

PAKULAS DOMINATE IN *HOT* HERVEY BAY FISHIN' ACTION!

The couple of months after Christmas provided the Olsen's with a fantastic opportunity to 'run in' the new 7.2m Kevlcat "ReelSport" in the pristine waters to the north of Fraser Island.

While the wind fairly blew for the couple of weeks around Christmas, lighter winds and calm seas later in January and February gave them a real chance to

explore the full potential of this fishing paradise. It was simply too difficult to compress all the fantastic images and experiences into one 'story', so for the first time in F&B, we're going to do a 'photo essay'.

Sit back and relax as we let Damon Olsen and his pictures tell the reel story about Summer in this remarkable place called Hervey Bay.





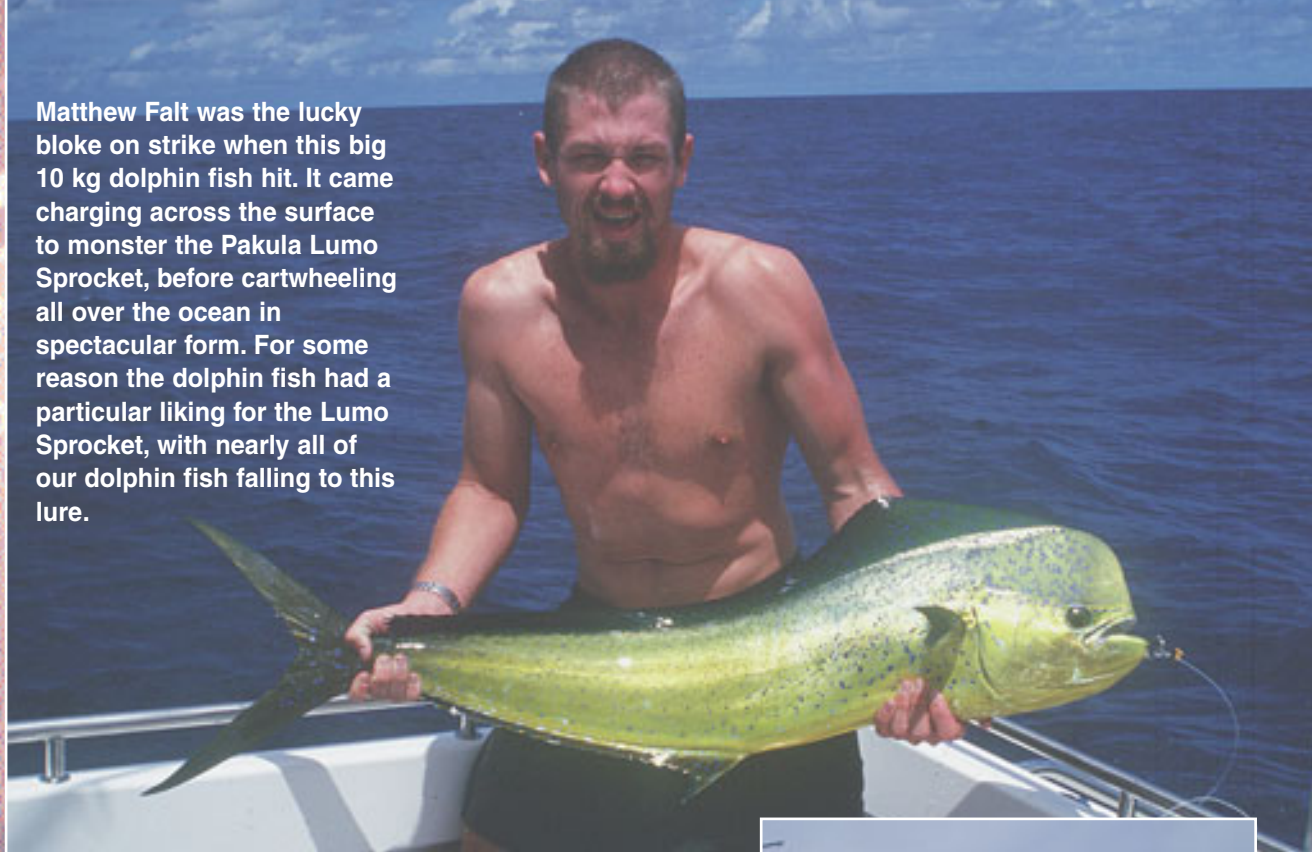
John displays quite a large and brightly coloured coronation trout caught bottom fishing around the deeper water of Sandy Cape Shoal.

This is how we entertained ourselves in the middle of the day when the billfish went a bit quiet. We'd have 4-5 drifts across the edge of the shelf to the NE of the Breaksea Lightship, and every drift would see us hook onto good fish of this size. Of course, the sharks could be a bit of a problem, sometimes eating every hooked fish on the way up. This time it was Ben with a 7 kg knobby, Quinn and myself only managed 4 kg pearlies on this drift. Certainly sounds like we were doing it tough - pulling 7 kg knobbies out of 120 m just to take a break from catching billfish - yeah right . . !

A double hook-up on rainbow runners. These brightly coloured speedsters were taken trolling Pakula's on the big ledges around the lightship bommie. It was quite amazing to see these fish schooled up and feeding just like tuna all around the bommie.



Matthew Falt was the lucky bloke on strike when this big 10 kg dolphin fish hit. It came charging across the surface to monster the Pakula Lumo Sprocket, before cartwheeling all over the ocean in spectacular form. For some reason the dolphin fish had a particular liking for the Lumo Sprocket, with nearly all of our dolphin fish falling to this lure.



John Olsen with a nicely coloured striped tuna which fell to the Express coloured Pakula. These little tuna (or "jelly beans" as they are better known), are prolific in the waters to the east of the Lightship. And they are just about number one on the menu for the big black, blue and striped marlin that hunt in these waters.



Ben with a typical Rooney's point spaniard, taken trolling only 100 m from the point in about 20 m of water. On a particular part of the tide at a certain time of day, with that lure set long out the back, we just about knew for sure that we'd end up with a spaniard in the boat. That lure, by the way, is the fluoro pink/white C-Lures 'Outsider' model, which in my opinion, is one of the best mackerel and wahoo lures ever hung over the back of a boat.

Hervey Bay



Above: One of the little red “bullseyes” taken at night on a bait jig.

Right: Ben with a large golden trevally taken on a purple/gold Pakula while trolling around the schools of little red fish known as ‘bullseyes’. The trevally, which were feeding on the balled up bullseyes, were prolific throughout January and February in the area just to the south of Rooney’s Point. The author was hooked up to a couple of these XOS trevally on fly and spin gear, but both fish proved too big for the light tackle, busting off in the end.



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Damon shows off a reasonable green job fish which ate a lumo cockroach trolled to the south of Sandy Cape Shoal.



This is what we call bait up this way. What was that, you don't believe me? Well, it was caught on a bait jig! This is what we caught on bait jigs at the reefs around Rooney's Point. Hooking 3 or 4 of these on a jig is more than just a bit of fun for the kids!



Above: Here's something you don't see every day. This is a beautifully coloured baby sailfish which was caught on a pink Pakula Mosquito just north of Wathumba Creek. Tim was nearest the rod when the sail grabbed the lure in only 8 metres of water. If you think that is shallow water, you're right! Sometimes you have to actually troll over the weed beds to catch these little billfish. Local charter boat 'Obsession' has caught several black marlin and sailfish in some pretty shallow water, which goes to show that it wasn't just a fluke.

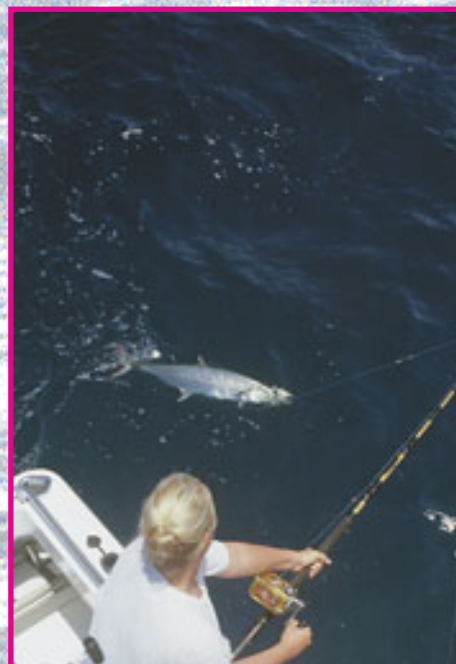
It must be lunchtime again! Tim and Ben struggling to beat the noahs in an attempt to get a couple of nice midday knobbies to the surface. And for all you southerners sitting there drooling, this *really is* how we spent an hour or two in the middle of the day-*every day!* No kidding, all it took to be hooked up to a big knobby was to drop a pillie over the side; the fishing really is that good.





Ben display's a hefty 'jack caught by the author while fishing an afternoon session at the southern gutter.

Emily Olsen with a 10 kg spaniard she caught whilst trolling aboard *Reel Sport* just north of Wathumba Creek, in only 10 m of water, on a Pakula Lumo Cockroach. This fish was taken while the wind was at 25 kn from the SE and as you can see, it is relatively calm in the background - such is the beauty of Wathumba Creek, where good fish can be caught in pretty average weather.



John and Ben hold up a chunky black marlin caught by the author while trolling on the shelf to the east of the Lightship.



Left: Matthew's first black marlin tail walking in spectacular fashion at our favourite spot north of the Lightship.

Above: *The Fish Bite Back* . . . here, Ben demonstrates how not to remove the hooks from a little black. Ben subsequently informed us that having even a little black marlin clamp down on his fingers was quite a painful experience - and from the look on his face, I'm inclined to believe him!

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Reader's Info: Important Facts About HERVEY BAY

To fish the waters between Wathumba Creek and the Breaksea Lightship, the best launching point is the Urangan Boat Harbour. Although it is probably slightly further to go to the Lightship from Urangan than from Bundaberg, the trip up the inside of Fraser Island from Urangan sees about 60% of the distance covered in protected waters.

Unless you have a boat with a very large range, in the order of 300 miles, fishing up around the Lightship and beyond is not really a proposition. From Urangan, it is a 220km return trip to the Lightship, and you are at least 30 miles from Fraser Island. It really is pretty wild country. But most larger trailer boats should have the capacity to fish out around Sandy Cape Shoal and some of the closer reefs around Sandy Cape. Fishing over the Breaksea Spit usually involves crossing one of the bars, but I'm not even going to try to tell you where these are or how to cross them.

Probably the best way to tap into the true game and sportfishing potential of these really distant places is to charter Rodney March's 40ft O'Brien named 'Obsession'. Rod really knows where to find the fish in these waters, and it is much easier and safer than doing it yourself.

If reef fishing is your fancy, there are 5 or 6 good boats in Hervey Bay that fish out around the Shelf. I really think the reef fishing in these waters is as good as any in the country, and all of the boats constantly catch heaps of fish.

The Pakula Connection

These 4 lures proved to be the most successful styles and colours during our couple of months around Fraser Island. It seems pretty clear that Peter Pakula has by far the best and most effective range of skirted trolling lures in Australia, if not the

world. He puts a lot of effort into each lure to make sure they all swim perfectly. By the way, the sailfish seemed to prefer the Express Chugger. When it was trolled flat on the long side, it was absolute dynamite. The lures are, from top to bottom:

- 1 Purple Fuzz Mosquito
- 1 Pillie Coloured Mosquito
- 1 Small Lumo Sprocket
- 1 Express Chugger



Some of the better known boats to try contacting would be the *Tasman Venture II*, *Seaspray*, *Hombre*, *Golden Phoenix* or *Summer Bay*. And I do apologise to anybody I left out.

There are quite a few other things worth pointing out about fishing and boating in this area, so it is probably quicker just to list them in point form:

1 It is a good idea to use the radio to log on and off with the Volunteer Marine Rescue group in Hervey Bay (VMR466 on VHF channel 73, for close in use, and 22 for up the top of the island) or in Bundaberg (VMR488 on VHF channel 22). Sometimes when up at the Lightship it is easier to contact VMR488. The reason I have only listed VHF channels is because when you get up to

Wathumba and beyond the 27Mhz is completely useless!

1 If you are lucky enough to catch any spanish mackerel in Platypus Bay, which is the area from Rooney's Point to Moon Point, these should be returned to the water as they pose a threat of giving ciguatera poisoning if eaten.

1 There are several good anchorages available in the lee of Fraser in the prevailing winds. Wathumba Creek provides an all weather anchorage and can usually be entered from about 2hrs either side of high tide and provides an excellent anchorage. In a south easterly wind it is also possible to get very good shelter anchored off the mouth of Wathumba, or anchored on the northern side of Rooney's Point. In just about any sort of

northerly breeze, the southern side of Rooney's usually provides a very good anchorage.

1 Fresh water, toilets and cold showers are available on the southern side of Wathumba Creek. It is also possible to easily drive your 4WD to the southern side of the creek.

1 There is a new 3 lane launch ramp/pontoon complex now located down the south west corner of the Urangan Boat Harbour with at least room for 100 cars and trailers to park.

1 Unleaded and diesel fuel is available at 2 different locations on the water in the harbour. Usually around 68 cents per litre.

F&B