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| **How to Catch Fish in the Florida Keys**  by Capt. John Inghram February 2000    *We're sorry to say that John passed away. This article is left here in his memory. John made this presentation on fishing at one of our Marathon Power Squadron meetings, complete with all kinds of educational props like various lures and knots for lines.*    **Introduction:** I have attempted to write a few lines about offshore fishing that I hope may be of use to you in your pursuit of offshore game fish. I realize that there are many things that I have left out of this dissertation. However, I have tried to hit the most important tactics to enable you to put fish in the box when you fish off shore.  **Types of fishing:** A listing of terms hopefully, will prevent misunderstanding the concepts proposed in this article.  Trolling Dragging baits and or lures through the water at various speeds in order to entice fish to bite. Advantage: covers large areas. Good when fish are scattered or you don’t know where they are located. May be the only way to find fish. Disadvantage: May involve traveling long distances or actually running past the fish you are seeking.  Bait fishing: Attempting to entice fish to bite by using live or dead bait with or without ground up chum or other attractants in the water as an added enticement. Advantage: Extremely effective way to fish. May produce the largest catch if conditions are right. Disadvantages: If you are not in the immediate vicinity of fish or fish holding structure it doesn’t work.  Different combinations of trolling and bait fishing are most effective. The presence of structure can be applied to trolling with markedly good results.  **FINDING FISH:** It should be obvious that the more time you spend fishing where the fish are, the more fish you will catch. For this we turn to the terms STRUCTURE and EDGE.  **Structure**: may mean bottom formation as in many types of fresh water fishing as well as salt water fishing. A reef or a ledge or other submerged object will attract and aggregate fish. It is these structures that the bait fisherman concentrates on in his quest for fish. However, structure is not only bottom structures, but it is anything that may aggregate fish.  For the offshore fisherman a better concept is that of an Edge. An edge is an area where 2 bodies of water meet. It may be clearly visible from the water surface, or it may be quite a subtle change, often a difference of one degree on a thermometer. It is these edges that are of interest to the predator, of which the off shore fisherman is an example. It is here that the majority of game fish congregate. Edge is an important concept for all sportsmen. Hunters as well as fishermen utilize this area in the pursuit of their sport.  **EDGE**: Because an EDGE occurs when two bodies of water meet, it is a prime area to aggregate fish. Bait is usually abundant here and the fish capitalize on this area. The most common indicators of "EDGE" are weed lines, and debris. However many edges are not as noticeable as weed lines and debris. Nevertheless they are just as important. There are many indicators of structure that may not seem important to the offshore fisherman. Believe me, these are. Very often the fisherman who notices something that is simply out of place can save a day’s trip. For example, a bird flying along but not diving in the water may indicate a rip current or a separation of two different bodies of water. Birds are also fishermen like us and they fly along certain prescribed routes where they have the best chance of finding a meal. Thus even if a bird is flying some distance away; a sharp fisherman will mark its course and check for structure along its path. Sights that may indicate an "EDGE" are many. The most common sign of an edge occurs after a North wind and that will be the line of green murky water against clear blue water. But that isn’t the only indication of an EDGE. Any change in wave motion, or direction will occur for a reason. That reason is usually an "EDGE". A line of debris is a dead give away of an "EDGE", but other indicators are Portuguese man-o-wars when they form a line off shore. They always line up on an "EDGE". Other indicators may be subtler. An area where Slick and rough water come together often indicates an "EDGE". Trolling along such an "EDGE" may often pay off with a Wahoo. Often you can see a rip of disturbed water some distance away. These are always worth investigating.  Of especial interest are temperature changes. Probably one of the most important fish finding pieces of equipment on board is a through-hull thermometer. Any temperature change over a very short distance even a change of less than one degree will always indicate an edge, as the two bodies of water may have different temperatures. Many bottom machines offer a thermometer on their transducers at a reasonable price. As you become practiced in its use your catches will increase.  Another thing about edges is that they usually occur in the same area or very close to it. Some captains keep a log of their fishing trips and update them as needed. The old FINCO charts that were available several years ago were excellent examples of the fact that edges occur in very close proximity to particular locations through out the season.  I haven’t used the Roffer Charts because they don’t give the detail that I would like to have, but I am sure that the temperature breaks they show will occur in almost the same locations with the prevailing wind through out the year.  (I have recently heard about two different temperature charts that have become available. Dave Brown, the proprietor of the Tackle Box, publishes the first one. He uses the data from the NOAA site on the Internet and plots it with a computer program he has to give the locations of temperature gradients off shore. The cost for this chart is $10. The second chart contains two satellite maps that give the water temperature and the water clarity off shore. The cost for this service is $20 per day. If you do subscribe to either of these charts be sure to keep a log of where you find fish and the hot spots on the charts. You will find that they don’t change through out the year. You can access this information on the Internet at [**www.orbimage.com**](http://www.orbimage.com) **.**. They intend to sell them through the Bass Pro Shops, but you may be able to download from the Internet.)  A second type of edge that occurs is very difficult to find visually. This edge is the thermocline, that layer of water where the temperature of the surface water is considerably higher than that of the water below it. This area can be found by turning up the gain on your bottom machine until you notice a faint return (usually within 100’ of the surface). This caused is by the temperature gradient at the thermocline. It is at this edge that many fish congregate; Wahoo, Tuna, big Dolphin, even Sailfish to name a few. When combined with a surface edges, these areas can be a bonanza. Many fish are light shy and prefer to stay in dimmer light conditions. Additionally, they can see their prey silhouetted against the water surface which makes it easier for them to feed. Thus when trolling a thermocline make sure that your baits are just above that layer.  **Trolling:   Putting the pieces together**  There are four basic ways of trolling. Each method has its strengths and weaknesses. Going in order from the slowest to the fastest they are: Live bait trolling, Dead bait trolling, combination dead bait and lure trolling and high speed lure trolling.  Live Bait trolling is extremely effective for winter game fish. Here live baits such as ballyhoo, pilchards, mullet, etc. are hooked through the lips or head so as to keep them alive and allowed to swim along with the boat. The live baits are suspended so as to cover the entire water column behind the boat. The speed of the boat is dead slow. Actually to the point of constantly taking the boat out of gear in order to keep the speed to less than 1 kt. so as to minimize the stress on the bait. This type of trolling may be combined with the use of a fishing kite at even lower speeds. It is one of the most effective methods for catching sailfish as long as the baits are in an area where the sailfish are at that time. Obviously the live bait troller must be in close proximity to the fish that he is after or he will have a long day.  Dead Bait Trolling is a good way to catch winter game fish. The boat speed is slightly faster. Speeds up to 4 kts are possible but the dead baits wash out quickly at the higher speeds. These baits are rigged to troll in a straight line and may include, ballyhoo, squid, mullet etc. This is one of the better ways of catching white marlin. Again, here the baits are suspended in as much of the water column as possible. The same qualifications exist for dead bait trolling as do for live bait trolling only the speed is not as critical. Generally the maximum speed you can troll with unprotected dead bait is about 1 – 3 kts. Even then you will have to check your baits constantly for wash out.  Combination dead bait and lure trolling is when a bait is rigged with a lure in front of it. With this arrangement the trolling speed can be increased because the lure protects the bait from washing out too soon. This allows the boat to troll at speeds up to 6kts. This method will lend itself better to off shore fishing except when chasing diving frigate birds. The higher speeds required to catch up to the diving birds will tear the bait apart.  Many species of game fish swim very fast. Dolphin, Wahoo, blue marlin and tuna have a strike velocity of around 50mph. To the offshore fisherman this allows speeds of up to 16 or 18 kts while trolling. Many captains will troll this fast. I generally troll at the best speed for the lures to work best. This allows me to troll rigged baits if the need arises at a much slower speed (2-4 kts), while I generally work my lures at a higher speed (6-12 kts) when I am getting to the area that I want to fish.  Once you locate structure, you can modify your procedure to suit your needs and fish the structure as you wish. Don’t be afraid to try different tactics. Varying your speed and course may produce excellent results especially with Wahoo. Use your imagination. It may very well make difference between having a full box of fish and only having a few fish at the end of the day. I discovered early in my fishing career that dolphin behave the same as bluefish and the same techniques that worked on them in New Jersey were just as effective here in our waters. For example, when chumming for dolphin in order to bail them, I found that they would get filled up with fish pieces and stop eating. I knew that the best chum for bluefish is menhaden. Thus I substituted rag soaked in menhaden oil for the ground up fish and bingo, I started bailing dolphin and they didn’t get filled up and continued feeding until I had caught my limit.  Where the fish are: The offshore fish that I have mentioned are pelagic species and as such tend to inhabit the open seas. This usually means water depths of at least 650 feet, and often far deeper. That is not to say that you can’t catch them in shallower water, (It is always worth putting out a lure the first thing in the morning before the sun gets too high and the boat traffic drives the fish down. Large game fish often come into shallower water at night to feed.), but day in and day out you need to get some blue water under your keel to catch these gamesters.  The best kinds of lures: Most fishing lures make use of some form of attractant. It may be bubbles on lures that "smoke" it may be sound on lures that rattle, or it may be scent on other lures. Some lures even produce a weak electrical field in the water to attract fish. However, if you look at any kind of fish, from a minnow to a marlin, you will notice that they have a shimmering aura. I call this flash. It is this glitter that is responsible for the strike reflex in game fish. Game fish, which are carnivores, respond to this flash by striking at the object. Trout fisherman have used this phenomenon for many years in their creation of mylar muddler minnow flies and other streamer fly patterns. In the 1960’s (before Mylar) we used to put two or three Japanese feathers together on a single hook because they seemed to work better than single feathers. Now, with the wisdom of hindsight, we know why they did work better. The metallic heads imitated the flash of real fish. Game fish reacting on impulse only have seconds to respond to prey, consequentially they must make a move quickly or go hungry, the use of mylar dressing on a lure is one of the best strike triggers available. Other lure designs work quite well. Bubble makers, rattles and scents are all used but of all the attractants most important is flash. Lures that make use of combinations of these attractants are the best to use.  I favor an eclectic approach to fishing in general, and trolling in particular. Trolling bait is a very effective means of catching fish, if one is in the right location. But, many times that is not the case. The fish are scattered or not where I think they should be. For this reason, modifications in technique must be made. I have used lures extensively for many years on my vessels, both singly and in combination with bait. Their use has resulted in some very nice catches for my customers and me. When using bait combined with a trolling lure, the bait tends to remain in better shape at higher speeds. Hence you can troll faster and cover more territory.  When trolling a mixed spread, I try to put my baits and bait lure combinations on my outriggers for the drop back on the strike. The lures are placed on the flat lines and pinned so that there is less drop-back on the strike. (I always pin my flat lines so that there is small amount of drop-back on the strike, which results in a considerably higher percentage of hook ups.)  When trolling only lures, it is better to use a tag line release on the outriggers to lessen the amount of drop back so the fish doesn’t have time to spit the bait. Again I can’t overemphasize the need for a small amount of drop back on bait or lure, simply to allow the fish to turn with the lure in its mouth and get hooked when the line comes taut.  **Special Trolling Techniques:**  Wire Line: The use of wire line to get trolling lures down to the level of the fish has been in use for quite some time. The fresh water fisherman has used these devices for many years to catch lake trout and wall eyed pike. The salt-water fisherman has discovered this technique to catch grouper and other deep dwelling game fish. Essentially the technique involves the use of a stout rod with carbaloy guides, a large trolling reel and a spool full of 30 to 60 pound test stainless or monel wire with a heavy trolling drail attached to the lure end of the wire. A 15-foot (minimum) piece of leader attaches the lure to the drail. Then the terminal end of the fishing rig is lowered into the water and the wire is carefully (so as not to kink the single strand wire) let out until the lure reaches its desired depth. (Often as much as 200 or 300 feet or more). It is very desirable to carefully pin the wire line (to avoid kinks) and allow for a short drop back on the strike. Playing a large fish on this type of tackle is difficult because the non-elasticity of the tackle allows slack to get into the line and the fish can throw the hook. Additionally the long distance to the fish makes it a lot of work reeling the fish to the boat and the drail means that the fish must be hand lined the last 15 feet or so. It is a very effective way to reach deeper dwelling fish. When using a large deep diving plug, the drail may be omitted.  Down riggers: Probably the greatest advance in fishing techniques of the century has been the use of planers and their offspring, downriggers. Many years ago we used to rig a planer on rope and attach a 30foot piece of 100-pound test leader and troll for bluefish. The results were spectacular but not very sporting. We caught many bluefish that way but they weren’t that much fun. Later someone came up with the idea of using a release and pinning a line from a fishing rod to the planer. While an improvement, this method was far from ideal. At the same time some fresh water fisherman developed the down rigger which was merely a large reel filled with cable and attached to a heavy ball and a release that allowed fisherman to get their lures down very deep. The problem with this method was that quite effective for fresh water fish that didn’t move around as much as their salt-water cousins the trolling speed was very restricted (only 12 to 2 kts). At any speed higher the amount of blowback became excessive and the lures would end up on the surface. This led the way for the most important development for the salt-water angler, The Z-WING. This apparatus resembles a planer, but is much easier to raise and lower. It is equipped with one or more releases each connected to a trolling line. There are two varieties of Z-WINGS available. The 250 Z-WING is best for speeds of less than 6 kts. While the 500 Z-WING is designed to work best at speeds greater than 6 kts. This allows the angler to deliver his lure to fish at his desired depth and at his desired speed. Several years ago I had a mate on TIKI who was a captain in Lake Of The Woods, Minnesota. Captain Blaine had extensive experience using down riggers in fresh water for lake trout and walleyed pike but he hadn’t tried to use them in salt water or at higher speeds. He and I put together the techniques for using high speed down riggers for our customers on my boat. These are the things that we found out. I know they work because during that winter we averaged almost a Wahoo a trip. Because of the greater speeds necessary for salt water fishing some adaptations must be made to use a downrigger. The Penn products seem to be of sufficient strength to handle the increased pull of the Z-WING over the ball but The cable should be strengthened to at least 250 # test. (Check Your cable frequently for any signs of wear and replace immediately should you notice any wear.) You will need to do some fine-tuning on your release system to compensate for the increased pressure caused by the higher speeds. I use rubber bands. Generally, a 60 series rubber band will break at 20# and a 30 series rubber band will break at 10#. It much easier to control your lure depth because of the lessening of blowback caused by your speed. Usually your cable will enter the water at about a 45 degree angle so you can approximate your depth at 1/2 the length of cable out on your down rigger gauge.  We have had very good luck using this system offshore and on the reef. We have caught many Wahoo with this technique as well as large dolphin, tuna, grouper, and even sailfish. When using this system I like to use large Billy Bait in front of a large ballyhoo that has 2 or 3 hooks in it. (Wahoo and kingfish are notoriously short strikers preferring to lop the tails off their prey and then return to eat them at leisure.)  **HIGH SPEED TROLLING:** This is one of the newest techniques to be used by the off shore fisherman. Here lures are trolled at speeds up to 20 kts. This type of fishing has been proven to be very effective for blue marlin, Wahoo, tuna, dolphin and virtually every other game fish. Naturally, at these higher speeds it would be impossible to keep bait on a hook, so this is a lure only operation. Some modifications are needed to keep your lures beneath the surface film. This usually involves using trolling drails of 1 to 3 pounds rigged about 15 feet in front of the lure to force it to run beneath the surface. (Be sure to secure the cable around the drail when using this method.)  **Fish attractants for trollers.** Probably the best attractant that you have is your boat. Engine noise is like a dinner bell to game fish especially if you have a diesel engine. The low frequency pulsed vibration actually calls fish. In addition you can employ a teaser to disturb the water even more. There are even products on the market that you can get that imitate the sound of a school of bait in the water or the struggles of a fish. The shadow created by your boat's hull is also an attractant. Many fish seek out shade during the day or food in low-light conditions and can be found swimming below debris.  Teasers are other devices that can be used to attract fish. They are towed behind the boat on a line but not necessarily one with a hook on the end of it. A teaser can be a boat fender, a daisy chain of lures or bait, a spreader bar of lures or bait or anything that will simulate a school of fish behind your boat. We even used Budweiser beer cans with Saran Wrap skirts in the 60’s and they worked. The idea is simply to create as much commotion in the water as you possibly can. A good rule of thumb is the more disturbances the better. This will bring fish into see what is happening behind your boat. The ideal teaser is a device that will attract the fish that you are seeking and yet be such that you can conveniently get it out of the way of the fish. This means that ideally a teaser should be on its own line; either a hand line spool for hanging off a stern cleat or a large reel attached to the boat with the teaser line running off a ring on the out rigger. An excellent way to see how a teaser should be rigged is to come down to the charter boat docks and see what the captains are using. That will give you a place to begin. Afterward you can make your own modifications to suit your self.  As I had mentioned earlier, carrying a gallon of menhaden oil is excellent practice. When fishing for dolphin. Simply pour a small amount into the bottom of a 5-gallon bucket. Tie a towel attached to a stern cleat with strong cord and let it soak in the oil. When you hook a fish simply through the towel overboard. You will soon see the results. It is a superb attractant and will bring a lot of school dolphin as well as other game fish into your boat.  Many fishermen don’t realize however, that the best baits for big dolphin are little dolphins. Try rigging a small one as a trolling bait and see what happens. Once when I was fishing for dolphin I ran out of ballyhoo and cut up a small dolphin for bait. The fish went wild. When bailing school dolphin don’t forget to look for the big dolphin that want to eat the school dolphin. I always keep a large pitch bait (usually a whole squid) handy on a heavy rod. You would be surprised how many 50-pound fish are caught that way. A word to the wise is sure you let the fish swallow bait before you set up on him.  **Errors:** This is almost ludicrous. These are tales of screw-ups by mates on charter boats that occur daily. They are comical in their telling but sobering in their result. I have written a list of "screw-ups" made by people who should know better.  **Case 1:** 1: Trolling for offshore game fish; the mate uses the spinning rods to troll for fish. You guessed it! A pod of dolphin swam in with a hooked fish and we had nothing to throw to the fish. Result: we got one Wahoo and no dolphin.  Lesson: always keep several spinning rods rigged with hooks and baits ready to use quickly.  **Case 2:** Trolling for game fish: Mate doesn’t put outriggers down when you clear the bridge (get to the ocean water). Run out to the reef and have to set out-riggers in rougher water: or worse not be set up when fish are present and feeding.  Lesson: Make sure all tackle and fishing gear is in order before you get to the fishing grounds.  **Case 3:** Trolling for Wahoo: Mate changes lure to a color green and yellow Billy Bait after a day of fishing with 6 Wahoo hooked up on red and black Billy Bait. Result: we don’t catch any Wahoo.  Lesson: If it ain’t broke don’t fix it!  **Case 4:** Trolling for Wahoo: mate changes leader from #7 to #12 because leader gets kinked after we catch a Wahoo. Result: leader doesn’t get kinked because we don’t catch any Wahoo.  Lesson: See above  **Case 5:** Trolling for anything to save the charter: mate changes leader from wire to monofilament. Wahoo hits lure and we lose the lure and the fish, Mate offers to replace $7. Lure for $500. Charter.  Lesson: When trolling in Wahoo waters it is a good idea to put a trace of wire in front of your hook.  **Case6:** Trolling: mate tries to bail dolphin with leader. Loses 3 fish.  Lesson: Always gaff the customer’s fish when trolling.  **Case7:** Trolling for dolphin: large dolphin hits and tangles lines. Mate tries to untangle lines instead of landing fish. Result lines still tangled, Fish lost.  Lesson: You have 2 choices; 1- land fish and then untangle lines. 2- untangle lines lose fish and then finish untangling lines. Take your choice.  **Case 8:** Trolling for dolphin: big dolphin hits and starts to run. Mate reaches over to tighten drag on pre set reel. Result line breaks 50 pound dolphin lost. Same trip same mate. Big dolphin hits reaches over to loosen drag on pre set reel. Result angler can’t reel fish to boat. Fish pulls the hook. Total for day 2-50+ pounds of dolphin (market value $175 lost by one inept mate, who claimed to be a musky guide in Wisconsin.  Lesson: The first rule in big game fishing: **Never touch a pre-set drag.**  **Case 9:** Bailing 10-pound dolphin. Large dolphin comes in and tries to eat 10-pound fish. Mate pitches bait to dolphin but hooks fish immediately, (no time to swallow bait), hands rod to customer who spends 45 minutes trying to get dolphin to boat. Result hook wears out, lost fish.  Lesson: Allow bait hooked fish time to swallow bait. Prevents pulled hook for inept anglers  **Case10:** Trolling for dolphin on rough day. Dolphin gets hooked up. Fish suddenly takes off at right angles to boat. Angler works fish back toward boat suddenly very large Mako shark jumps over wave and takes dolphin. Shark eats half of dolphin. Then comes up to boat looking for rest of fish. Mate doesn’t want to put out shark rig with dolphin head on it because he is afraid of shark. Result: lost opportunity for 500+ pound Mako shark.  Lesson: Prepare for the unexpected. Always have one heavy fishing rig ready to clip on your line in case of an emergency. Go over the program with your crew before hand. Also, learn what things can cause a change in a hooked fish’s behavior.  **Case11:** Bottom fishing at the bridge rubble for yellowtail. Hooked yellowtail taken by a very large cobia. Try to bait cobia with live bait but hook was too small. Result: lost 80+ pound cobia.  Lesson: See above  **Case12:** Bottom fishing for grouper. Hooked large cobia, brought fish to boat for gaffing. Gaff is too dull to penetrate fish. Result lost 50+ pound cobia.  Lesson: Always get the best gaffs available and keep them razor sharp.  **SUMMARY:** Remember 90% of the fish are caught in 10% of the time on the water. A missed opportunity is deadly to your fishing success. Prepare for the unexpected. A successful fishing trip is built around attention to details. Develop the habit of checking equipment regularly. I had a charter out sometime ago and it was a tough day. We couldn’t buy a fish. Finally at the end of the day on the way in I spotted a board and stopped on it. We took our limit of dolphin off it in an hour. The customer remarked to me that if we hadn’t hit that board that we probably would have gotten skunked. I agreed with him. That’s fishing.  **SOME TROLLING RIGS WORTH TRYING:** These rigs will all be on display and you can examine them personally.  **Mackerel rigs:** Should be rigged on #5 to #7 brown wire. The terminal end is a Clarks "Squid Spoon" (either size 0, 1, or 2). Attach a 2-ft. wire to the spoon with a haywire twist. Attach the other end of the leader to a 5/0 3407 mustad trolling hook. Attach a 4 ft piece of wire to the eye of the mustad hook. Slide a small Mylar trolling head down the leader to cover the hook. Attach a #7 swivel to the wire and rig it on a heavy spinning rod or a light trolling rod. Work the lure fairly fast 4 to 8 kts. Deadly on mackerel and other small game fish.  **Note** Don’t use any spoon but the squid spoon with the red bead. Anything else will twist and tangle.  **Sailfish rigs:** sailfish are usually best caught by using live bait in the 150ft to 250 ft. area of the reef in order to stay away from kingfish. But this rig has accounted for some good sailfish for me. Crimp a 5/0 to 7/0 3407 mustad hook to a 6 ft. piece of 60 – 80 LB test piece of monofilament in such a way that an L-shaped piece of # 9 wire is held in the crimp sleeve and points 180 degrees from the point of the hook. Using this hook attach a small ballyhoo in the normal fashion with the wire sticking through the bait’s head and secured with a piece of copper wire or a small rubber band. Next slide pink and white Double Cavitator Billy Bait over the leader and secure the end with a swivel or a loop.  This bait works well on an outrigger or a flatline.  **Wahoo – Kingfish Rig:** Link 2 or 3 - 7/0 mustad 3407 hooks in tandem using a 7/0 swivel to make the connection. Attach a 6 ft. piece of #7 brown wire to the lead hook using a standard hay- wire twist with the tag left ¾" long and directly aligned with the point of the hooks. Place the tag end spike through the head of ballyhoo so that the hook sticks out of the top. Secure the bait with a wrap of wire or a rubber band. With the point of a sharp knife make cuts in the bait’s belly to hide the hooks. The wrap pulls the bait by its head not by the hooks. Slide a double cavitator or magnum Billy Bait over the bait and finish the end of the leader with a haywire twist loop or swivel. This rig is best fished deep on a wire line or a downrigger just above the thermocline. Lure option: this rig may be fished without bait by simply omitting the ballyhoo. This combination will also take large dolphin and sailfish.  **Deep Running Plugs:** These plugs can be fished in a variety of ways. Large diving plugs can be fished on flat lines, wire lines or down riggers and will perform equally well on all game fish.  **Yozuri Plugs:** These plugs work best on wire line or downriggers and are deadly on all kinds of game fish.  **Tuna Killer:** Available at the Tackle Box in Marathon. Comes ready to fish. Excellent fast trolling lures for tuna at the hump or other game fish. It imitates the small bait that the black fin tuna feed on at the hump.  **Standard Dolphin Rig:** Start with the basic sailfish rig and vary the Billy Bait that you use or eliminate the bait entirely and troll naked hooks.  **High Speed Trolling Rig:** Attach a size 7/0 to 9/0 Super strong hook to 8 ft of #150 monofilament Slide a medium size Billy Bait over the hook and finish the rig with a strong loop double crimped. This rig can be run at speeds up to 16 kts. When fished far back from the boat it is a deadly lure accounting for many fish even blue marlin.  Blue and pink is a deadly color combination for offshore. I think it resembles squid.  **YOZURI SQUID RIGS:** These are deadly in blue and pink and in other colors as well. Run a strong piece of wire attached to a super strong 7/0 to 9/0 hook either singly or in tandem. Slide a sufficient number of spacer beads on the wire so that the hook(s) ride in the skirt of the squid. Make a haywire twist loop in the wire so that the loop is very close to the forward end of the squid ( or you can join the wire directly to #100 monofilament leader with an Albright Knot.) Attach the wire to a 6ft. piece of #100 leader. And finish the running end with a strong loop or a swivel.  **Some other things to try:**. When dolphin are around the boat but don’t want to eat try throwing some dolphin roe to them or better yet rig it in a bag of cheese cloth and put it on a hook then watch what happens.  Remember that the dominant baits off shore are flying fish, squid, and dolphin. Anything you can do to use or copy these baits will increase your rate of success. (Blue and white for flyers and red, blue for squid, and yellow and green for dolphin) |

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