



Brisbane Sportfishing Club Inc.

PO Box 1022, Foritude Valley, QLD, 4006

www.brisbanesportfishingclub.com.au

Australia Day Marlin Chase

By Jeremy Arnold

With strong SE winds forecast for Australia Day, it was an easy decision to postpone this event to the following Sunday, and what a glorious day it turned out to be. W-SW winds less than 5 knots early, then 5-10 knots of S-SE during the morning and around 15 knots E in the early afternoon. There was a good size swell of around 1.5 – 2m running, but it was barely noticeable with the glassy seas.

At 5.30 am we met up at the NE corner of Wavebreak Island. Tony Dolby was onboard *Shortbill* with Mike and Jon, Damon and Steve were onboard *Hard Drive* with Dave Marsh, Rob Amos and Col were in Rob's 4.5 m Quinnie Lazeabout *Jenny III*, and I was onboard *Barralundee* with Darryl. Jim Karydas and Steve Barber on *Sirocco* wanted to try to catch a feed first and were already out on the reef.

It took us about 20 minutes to reach the 50 m line East of the Seaway, and the outriggers were positioned, lures set, and teasers dropped in. Experience showed here with *Shortbill* completing the job in only a minute or two, while the rest of us took quite a bit longer. We all followed *Shortbill* as she zigzagged her way North and then worked over an area which had produced fish the previous weekend, but no fish were raised and no bait was to be seen. About 8.30 am a decision was made to head South to Surfers, so the gears was pulled in and then reset about 30 minutes later and we then proceeded to troll South.



Unfortunately, only two of the boats had VHF radio, and no channel had been decided on for 27 MHz (and mobile phones were either off or out of range), so there were some problems communicating during the day. *Hard Drive* lost contact with *Shortbill* and headed out to Spot X in around 70 m of water, and Dave Marsh connected to a nice black of 70-80 kg. Unfortunately the line parted after about 10 minutes and their only other strike for the day was a little striped tuna. *Sirocco* got onto a patch of bottom fish, and put together their bag limit of squire and some parrot and trag jew.

Shortbill, *Jenny III* and *Barralundee* found some scattered patches of bait off Surfers and about 9.30 things began to get interesting. We each had several hits, but the small blacks were difficult to hook on this day. I had two strikes for one hookup but the line parted after only a few seconds. The line did appear to have some abrasion on it and it just shows that your gear must be in top shape for billfish as any weakness may result in lost fish and lures etc. Darryl had two strikes also and both his fish were successfully tagged.

Shortbill raised the most fish, but only managed to brig one to the boat to tag. So close, yet so far for Tony who played a fish for 15 minutes only to have it throw the lure close to the boat! Rob probably tagged the biggest marlin for the day at around 30 kg (**Pictured above**) and later trolled up a feed of spotties close to the Seaway before going back in.

Thanks to Jon and Mike for the talk at the club meeting and leading the 'hunt' on the club trip. It was a great day and shows that given good weather, even small tinneys can get into the billfish action. It was a shame that more members weren't interested in coming along on this trip as there were plenty of seats available for additional crew if they had been required.



Sport Conservation Integrity

