storage is: how to retain the springy monofilament on the reels. If you are like me and sometimes don't give much thought to that predicament, your reels may look the one depicted on the left, with line strewn out off the spool, gathered into a tangle, and some line insidiously working its way under the skirted spool onto the spindle. Inevitably, we will drag the tangle into the truck or boat and have to cut out the tangled line. This wastes not only line, but also valuable time, when bait should be rigged or the lines should be out. What's a poor angler to do? You all know what happens to rubber bands here in FLA. That's right, they melt into a gluey mess, and if that mess is on the line of your reel, count on either

discarding the last 100 feet of line, or having the line stuck together with bits of decaying rubber attached to it. Think about attempting to freeline in the current for yellowtail with that mess. There is a cheap solution: Go to the Dollar store, Walgreens, etc. and venture into the beauty section (you might find Rob S. there!) and pick up a package of those fabric-covered elastic bands that women use in their hair. They work better than rubber bands, you can get 30 of them for a buck, and when they wear out, they won't damage your line. They're also good on filler spoons!

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