

Forget Fishing; You're Shark "Hunting!"

Less than 1-mile from Miami Beach, where swimmers look like bobbing appetizers, lurk giant man eaters!

By Andy Lightbody

Having grown up in California and been deep sea fishing since I could reach the rail and chum my breakfast next to my compassionate yet sometimes snickering father, I have been fascinated with shark fishing. And while there are upwards of 34 different



Mark "The Shark" in his office surrounded by the teeth of his victims.

species that cruise the Pacific waters, about all I ever tagged were some non-eatable blues, a few small Makos, leopards and the really ugly dog fish. To me, the trophy shark waters were the Great Barrier Reef, the warm waters of South Africa, the giant White Shark waters of legendary Jaws, or a hundred miles from shore in the Caribbean.

But, to be fishing in the warm gulf stream waters, less than a mile from some of the most favorite white sand beaches, loaded with hundreds of happy swimmers/tourists, and the multi-billion dollar Miami beach skyline as the backdrop.... something seems terribly wrong when the ultra-heavy duty rod/reel mounted on the fighting chair begins to zing and vibrate like an angry hive of hornets.

After all, I'm pretty content using my Steiner Commander binoculars and watching the beach babe action, when suddenly our legendary shark hunting guide, Captain Mark (The Shark) Quarantiano bellows from the bridge of his custom built

43-footer—The Striker 1-- to all on deck, "Fish on!" First Mate, Tim O'Hare springs into action, jumps into the Lee fighting chair to slow the monster fish's action, and barks like a young Captain Quint to Kathy to get in the chair immediately.

Within seconds, hundreds of yards of line are spooling out as I grab for cameras and hear the voice from the JAWS classic, "this ain't no little Tommy Cod, this fish—he'd swallow you whole!" And for the next 2 1/2 hours, the seesaw battle between angler and unseen monster of deep continued. Kat would gain line and we would cheer. And just as quickly, Kat would lose line and we'd offer words of encouragement as you could tell her back ached, her arms and hands cramped and burned. It was a contest that truly was a battle of wills, and victory still was a long way off.

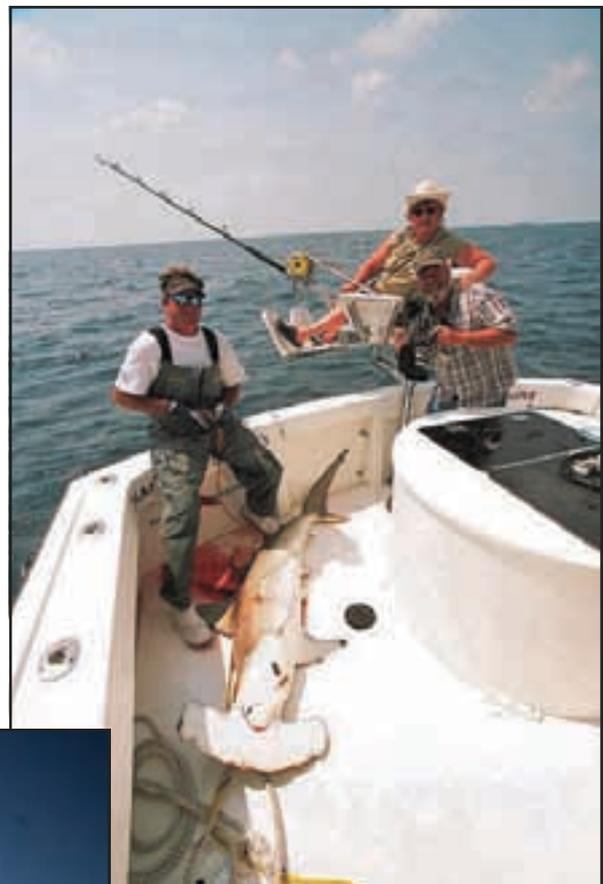
For Mark the Shark, this is just another day in paradise in his hunt for monster shark fishing action. Headquartered in his underground bunker office at the Biscayne Bay Marriott in Miami, Florida, there are dozens and dozens of shark jaws that provide the décor for a man that has spent his life

catching giant sharks and guiding others to do the same. Including such notables as Clint Eastwood, Robert De Niro, Will Smith, Shaquille O'Neal, and now yours truly.

Mark also holds more records for catching sharks than any other man alive. He's fished the waters of South Africa, Indonesia, Thailand, Viet Nam, Hawaii, Bora Bora, and just about anywhere else he can find sharks. In addition to making anglers happy with everything from Hammerheads, Bulls, Threshers, Tigers, giant rays and all the trophy sharks that one can imagine, Mark also works with shark researchers, documenting the animals' habits, migrations, and scientific data.

As I marvel about all that this legendary and sometimes controversial King of Monster Fishing has accomplished, Kat finally begins to gain on the biggest shark I've ever seen up close and personal. A magnificent 8 foot 10 inch Golden Hammerhead finally shows "color" about 20 feet off the back end of the boat.

Kathy is exhausted as the very odd, side-looking fish is roped and brought aboard. Kudos to all, and within a few minutes, we're back fishing again. This time it's the head chef, Chef Joe from the Miami seaside award-winning restaurant, A Fish Called Avalon. Unlike Kathy's hammerhead, Joe's shark takes off slow and deliberate, and yet equally powerful. After nearly 3 hours, we boat



Kathy in the flying chair after landing her Golden Hammerhead.

a huge 8 foot, 375-pound bull shark, and decide to call it a day.

Wanting to capture the moment and the magnificent splendor of this lifetime experience, Mark made arrangements for the folks at Gray Taxidermy to mount both our sharks. Gray is located in nearby Pompano Beach, has a 70,000 square foot facility and it's immediately obvious why they are the largest marine taxidermy company in the world! After touring their facilities, we knew that Kathy's nearly 9-foot Golden Hammerhead would be a world-class winning



Captain Mark on board his boat hunting his favorite predator.

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MY SLICE

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my reward of sitting an area year after year just paid off. My 172" whitey lay as I celebrated, reminisced and enjoyed my buck.

The next couple of days was Antho-



ny's and he was excited to be in the saddle. We were sitting a fresh stand and an area we talked about often. Thinking this night was going to be no different than the others we watched as porcupines and birds traveled around us. The night was ticking away and the sun was falling behind us. As the flocks of geese flew feet above us the distraction allowed for just enough time to pass that a few mule deer snuck in. This was it; it had to be the night. With a few more deer coming in our excitement grew and I thought the chills we were experiencing were gone. For some reason though the tree still shook as I looked over at Dix. He slowly pointed to the far east of the field I knew why the tree still shook three nice whiteys approached the field. It was just like a dream three big whiteys following a trail direct to your stand. When they entered the field everything came into check and as the buck came to 30yds Dix put the wheels in motion that would then send the bus crashing through the side of this beautiful whitey. With one more arrow slamming down on this animal the buck went a short distance from where he received his transfer and Dix was up one more animal on this trip 2 for 2. Just a few days earlier

he had crushed an amazing Muley we named fan.

This trip was about done and we had all the time to focus on my muley. Unfortunately on this trip I went home without mine. Although we all tried and Eric was frantically looking for more muleys on the nights we sat on

stands it just was not in the cards for me. I let a few walk that in hindsight I should have killed. You know the rule. Don't pass up something on the first day that you would love to shoot on the last.

The year prior to this season was my big muley year. I was able to hunt a great buck for nine days straight and be able to observe and study his patterns until we were able to move in closer and closer as if we were playing a

chess game until I was able to kill Alberta's and Alberta River Valley lodges #1 Non Typical Bow kill. We named him Porky and the video can be seen on FMP's Proof. He is a true example of what Alberta has to offer.

Lee and Eric have an Amazing track record of finding and killing great bucks. They also do a bit of goose and duck hunting on their place with their Master Guide and good friend Phillip McDonald an amazing waterfowl guide and caller. He also makes a mean custom call. I tell myself every year to set aside a day to hunt birds but I still have not. It's not the numbers because the guys in camp are usually always tagged out. It's the amount of action we get with the deer hunting. And with the bow zone in the works it will only get better.

As Lee and Eric continue to grow Alberta River Valley Lodge and move forward with the no holds bar attitude they should continue to find and create good whiteys and muleys. And with them creating a paradise inside a paradise and it still not being too late to start hunting Alberta, I will continue to go and enjoy the hunt and experience's it has to offer and grab *My Slice* before it too is gone. 🍷

MARK THE SHARK

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The front of Gray Taxidermy's 70,000 Sq. Ft. Studio

mount.

Having decided that the shark was going to adorn our wall at the Rocky Mountain Television studios, we marveled where the shark would be hanging for all to see, admire, and hear stories about our adventure. Luckily for us... the wall measured 9 feet, 6 inches!

Check out all the year-round monster shark hunting opportunities that can be found at www.marktheshark.com, or by calling (305) 759-JAWS (5297). Once you land the man-eating monster, take it to Gray Taxidermy (www.graytaxidermy.com) or 305-785-6456. Just make sure you tell JAWS we said hello. 🍷

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