



### 2011 SGDSAA Sailfish Theory

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### Facts about Sailfish

- Sailfish are exciting fish, combined with beauty and power.
- Fast growing: (4-5 ft) in a single year, averaging 10-12ft.
- Weight: 15-40kgs.
- Fastest fish in the ocean: clocked at 110km/h.
- Generally found closer to land than other billfish, seeming to prefer areas surrounding coral reefs.
- A migratory species travelling in small, loose schools.
- Feed on the surface or at mid-depths.
- Inquisitive by nature.
- Highly prized game fish with incredible jumps.
- Rapidly turns its body light blue with yellowish stripes when excited.
- They're not good table fare. Often they're caught, tagged and released because their meat is tough and tasteless.

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### Individual setup

- Rod, Reel and Line
  - Shimano BeastMaster 70 Medium Heavy
  - Shimano TLD 20/25
  - 10kg-15kg Ande IGFA Tournament Hi-Vis Yellow
- Drag set to 30% of line class




- Terminal tackle
  - 1m double line - Bimini
  - 3m wind-on leader to clip swivel
  - 1m leader to the lure

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### Individual setup


- Goodie bag
  - Lures
  - Spare hook sets
  - Spare wind-on leaders
  - Leader material
  - Extra clip swivels
  - Hook sharpener
  - Knot tying tool



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### Individual setup


- Other
  - Clothing - hat, shirt, shorts, shoes
  - Reputable set of polarised sun glasses
  - Gimbal styled bucket
  - Set of Pliers – long nose
  - Knife
  - Gloves
  - Camera
  - Bill grabbing pole
  - De-hooker



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### Lures


- Soft plastic or hard headed
- Face – slant, flat, pointed, star



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### Colours


- Rule: Overcast – dark colours / Clear day – bright colours
- Top single tone colours.
  1. Pink
  2. Purple
  3. Black
  4. White or Pearl
  5. Chartreuse or luminous
  6. Blue
  7. Red
- Top combination colours
  1. Pink with: white, red, purple, blue and black
  2. Purple with black, red, blue, pink and white
  3. Black with purple, red, pink, and blue
  4. White with pink, red, blue and purple
  5. Blue with white, pink, purple and black
  6. Red with black, purple, white and pink
  7. Chartreuse with green, orange and yellow



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### Hooks

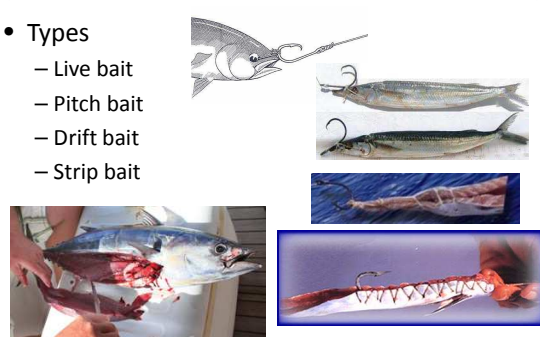
- Must be SHARP
- Mustad Stainless Steel Salmon 95160
- Single
- Chain gang
- Double stiff rig 90° or 180°



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### Bait

- Types
  - Live bait
  - Pitch bait
  - Drift bait
  - Strip bait



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### Strip bait / Belly shine



- With a sharp filleting knife cut through the skin, from in front of the pectoral fins along the "shiny" belly all the way to just behind the anal vent. Turn the fish around and cut the other side.

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### Strip bait / Belly shine



- A properly cut belly shine

Strip bait / Belly shine



- In this demonstration a smallish bonito was used, only two strips were able to be cut from the belly in this example. In the above picture the pectoral bone was halved in the middle to make two usable strips.

Strip bait / Belly shine



- Trim the strips further by cutting off excess skin and flesh, and shaping the bait into a 'tail'.

Strip bait / Belly shine



- This size strip is made for 6/0 hooks. 5/0 may be shorter and 7/0 can be slightly longer than shown.

Strip bait / Belly shine



- When rigging a strip bait the grain of the flesh must run towards the 'tail' of the strip to avoid the flesh from washing out.

Strip bait / Belly shine



- Secure a length of flat wax or crochet wool (1m - 1.5m) to the shank of the back hook with a clove hitch and tie securely off with a couple of simple overhand "granny" knots.
- Trim the tag end. Measure the hook trace to the bait strip length. The eye of the front hook must be at the top of the strip. Insert the point of the back hook from the fish's side, and out the skin side.

Strip bait / Belly shine



- Wrap the strip around the shank of the back hook, and start wrapping the thread or wax tightly around the shank of the back hook towards the front hook. Notice the 5mm wrapping gaps.

### Strip bait / Belly shine



- Wrap the strip around the front hook and continue towards the eye and then tie off securely with a couple of overhand "granny" knots and trim the tag ends.

### Strip bait / Belly shine



- Slip a sailfish lure onto the leader line and over the top eye to complete the bait.

### Boat setup – Skiboat

- Rod holders
- Outriggers
- Teasers
- Ease of movement on the boat & setup



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### Outriggers

The advantages of outriggers are:

1. Get lures outside the boat's wash into clear water
2. The increase in the angle gets lures to work "harder"
3. Minimises tangling as the rigger lines are higher and further back, so that the flat lines can easily run under the rigger lines

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### Teasers

- Boat is the biggest teaser
- Can be run off the outriggers or transom
- Usually string of birds / squid
  - Windy day – replace with a daisy chain
  - Beware of a sailfish's bill becoming entangled in the teaser (80lb – 100lb leader material)
- Ease of movement on the boat & setup
  - Use teaser reels to best position teasers
  - Un-cluttered deck
  - Easy to get to rods



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### Setting a spread on a Skiboat

- Generally 6 rods
  - 2 x Wide rods (outriggers)
  - 1 x Shotgun (centre rigger)
  - 2 x Flat lines (short)
  - 1 x Centre line
- Rotation amongst 4 people
  - 1 crew member drives the boat
  - Each crew member has a set of rods
    - 1 x long line & 1 x short line
  - Rotate every half hour
  - On strike for 1.5hrs before taking a 1/2hr break



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### Important pointers to note

3 vital keys to enhancing the performance of your lure

**Key 1: Speed**

- Higher speed equals bigger bubble trail and surface action.
- Lower speed, less bubble trail and surface action.
- Sailfish: Troll at speed of 6 – 7 knots.

**Key 2: Distance of lure from boat**

- The distance between the boat and the lure will affect the lures' action and bubble trail significantly.
- Closer to the boat gives the lure a more pronounced action whilst trolling further from the boat will create a smaller bubble trail.

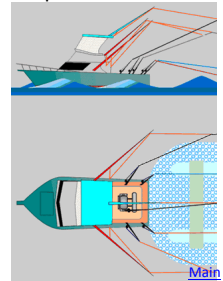
**Key 3: Outriggers**

- Outriggers enable one to get the same aggressive action out of lures further back from the boat by elevating the pulling point of the lure.
- Outriggers also enable the trolling of a wider spread. The use of outriggers also improves manoeuvrability of the boat as it allows for tighter turns and therefore reduces the possibility of line tangles.

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### Pattern

- Choose appropriate lures
  - Mindful of bait in the water & sharpen hooks
- Set shotgun – with a bird
- Set taglines / outrigger lines
- Position teasers
- Set flat lines



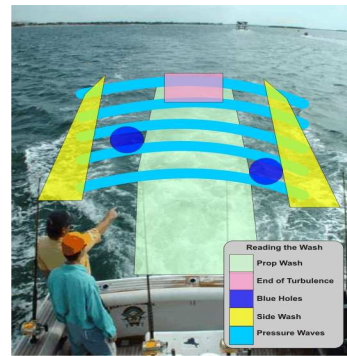
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### Reading the wash of your boat



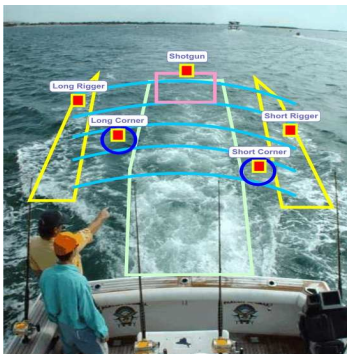
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### Reading the wash of your boat



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### Reading the wash of your boat



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### Visual observation

- Need polarised lenses
- No "sticks" in the sea
- Watch teasers
- Look for black / brown images under the lures



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### Hookup: Outrigger / tagline/ shot gun

- Do not cut motors
  - Keep going in the same direction
  - Possibility of a pack attack – potential for more hookups
  - If none, cut one motor to idle and reduce the revs on the other motor
- Immediate hookup
- Grip rod – lift the point 2 or 3 times
- Keep rod pointed in the direction of the run
- Keep winding – do NOT give slack line
- First clear the rods in the vicinity of the fish, then the rest
- Beware of burn-offs

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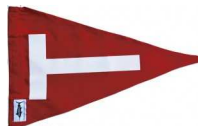
### Hookup: Flat lines

- Visual observation
- The sailfish is usually playing with the teasers
- Reel in the teasers – fish will be excited / frustrated
- Pick up flat line and wind in quickly until the lure is just in front of the fish
- Wait for the fish to turn towards the lure
- Apply the drop back technique
- If missed, lift rod and retrieve the lure quickly back to the surface
- Keep a look out for the fish
- Remember your manners - courtesy to fellow anglers

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### Landing the sailfish

- Beware of green fish next to the boat
- Always use gloves
- If possible, use a bill grabber
- Remove hooks carefully
  - Use a de-hooker or long nose pliers
  - Beware of chain gangs
- Take a photo
  - Do not drag the fish over the gunwales
- Rejuvenate the fish
- Release
- Fly your flags when coming home



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### Sailfish survival rates

- Time spent fighting a fish dramatically affects the amount of lactic acid that builds up in a fish's tissue. The lighter the line and/or drag causes sometimes fatal amounts of fatigue on a sailfish.
- Second, dragging a sailfish across the gunwale of your boat or laying him on the deck for a measurement, will wipe the slime coat off of the fish dooming that fish to a slow death caused by an infection on the area that the slime was removed.
- Swimming the fish alongside the boat until it shows some signs of renewed energy most likely increase their chances of survival.
- Pressure on the hook caused by "leadering" could be more damaging than the fight itself. If you think about it, a hook imbedded in a sailfish, being caught on 10kg test, probably averages between 2 and 4 kgs. of pressure while you are fighting the fish. When the leader is grabbed, that pressure could easily reach 30kgs or more, depending on the strength of the leader. The pressure could obviously match or exceed the listed breaking strength of the leader being used, because the leader could over test. Try tying off some 30 kg test, wrap it around your hand and pull it until it breaks just to see how much pressure that is, you might be surprised. Holding on to a leader to break it instead of cutting it with a sportsman's knife or a pair of pliers, could cause more trauma depending on the hook's placement in the fish.
- Releasing a sailfish which is hooked in the jaw. By holding on to that leader, if the fish shakes it's head violently or jumps going away from the boat, there is a risk of damaging it's jaw structure because of the potential pressure exerted on the hook. It may be more damaging to jerk on a leader or hold onto a leader when a fish is showing any sign of bleeding rather than cutting it.

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