

Freeport Tuna Club, Inc.

TUNA TOWER NEWS

JANUARY 2019
www.ftcfishing.com



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



NEXT GM
THURSDAY, JANUARY 10
@ 7PM
FREEPORT YACHT CLUB

At the January GM we will be swearing in our newly elected Officers & Board for 2019

INCOMING PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

As your 2019 President, I would like to wish everyone a Happy and Healthy New Year, and express thanks to the membership and Board of Directors for allowing me to have such a great honor. Special thanks also to outgoing President Matt Cardone and the board of directors for all of their hard work behind the scenes that makes our club run. Special thanks is also needed to everyone that helped and participated with this year's Holiday Party, it was great to see so many old and new faces in attendance.

Participation is going to be the theme for the year, because it is what truly drives the Freeport Tuna Club. From General Meetings, Captains & Anglers, and special events... they are all successful thanks to the tireless participation from the Committee heads and members. Getting involved not only helps the club, but it builds long-lasting bonds between members - which is what makes this club so special. I urge everyone to reach out to a committee head, get involved and help continue to make the Freeport Tuna Club great. We are always looking for suggestions for improvement, please feel free to call or email me: 516-322-0030 or adambollaci@gmail.com.



Adam Bollaci

happy new year



OUT WITH 2018, IN WITH A BETTER 2019



First I'd like to wish everyone a Happy and Healthy New Year

Thinking about this report, I decided to look back at last January's fishing report for comparison. This time last year, the weather had turned frigid, with a fair amount of snow and the fishing had ground to a halt in late December. Right now, it's raining with temps pretty comfortable for January. I just heard the News12 weatherman say it should not get much colder than it is now for a "couple of weeks" due to the jet stream pattern. Rain instead of snow works for me, on Long Island anyway. Upstate... skiing is another matter. We shall see how this winter unfolds. So far so good.

2018 is now a memory, in some aspects disappointing but still held some bright spots and surprises too. A quick "barometer" up/down rehash on some of our popular species, from my vantage point on the west end. Let's start offshore. Again, looking at my report from last January, I saw that 2017 was lackluster overall from an offshore standpoint. 2018 was even worse. What does the future hold, where are all the yellowfin, and longfin? Bluefin and bigeye still make an occasional appearance in the reports, but is becoming more and more a hit or miss proposition, with a lot of misses. Sharking participation has taken a hit with the increased size limit on makos. The number of keepers taken on Long Island could be counted on two hands I'd think. The mako population may benefit but that massive size limit increase seems draconian. The past decade or so saw a boom in the number of threshers available on Long Island. It seems to be cooling off, yet they are still far more abundant then when compared to the early days of Long Island sharking. What caused the boom, did the population rise, did the migration shift, did the resurgence of bunker have an effect? What is happening now? All good questions. Green bonito, false albacore and mahi are abundant. I'm not aware of as many skipjack as in the past.

Striped bass maybe took a step backwards from 2017 but still pretty good overall with a short but productive fall season on the west end. Big fish were common, 30s and 40s were plentiful with a healthy mix of smaller fish available too. The striped bass barometer is steady. For better or worse, bluefishing is a mere shell of what it had been in the past. Weakfish have made some appearances but nothing like the banner years of long ago. Surprise number one was the number of cobia taken on Long Island, in numbers not see around here in my lifetime, maybe ever.



Many Cobia were caught on Long Island in 2018

In my opinion, Fluke continue to decline. It took a while for the west end ocean fluking to finally get respectable this year. Seabass fishing remains good, with the population apparently at or near an all time high. The offshore boats finished the seabass season on a very high note with limits of nice fish. The porgy population seems healthy and continues to rise. Many wrote off blowfish and kingfish as a thing of the past. They have made quite a resurgence, so you just never know. If only winter flounder

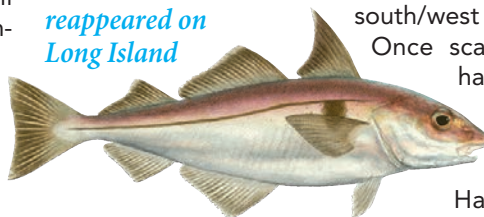
would come back, they are sorely missed around these parts.

Blackfishing appears to be on a slippery slope, especially in our neck of the woods. The east end still has good fishing, but the west end is a far cry from the past. Good days are possible, just not as frequent. The only first hand report came from Bob Bohlert back in December. Bob took his Joint Effort to 17 Fathoms with a crew of 5 they landed 7 keepers to 8 lbs. Nice going Bob. I was able to sneak out a few times for local blackfish. My fishing was limited to mostly short trips on some local wrecks and Hempstead Reef. East winds aplenty and fishing was generally slow, limits being very tough to come by.

Fishing at 17 and deeper wrecks proved more productive, with several notable fish taken in the 14 to 19 pound range. These outsized fish are becoming more common, some theories have the potentially larger sized fish from the southern population shifting a bit northward. New Jersey's extensive artificial reef program may be partly responsible, very interesting. Every very large (teen+) blackfish I hear of seems to be taken on white crab. A word to the wise should be sufficient. It is good to see Long Island reefs receiving a large amount of rubble and debris. As our wrecks continue to age and break down, the artificial reefs become more and more important.

With the closing of striped bass, seabass, and blackfish comes a focus on COD. Montauk enjoyed quality mixed bag bottom fishing with blackfish, seabass, porgies, cod and large numbers of HADDOCK! According to Capt. Paul Forsberg, haddock have not been caught in numbers around Montauk since the 1950s. Another boat had some on a wreck south of Shinnecock. Haddock were caught as far south/west as the mudhole long ago. Once scarce up north, Haddock have come back strong and may be increasing their range. We have had the bait to support them. Haddock are great eating and would take the pressure off of other species. It will be interesting to see if a haddock fishery reemerges on Long Island or if it's an isolated occurrence.

Haddock have reappeared on Long Island



At least one well known west end boat has been doing pretty well with codfish locally. They appeared seemingly out of nowhere. I say that because not many made the reports as by-catch while black fishing. My boat in in the water and ready to go. I'm itching, just need the weather and schedule to align.

That's a wrap for now. Please share your results with our membership. Please send reports and pictures to me for inclusion in your club bulletin. Thanks to all who contribute.

Email your reports to philton@optonline.net or text/call me at 516.721.8907

Paul Hilton FV Emily S

PROPERTY MANAGER'S REPORT

There are a few outstanding payments due for winter storage so please send in your payment as soon as possible. **After December 15, 2018, mail your winter storage payment directly to: FTC Property Manager | PO Box 5 | Freeport, NY 11520.**

The rate for 2019 will be **\$79 a foot with no minimum. All owners leasing a slip will be charged an additional \$175 if storing a trailer on the property.** Freezers are \$175. **A deposit of \$300 is required with your signed lease.** In order to secure your slip for the 2019 season your deposit and signed lease **must be received on or before February 20, 2019.** You will receive two invoices for the balance owed, **one due on April 1st and the**

second payable on May 31st. Before your vessel can be in the Marina you will need to supply an updated insurance policy to the Property Business Manager. Please let us know if you are not renewing your lease so we can quickly determine which slips will be available. Our goal is to keep the marina full!

If you have questions or concerns about the club property you can see me at the GM or Captains and Anglers. You can always contact me by phone at 917-517-6018

Larry Risi

PROPERTY COMMITTEE

The new bubble system is up and running. As of this writing there are 50 boats on land and 3 boats still in the water. Chris and his men at Travelers Marine are to be applauded for the hauling and positioning of the boats so as to maximize our storage capacity. THANKS CHRIS AND CREW! Issues with the cameras are being addressed and we hope to have things working as planned in the near future.

Your Property Committee,

*Larry Risi Bob Sabella
Don Granger Charlie Goldstein*

ENTERTAINMENT

I am looking for quality speakers and possible vendors and associations to attend our GMs. It is my goal to bring entertaining and informative people to our amazing club. I am also looking for assistance from any member that would like to assist in this effort.

Tight lines and fair seas,

Bruce C. Forster

(212) 925-7405 - (516) 887-8953

The Freeport Tuna Club

wishes to thank all the contributing Members and Businesses for their very generous time and donations and for making our annual Christmas Party a success.



DERBIES, AWARDS & CONTESTS

Awards Chairman: Ray Geiger | Committee: Bob Benzenberg, Harry Sbaschnig & Captain Bill Morrogh

The 2018 season is officially over. On behalf of our club, I wish to congratulate and thank all of you members who participated this past year. We received over 170 of your weight slips this past year. Well done to all of you!!

*** NOTE ON ANNUAL AWARDS ***

If you're holding weigh slips that you feel are eligible for consideration for Annual Awards, you must get them in to the Committee by **MONDAY, JANUARY 14th!!!!!!** No weigh slips will be considered after this due date.

BLACK SEABASS

1st Place: Mike Zullo 4.00 lbs. F/V Magic Too
2nd Place: Mike Zullo 3.00 lbs. F/V Magic Too

STRIPED BASS

1st Place: John Kampa 48.75 lbs. F/V Breaking Away
2nd Place: Daniel Pollera 38.75 lbs. F/V Nan-Sea
3rd Place: Paul Noto 38.10 lbs. F/V Rocketfish

BLUEFISH

1st Place: John Kampa 19.63 lbs. F/V Breaking Away

Happy New Year to all !!!

Best Fishes —

Ray Geiger

STRIPER DIARIES | EPISODE 9



WINTER BLUES

- For so many, myself included, winter-time can be depressing. The boat is shrink wrapped, my favorite

hobby is over and weekends consist of eating and laying around. Rather than sitting and watching re-runs of Wicked Tuna (although that is fun) take this opportunity to GET READY for spring!!!



example, are you flares outdated? Do you need new life jackets? Did you renew your Sea Tow membership. Did you remember to tell your wife opening day starts in four months (just kidding). With all these checklists in place, you will be ready enjoy the winter boat show, fishing flea markets and seminars that take place. It will also make the winter-blues go by faster

Until next year, Tight lines.

Capt. Barbara Solomon
F/V Legal Limits

I am fortunate enough to have a heated garage. This is where I spend most of my time on freezing cold weekends. First thing I do every winter is an inventory search. Naturally, this includes plugs, metal, hooks, line, sinkers, terminal tackle, boxes, rods and reels. You must spread out ALL of your tackle and examine the hardware. (For those without a heated garage, the dining room table is a great option). It may sound crazy, but I open all of my Plano boxes and examine each lure. You would be surprised how many hooks need sharpening or replacing. A good set of split-ring plyers is a must for this task. I even re-organize my plugs by style. For example, darters, needle fish, pencil poppers, and metals are separated and placed in Plano boxes and labeled with a sharpie. My bucktails (of which I have hundreds) are placed on a scale and weighed. Yes, I just said I weigh each and every bucktail. I then place each bucktail in a zip-lock baggie and label the weight. This is crucial when fishing. When the bite is red hot and I want to grab a 2 oz bucktail, there is no guessing.

You also need to spread out all of your Tuna/Mahi/Skip Jack/Bonita trolling gear. Check leaders which get frayed over time. Feathers get damaged and snap swivels may need to be replaced. Review all of the inventory. You will be amazed at how many of your "favorite" lures require some serious work, or duplicate lures/colors to be purchased.

Next up, fishing rods. I like to have one or two set-ups at least for each species. For example, I have two (2) rods for inshore fluke fishing, two (2) rods for Sea bass, two (2) black fish outfits and so on and so forth. Check the poles for cracks and loose guides or anything else that may impair your chances of landing a fish. I recently found a guide cracked on my favorite rod. A trip to Sea Isle this winter is a must for a repair. FYI - do those things now, as a rod repair in winter will be much quicker than if you drop it off in the spring.

Reels. I have an addiction to buying reels, and I spend winter time fantasizing about outfitting my boat with all new reels. However, instead I spend my time figuring out which reels need to be re-spooled and/or serviced. Replacing fishing line every season is an absolute necessity on reels you use often. I keep a log with line test and date of change. This way I know exactly when each reel was serviced and replaced.

Safety gear. I also check my safety gear during the winter and I make a list of things which need to be replaced. For

GOOD & WELFARE

Everyone must be OK. No news is good news

Jeff Squeri 516-652-5981

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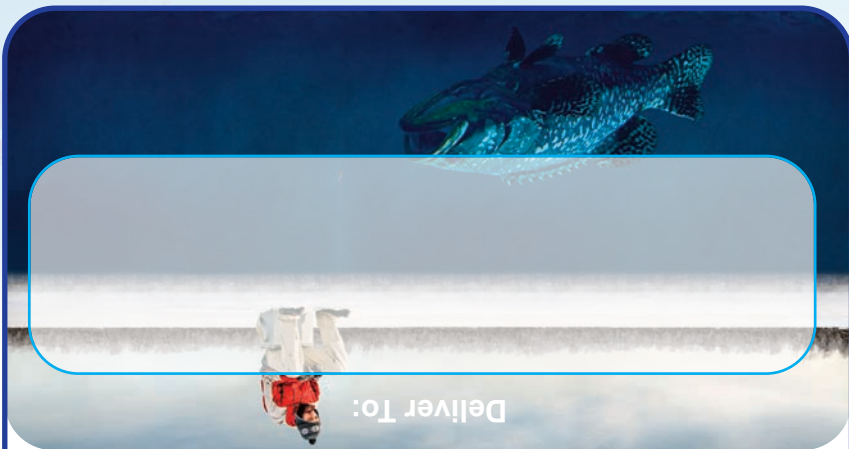
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Final 2019 updates to be included in next issue

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**If you have not yet sent in
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**If you have not received
your membership
renewal letter please
contact Gene Schettini**

**We appreciate your prompt
attention to this matter**



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.*