

## TEAM CAPTAIN'S REPORT – SHELLY BEACH INTERCLUB - 23/24 July 2011

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Shelly Beach hosted the annual Shelly Beach Interclub over the past weekend. The event is always well attended by clubs from all over SA and this year there were 12 teams competing. The competition is standard 10kg IGFA with the SADSAA scoring system, minimum weight for Tuna is 6kg and other game fish is 3kg.

The weather forecast looked promising for Saturday (moderate NE winds and small swell) and Sunday looked threatening with a moderate to strong SW coming through around mid day (perfect tuna conditions!). The briefing went well and it was good to catch up with some of the "usual suspects" to talk tactics over a few beers. This year there was a good selection of very experienced skippers in the boat draw and we were pleased that we drew Mark Bennett on "Tacklebox" for Day 1 and PJ Botha on "Watt4" for Day 2.

After an early launch on Saturday the boats all left backline safely and headed out to find fish. Most teams opted to start off with some jigging to try and get species early, others started trolling lures looking for tuna and bonnies. Our game plan consisted of jigging on several pinnacles and ledges around Protea Reef to try and get a small kingfish, amberjack or tropical yellowtail above minimum weight and then move out to the tuna grounds to chase weight on the yellowfin.

Apart from a few knocks on a white squid jig and whipping spoon we boated no fish. The showings were there but the strong S-N current and low water temp gave the fish lockjaw on the jigs.

By 9.30am we moved out of the Protected Area (Red Zone) and headed south of the Southern Pinnacle pulling rapalas and feathers. As the NE picked up to 12 knots we got our first yellowfin on a Halco it was a small fish around 5kg. We quickly got 3 more similar fish and then headed off to start our chumming drift. With a restricted bait allocation of 3 x 5kg boxes of sards and 5 hours of time left we had to be seriously disciplined with our chumming.

We settled onto a good drift and within 20 minutes we had a tuna of 7.6kg in the hatch. The same drift produced many more strikes (we paid a lot of tax!) over the next 2 hours and by lunchtime we had another Tuna of 16kg as well as 2 bonnies around 6kg each. We finished the afternoon with a triple strike of bomber YFT of which two were lost (one burnoff on another teams lines and the other taxed). Piet fought his fish exceptionally well on the 10kg line class and managed to get his fish to the boat but it sadly got taxed right on the end of the tail by a monster Johnnie! The fish eventually weighed 18.6 kg but was disqualified due to mutilation. After a wet ride home into the NE we looked forward to seeing the other teams' fish at the weigh in.

We weighed our 2 tuna of 7.6kg & 16kg and the bonnie of 4.2kg. This put us in 7th overall for the day - we needed that 18.6kg to have boosted our score. Other teams did well with a few big tuna, bonnies and the odd amberjack. The Durban guys scored a luck fishing off Bliksem IV they managed 3 YFT over 17kg (biggest 20.4kg), a bonnie and an 8kg AJ that doubled their points and put them way out front for the day.

Sunday dawned as a pearler but the promise of the big SW had the teams planning for a short day. Our boat draw for day 2 was PJ Botha on Watt IV (the lucky boat that won the Shelly Bonanza this year so things looked promising!). We stuck to our game plan of early jigging but we got blown all over the place by the 15 knot SW and nothing wanted to eat our jigs. We made an early move to the drift and started chumming - the restriction on bait for the last day was only 2 x 5kg boxes! We found fish early starting with a 6kg Yellowfin, then I got one of 12kg. Good start. The conditions stabilised by mid morning and aside from getting absolutely

pestered by the flocks of birds eating our chum and chunk baits the tuna were around and some size specimens as well. We had a golden hour around 11am with lots of pulls from good sized Yellowfin. I had an absolute screamer take on its first run before settling down and after 15min we gaffed a nice fish close to 17kg. By 12pm PJ Jnr had one of 15kg which he fought very well to avoid the taxman. We then paid tax properly. We lost 4 fish of around 15-18kg to a massive Zambezi who had camped out under the boats on the drift. Lines up was called at 13h00 and we headed home. We weighed 5 fish for the day (16.8kg, 11.8kg, 15kg, 6kg and a bonnie of 4.6kg).

Other teams also battled the sharks and tackle failure on the last day and despite a few fish around 12-15kg nothing major was weighed. Consensus was that the taxman owned the day with many good fish being taxed during the fight. On the positive side the Yellowfin were around in numbers and that is what the Shelly Beach Interclub is famous for.

In the end our second day's effort boosted us into 2nd overall and I was fortunate enough to receive Top Angler for 4 yellowfin tuna.

Once again it was a great comp and a big thanks must go to the committee for organising the event and it was nice to see some familiar faces again. The comp is also good practice for the North Coast boys who get to put away their couta gear and come press some proper fish on short sticks and 10kg line....!!

Some pics:

