

ANGLER'S ALMANAC

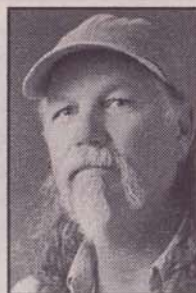
75 Spots Wins Tourney

Capt. Chet Jennings reports fishing for redfish south of Cockroach Bay has been hot. He stated most of the fish have been over the 27-inch slot. He also continues to catch big trout and says the catch and release action on snook is about as good as it gets for this time of year.

My first observation on the recent closure of snook season is many anglers have apparently turned their attentions elsewhere. Catch and release action on snook is still hot, but the holes are a lot less crowded. On my last few trips we caught some big redfish in the mangrove roots south of Bishop Harbor, but more fish broke off than we put in the boat. Jacking redfish out of structure calls for stiff rods and heavier line than what I like to use on the flats. In fact it's one of two occasions where I pre-

fer to use 20-pound microfilament. The other is for toothy Spanish mackerel.

John Oliverio of Brandon called me to report that Team Power Pole won the Times Union Redfish Roundup Tournament held in Jacksonville in April. Oliverio fished with Greg Watts, professional redfish tour champion, and Capt. Bill Pitman of Amelia Island. This was a "spot" tournament, meaning that the redfish caught with the most spots wins the tournament. There were 397 boats entered to compete for \$3,000 in cash and a \$2500 gift certificate to Bass Pro Shops. Fifteen minutes into the tournament, Oliverio's team hooked a 21-inch redfish on a Zara Spook. They counted 75 spots on the fish and headed straight back to the dock, confident that they could not expect to do



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Columnist

better. That was the case at day's end; the second runner up fish had only 21 spots. Now that's what I call lucky.

Capt. Nick Winger called me to report tarpon are thick at the Sunshine Skyway Bridge. So one Sunday, Capt. Chet Jennings and I accompanied Winger in his boat to the south end of the bay in quest of tarpon. We never saw a single tarpon hookup amongst what must have been hundreds of boats. Even the mackerel bite was slow.

On our way back home,

TIDES

TODAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
H 6:43 a.m.	L 12:12 a.m.	L 1:08 a.m.	L 2:09 a.m.
L 9:13 a.m.	H 4:21 p.m.	H 5:16 p.m.	H 6:24 p.m.
H 3:36 p.m.	L	L	L
L	H	H	H
SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	Average Tampa Bay water temperature at press time was 84°
L 3:10 a.m.	L 4:07 a.m.	L 4:59 a.m.	
H 11:00 a.m.	H 11:20 a.m.	H 11:42 a.m.	
L 2:00 p.m.	L 4:01 p.m.	L 5:26 p.m.	
H 7:48 p.m.	H 9:23 p.m.	H 11:00 p.m.	

Capt. Jennings caught and released a magnificent 34-inch snook at one of the holes in Bishop Harbor. We saw plenty of big snook, and the 34-inch cap on the slot limit seems to be working.

Hopefully, the newly extended snook season closure and the reduction to a one-fish limit will see slot-sized fish on the increase. Snook season closed on May 1, and it will be catch and release only for snook fishermen until Sept. 1.

In local fishing news, Ruskin Bait and Tackle Shop has a

new owner. Doug Fox took over the popular bait shop on April 1. Fox moved here from Hollywood, where he was an actor. Dick Worden is going to stay on at the bait shop as general manager.

Capt. Mel Berman will be in town for the SouthShore Fishing Tournament to broadcast his popular fishing show live from Bahia Beach Marina, and I will co host the show with him. The show airs on 970 WFLA AM radio May 18. The catch and release tournament

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