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Happy New Year

The editorial staff of the Tuna Tower News wishes the entire FTC membership

A Happy New Year

We thank all who have contributed your time, expertise and input. This Year we look forward to more participation by you, the members, in continuing to make this publication the best in the fishing club community.

CLASSIFIED:

- 26' Stamas 1966 hull, Furuno Color Scope, Radio, 100 Gal. fuel tank, runs but needs work. \$4,900.00 or best offer. Contact: Dan (516) 459-6619.
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 Contact Capt. John Jutt (516) 546-2312
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Freeport Tuna Club, Inc.

Tuna Tower News

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EDITOR: CAPT. JOHN J. JUTT, SR.
Co-Editor ~ Capt. Paul Hilton
Contributor ~ Mike Sullivan
Contributing Editor ~ Capt. Lawrence Festa



Happy New Year

NEXT GM
Thursday, January 12, 2012
at 8pm
Cure Of Ars Auditorium
Merrick Avenue • Merrick
 (Between Sunrise Highway and Merrick Road)
Come on down for some club history and find out what makes this club what it is today.

At the January GM we will be swearing in our newly elected Officers and Board for 2012. Chris Squeri will start off the festivities by highlighting some FTC Milestones and Anniversaries!

President's Message

Dear Members,

I am honored to have been chosen to lead the Freeport Tuna Club during its' seventy-fifth anniversary year. I want to congratulate the new executive board, and thank them for stepping up to help guide the club this year: 1st VP Bob Pandey, 2nd VP Capt. Harry Weinblatt, Secretary Capt. William Morrogh and Treasurer John Daum. And I especially want to thank outgoing president John Rooney for his guidance in preparing me for this job and preparing the club for the challenges that lie ahead. It has been seventy-five years since our founding and as the old saying goes, we are not getting older, we are getting better—and the truth of that is on display all around us. From our beautifully refurbished marina to our rodeos and parties to our weekly get-togethers that keep everyone informed of the latest "hot" information, the Freeport Tuna Club shines in every category. But that is not the best part of our club—the best part is you, the members.

With a little over two hundred members on the books our membership is strong, and we are actively looking to add more! It is the other members that give your membership value and meaning—what you can offer to them, and what they can offer to you. Our association together makes us all stronger and wiser. We talk, swap stories, fish and socialize together, lend a hand with projects—and we all gain by the experience. The more you participate, the more you will enjoy and benefit from your membership.

My own experience with the Club illustrates what I mean. I have been a member for about twenty years. I joined in order to be around people who enjoyed fishing and being on the water as much as I do. And that is what I found during my first few years in the club. When I attended a meeting I would see lots of smiling faces, and would be included in

friendly conversations even though I didn't know any of the members involved. But it never went past that point, and I was the reason why: I was working nights, going to school and starting a family, so I was able to attend very few meetings. Because I wasn't at meetings I felt uncomfortable attending rodeos, the holiday party or other events because I didn't really know anybody well. I didn't push myself to get involved. What a mistake!

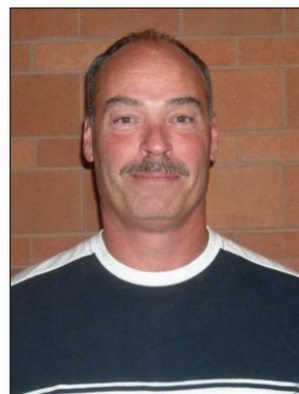
Well, school ended and the work schedule changed and I realized I was the one that had to make a move.

I went up to the president, introduced myself, and asked what I could do to help. He suggested the captains-anglers committee, and before I knew it the smiling faces became friends and associates. The more I got involved the more fun it became; and as I had more fun both my family and I enjoyed and looked forward more and more to participating in Club events. Next came a suggestion to run for the Board of Directors, then an opportunity to serve on the executive board, and now I have the privilege to serve as president of the best fishing club on Long Island! Get involved in your club, to whatever degree your schedule allows: it's the best way to enjoy your membership.

Democracy is two wolves and a lamb voting on what to have for lunch. Liberty is a well-armed lamb contesting the vote.

God Bless America.

~ President 2011 ~ Bill Toohey



~ Benjamin Franklin ~



"THE ICING ON THE CAKE" PRESERVING YOUR CATCH ICE MANAGEMENT PART 1

By Captain Lawrence J. Festa

Tuna fishing along the canyons on our continental shelf is a very challenging experience. Much has been written about "Canyon Tuna Fishing". The topics are usually about bait rigging, trolling patterns and techniques, location, and finally the hook-up and fight. However, little has been written on a very more important, basic topic – "preserving your catch - ice management." The importance of harvesting and protecting your catch at days end. Nothing is more rewarding than, once back at the dock, proudly displaying your fine catch in pristine condition. Each fish must be properly cared for starting even before the catch is boated, and immediately thereafter. This process includes gaffing, boating the fish, bleeding, collaring and, most importantly icing your catch as if it was an organ waiting to be transplanted. Even if all steps prior to icing are done correctly, without properly icing your catch, all your efforts will have been in vain. This very important aspect of tuna fishing can sometimes be overlooked during the heat of departure and the overall problem of space on the small pocket battleships that most of us use as we venture into our far reaching canyons.



To start, let's review some options that a tuna fisherman has available to him to preserve his catch, conserve his space, and manage his ice. The art of preserving ice is really not an art at all, as it requires only a good insulated container. The art is in making the best use of what you can hold. The first ingredient needed, obviously, is ice. On canyon trips, depending on the vessel's layout and capacity, the choice of ice can sometimes vary. Shaved, or crushed ice is by far the most forgiving on the catch. This form of ice can be used to carefully fill every void in the fish box and easily conforms to the shape of the catch, both inside and outside of the body cavity. Shaved ice, however, does have a quicker melting point than its hardier cousins. The second best choice is cubed ice, followed by the block ice, which is the hardest, but the most difficult to work with. Since all boats and their captains and crews are different, evaluating what works for you best is key. In some cases it may take the captain and crew a few trips to get things right. However, no matter which ice you choose, the key to returning to dock with professionally dressed tuna is in keeping only the fish you can preserve, given the amount of coolers and ice your particular boat can reasonably handle. All other fish should be released.

Your second ingredient in addition to ice in professionally preserving your catch is Kosher Salt. Kosher Salt, when added to sea water, will lower the freezing point of the water considerably. This means that when ice is added to this super-saturated brine solution, the water becomes super cold and, in turn will lower the temperature of whatever is placed in the solution to a much greater degree than if the item were placed in just ice alone. The mixture will be approximately one box of kosher salt per 150 quart cooler filled with ice and sea water. When to add this briny solution to your catch will be discussed later on.

The third ingredient is your transport containers. Usually for a canyon trip we use a series of coolers, such as Igloo or Frigibar, commercial grade insulated containers such as Xactics, canyon bags and, if you are lucky enough, a below deck fish hold. These containers come in a large assortment of sizes to suit your vessels needs. Once you have selected the combo of containers that works for your vessel it is important they do not move or slide around, as the weight of these loaded containers can be a serious problem. So make sure your containers are securely lashed to the sides of your boat. The formula next is the ice...no magic here just fill them all, except for one. The one empty cooler should be filled with all of the frozen & fresh bait needed for night fishing. Once out at sea this will then become your working,

or swing, cooler. Once the bait is removed to thaw, the working cooler can then be used to hold ice and fish as you start your fish packing out process.



Now that we have all of our ingredients assembled, let's get cooking! With space always being an issue, the proper dressing of the fish prior to packing is always an important step in the process of preserving your catch for freshness, value, and a professional dockside off loading.

Bleeding is the first and most important step in the process. When we gaff our tuna, the word is: "Head shot or no Shot!" Good gaff control is always important and sometimes an art which is hard to manage in the heat of battle. Tuna properly gaffed are easy to manage. In addition, with a well placed gaff shot, none of the outer skin covering the tuna's meat is pierced, which allows for the tuna's blood to come to the aid of the wound in an attempt to heal the damaged tissue. If the gaff is placed in the head area, you will have good control over the fish either bring them over the rail or through the transom door. Tuna gaffed in mid body can be hard to control and boat as they still possess forward mobility. A good size tuna can rip the gaff right from grip and bend the finest of gaff poles when gaffed in the body. Also keep in mind that later in the process of packing the tuna in coolers the water from melting ice will enter the gaff opening to future damage and soften the meat.

The head gaffing also gets a jump start on the bleeding process. Once on the deck it is a good idea to place a foam pad under the fish to cushion the tuna from the hard deck. Next a cut is placed in the gill area to help pump the blood from the fish as quickly as possible. The heart must continue to pump during the bleeding as once expired, the bleeding process stops, trapping the remaining blood in the fish, so it is important to bleed the tuna immediately while it is still alive. Placing a moist towel over the tuna's eyes during this part of the process is also helpful in calming the fish down and slows up the drumming on the deck. It is also important to refrain from using the wash down at this point, as it will inspire the tuna to continue drumming on the deck, which can soften and bruise the tuna's meat.

See all next month for Part II of Preserving Your Catch.....

~ Captain Lawrence J. Festa

MEMBERSHIP

We closed out the year with 208 members. One new member will be sworn in at the January meeting: Peter Monteleone. Peter is an electrical contractor and lives in Massapequa Park. He is thinking of storing his 22 Aquasport, Sea Mistress, at the club and mooring it there in 2012. Please join in welcoming Peter aboard.

Membership renewal letters were mailed out on December 1. If you do not receive one contact the membership committee at ftc1937@verizon.net. Membership dues effective January 1, 2012 are \$225 for regular members and \$250 for family members. Due to rising costs, the dues reflect a \$25 increase.

~ Mike Sullivan

A THANK YOU...

On behalf of the Members and the Board of Directors of the Freeport Tuna Club I'd like to extend a big thank you for supporting our Holiday Party with your Generous Donations from these Vendors and Members. Causeway Bait & Tackle, Freeport Marine Supply, Fred Chall Marine, EB Elliot's, Richie @ Woodcleft Fishing Station, Sea Isle Sports, Bay Park Fishing Station, South Shore Marine, Ed Faza, Chris Scarpintonio, Cora Pandey, Paul Schuber, Don Granger & Barbara and Bob Sabella. Sincerely, 1st Vice President

~ Bob Pandey

SOME THOUGHTS ON RIGGING FOR COD



We have been fortunate to see a resurgence of cod on Long Island. Montauk has enjoyed banner runs for several years with fish spreading all along the South Shore, down through Jersey all the way to Delaware. Large cows of 30 pounds plus are once again a distinct possibility on the deeper wrecks. With seabass and blackfish currently closed, many boats will be setting their sight on cod. On Long Island, most large cod are caught on rigs baited with slices of skimmer clam. Here are some observations and thoughts on effective bait rigs I have seen and used over the years.

Braid or Mono?

Braid has taken the fishing world by storm. It is durable and sensitive, it's limited stretch letting you feel every move the fish makes, which many enjoy. It's thin diameter will let you hold bottom with less lead making the use of lighter, more comfortable tackle a viable option. One downside is the hellacious tangles that can occur with braid, inevitable while deep water bottom fishing on sometimes crowded boats. There are ways to deal with this however, discussed below. Some old school sharpies still like mono for certain shallow water (less than 120 or so feet) applications, but most would agree braid is the way to go. 40-60 lb braid is very strong yet still quite thin, many good choices exist, use the brand you are comfortable with.

Assuming you are using braided line, the real question is whether or not to use a mono shock leader and if so, how long? My preference is to use a mono shock leader since it does provide a nice cushioning effect on large, rolling fish, especially considering today's faster rod tapers and high modulus (stiff) graphite and composite blanks. The use of the shock leader will confine most of your tangles to the mono leader, which will simplify and hasten un-tangling the snarls that occur low in the rigging. I like a mono shock leader about twice the length of the rod I'm fishing, which will give you a couple of turns of mono on reel with a fish at the boat. On a party boat, you might want to go longer, 20-25 feet. Cod give a good tug, so any loss of sensitivity lost due to mono leader should not be an issue. A hard finish, durable mono like Ande or Big Game, 40-60 lb will work well either as a shock leader or as your main line if you elect to go the all mono route.

To attach the mono to the braid, I prefer the uni-uni knot with the braid doubled up. The uni-uni is very simple to tie and ultra reliable. Whatever knot you choose, you should be able to tie it proficiently with cold wet hands on a pitching boat.

If you elect to go all the way with braid, and forego the shock leader, simply use a Palomar knot to attach a barrel swivel at the end of you line. With mono an improved clinch knot is more than adequate and easy to tie. Some sharp fishermen do prefer to rig directly into the shock leader or mono main line with no hardware, but most will add a barrel swivel and rig into it. If you fish braid (recommended), like to pre-tie your rigs (your choice), and use the Palomar knot to tie your swivel to the braid (recommended), you might consider leaving the barrel swivel off the top of your mono rig until after it is attached to the braid via the Palomar knot, which must be looped completely over the swivel (hard to do with the rig attached). Then simply tie your rig to the bottom of the barrel swivel via the improved clinch knot or other knot of your choice.

Single High Hook or High / Low?

On sticky offshore wrecks, with the possibility of a very large fish, a single high hook would usually be the rig of choice, set at a height of about 30-40 inches above the sinker.

Large cod will pull some line and swim around when hooked, with the high / low rig you run the risk of having the free hook getting caught in the wreck potentially costing you a large fish. Some notable Captains are adamant about the use of a single high hook on deep wrecks citing large fish lost in the past, I have seen it happen. Still, for most applications the high / low rig is favored. The low hook can be approx. 4-14 inches above the sinker, the high hook 24-40 inches off the bottom. In any case, they should be far enough apart so that the leaders or dropper loops will not snag each other as you drop your rig to the bottom.

Dropper Loops or Leaders, Standoff / Hangman's Knots?

I have fished all, each has advantages. In general, I like nicely formed, well lubricated dropper loops, about 5-10 inched in length for any of the rigs described above. The dropper are easy to tie and allow for easy baiting, allowing your slice of skimmer clam to easily slide up and over the eye of the hook without tearing up the bait. Some like a hook snelled with stiff, heavy 50-80 pound leader material since the length is easy to control, and it is very durable. Large cod sometimes take the bait deep, and can chaff the lighter line generally employed with dropper loops. On balance, the bulky snell knot does make it a bit harder to thread the clam or twister tail up and over the hook eye nicely, tearing them up a bit, a subtle yet real issue for sharp minded pool sharks. Droppers will allow you to easily add or remove colored beads or twister tails much more easily without changing rigs. These adornments sometimes make a difference, as discussed below. So, if you are proficient at tying dropper loops of various lengths, I would hang your hooks directly on them but in the end it comes down your personal preference.

If you decide to go with snelled hooks you have several choices when attaching the leader loop to your main line. You can tie short (2-4") dropper loop(s), or the sharpie preferred "standoff" or "hangmans" knot. Standoffs make for a nice presentation, but I can only recommend the use of standoff / hangmans knots when fishing a single high

hook rig. The strength of these knots, BELOW the knot (on the tag end), is questionable in my opinion, possibly jeopardizing the integrity of the lower hook, on a high low rig. If you go with snelled hooks, and like the high low rig, simply attach your snelled hooks to the droppers, loop to loop.

In any case, I see no reason to ever use a three way swivels when baiting cod on Long Island, where we fish relatively shallow water and in light current. Always add an overhand knot above your sinker loop, it is an effective breakaway and could save you a large fish or some rigging if you hang up. Whatever rig you elect to fish, check it from time to time for nicks, cuts, etc. so you won't be disappointed when you hook the big one.



Hooks and Ornaments

Gamakatsu or Mustad 5/0 - 7/0 Octopus work well. If you like a bait holder style hook, the Mustad Beak 6/0 works well, but may need some sharpening out of the box. Simple Sprout hooks were common years ago, were very effective, but are no longer manufactured by Mustad according to some recent information I've seen. I have not used circle hooks but see no reason why they would not work well, if that's your preference.

Sometimes, the addition of color to your rig seems to make a word of difference, other times it doesn't seem to matter. Whether South Shore cod fishing or Montauk open bottom fishing I will generally start with a plain rig, maybe a couple of pink/red beads on the top hook. If you don't feel like your catching your share of fish, try to observe who's catching, and what is unique about their rig (color, hook height, etc). Often, a certain color will be doing the damage, those catching may have a particular color bead(s), tube, 4-6" curly tail grub / twister tail, etc. on their line. In general, it seems cod like red and pink, white, grape, and sometimes chartreuse. Glow beads sometimes have their moments in deep water, or with slow fishing on a crowded boat.



Keep your eyes open, see what's working on any particular day and be ready to adapt if necessary. Good luck, catch them up, and be prepared to "bow to the cow" if you are fortunate enough to hook the big one. Happy New Year!

~ Paul Hilton / Emily S.

JANUARY 2012 DERBY, AWARDS & CONTESTS REPORT

*Awards Chairman: Captain Bill Morrogh
Committee Team: Captain Larry Festa,
Captain Michael Zullo*

WE HAVE THE FINAL DERBY WINNERS TO TOP OFF THE 2011 SEASON! THE AWARDS TO BE HANDED OUT AT THE JANUARY GM ARE:

Blackfish

1st	Brian Doherty	13.50	Blue Sky
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Bluefish

1st	John Kampa	18.00	Sea Quest
1st	Alan Evelyn	18.00	Sea Quest
3rd	Yukio Fujii	15.44	Just Add Water

Striped Bass

1st	Yukio Fujii	35.19	Sand Pebble
2nd	Bob Porter	33.75	Shark III
3rd	Harry Schroeder	28.80	Just Add Water

Cod

1st	Sharon Missan	10.44	Seahawk
2nd	Jim Krug	9.00	Persuader II
3rd	Jim Krug	7.50	Persuader II

LAST CALL FOR 2011 WEIGH SLIPS! IF YOU HAVE ANY WEIGH SLIPS THAT MIGHT CONTEND FOR AN ANNUAL AWARD, BRING THEM TO THE JANUARY GM. DON'T BE A HOLDOUT!E

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GOOD AND WELFARE

Our prayers and thoughts go out to the Goldstein family on the passing of Charlie's mother in law. H 516-221-6343 / C 516-652-5981. Contact phone 516-221-6343 or 516-652-5981.

~ Jeff Squeri

BULLETIN

Do you know that 70% of the members receive the bulletin by e-mail? That's over 140 members! If you are one of the 30% and would like to give email a try, send your request to ftc1937@verizon.net. And don't worry. You will still receive a paper bulletin by mail.

PROPERTY

2012 Summer contacts have been mailed out. The FTC Marina is 3 miles from the JI. Parking behind your boat, Fenced in secure yard with an electric gate with a Shower and bathroom.

Contact: Property@FTCfishing.com.



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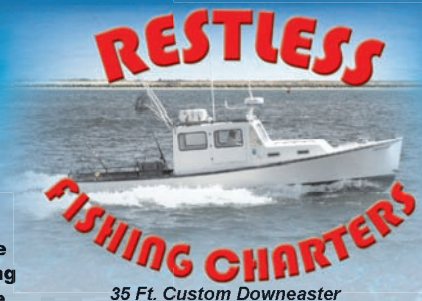
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