



F L O R I D A

OUTDOORS

The Palm Beach Post

Special Advertising Section

Sunday, June 29, 2008

inside

3 LAKE "O" REPORT
Cleaner water makes catching bass in deeper water a little easier. Also, it seems the artificial lure bite is working better than wild shiners now. Capt. Mark King offers some tips as well as his outlook for July.

CHECK OUT THE CATCH OF THE MONTH 3
Okay, so the picture wasn't taken in June, but with Lobster Mini-Season right around the corner, it seemed like a good time to show the 10½-pound monster some local divers pulled out of the Sebastian Inlet last year.

4 TURTLE WALKS
Sea turtles come ashore to nest this time of year. Take a guided tour through their nesting grounds.

5 SAVE THE DOLPHIN
New dolphin tagging program encourages fishermen to tag — rather than keep — smaller fish.

6 OKEEHEELEE BMX TRACK
Not only is the West Palm Beach track about to celebrate its 20th anniversary, it's also considered one of the best in the country.

7 CALENDAR OF EVENTS
Looking for some outdoor fun? Find out what's going on when and where.

TABLE FARE 7
Got a great seafood recipe? We've received several submissions from our readers and decided it's time to share them. The first one is...

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Look for next month's issue: Sunday, July 27.



Mark "The Shark" Quartiano with a Mako shark he caught during a recent charter trip.

Photo courtesy of Mark Quartiano

FEEDING FRENZY

Monster Fishing with Mark "The Shark" Quartiano

By CHED CHASE
Special to Florida Outdoors

We leave port at about 8:30 a.m. and Mark "The Shark" Quartiano comfortably guides his 50-foot Hatteras Luxury Fishing Boat into deeper water in search of some monster sharks.

It's just another day in paradise for the Shark Hunter. It's shortly after 9 a.m. and Mate Tim O'Hare, who captains the boat on Quartiano's off days, finishes rigging up the baits. For shark fishing, Quartiano and O'Hare typically use a good-size Mackerel, which seems to work best for sharks, but they also use kingfish and bonita to catch the giant predators.

The boat eases up and Quartiano scouts the waters just beyond the back of the boat. "We're here," he says, in about 180 feet of water right on the edge of the Gulf Stream. "The sharks out here are not natives, they are simply passing through."

Mark "The Shark" has been fishing these waters ever since he moved to South Florida from Long Island in the 1960s. Today, he operates the Striker-1, which is fully equipped with state-of-the-art fishing reels, an air-conditioned cabin and runs on fuel-efficient engines.

But what truly makes this boat unique is the fighting chair. The Lee's Fighting Chair extends out over the back end of the boat, giving fisherman the experience of a lifetime as they begin to engage in a fight with some serious fish. Striker-1 fishes with no less than four lines at a time. Two 150-pound monofilament lines are extended out off the end of the boat with balloons at a measured distance above the bait to keep the lines in shallower waters.

In the Lee's Chair rests what the crew calls "The Moose," which is a custom rod and reel with 300-pound-test braided line. "The Moose" is weighted down with about 3 pounds of weight to get the bait to stay down near the bottom. This is generally the line the big fish hit.

Strangely enough, Striker-1 does not chum.

"We don't need to out here," Quartiano says with a smile. "We know where they are."

With all the state-of-the-art technology and fishing equipment aboard his boat, it's easy to understand why Quartiano holds many fishing records, including two he set earlier this year.

But, why specialize in Shark fishing?

"It was the only thing that rhymed with my name," Mark "The Shark" jokes. "No, we're the only ones doing it out here. I'm a dinosaur. I'm the only Shark hunter left. No one else does what we do."



ABOUT THE CAPTAIN

Name: Mark Quartiano
Hometown: Long Island
Experience: About 40 years, 30 of which have been spent in South Florida.
Specialties: Sharks, day-time swordfishing and other big game
Boat: Striker-1
Boat specs: 50-foot Hatteras Luxury Sport Fisherman Yacht fully equipped with live wells, state-of-the-art equipment and tackle, and a Lee's Fighting Chair. The cabin is fully air-conditioned.
Port: Biscayne Bay Marriott Marina, Miami
Fun facts: Helped build and design the Bom-Bom Resort in South Africa about 20 years ago. It's located 200 miles off the coast of Cameroon. Also helped teach the local fishermen how to catch sharks and sailfish so they could take customers out on charters. Quartiano calls it the best place in the Atlantic Ocean to catch sailfish, and he once landed 49 in one day.

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