



FISHING

with Eddie Riddle

Tank barra full of fight

STRONG winds and rough seas ensured a record crowd at the Townsville Boating and Outdoor Adventure Show last weekend.

With attendance 30 per cent up on previous years, fishing, boating and outdoor enthusiasts enjoyed a variety of displays.

There were a large range of boats, jet skis, kayaks, marine electronics, fishing tackle and an array of camping equipment.

The super tank, a semi-trailer size aquarium, was the biggest drawcard when casting demonstrators teased the resident fighting barramundi with a variety of lures.

Trick casting by a pair of Queensland casting champions had spectators sighing with admiration while Flathead Fred's Kids Fishing Show entertained far more than just the junior anglers.

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NORTH Queensland



POPULAR ... anglers gather around the super tank

anglers should make up their own mind regarding bag and size limit recommendations in the Regulatory Impact Statement (RIS) handed down by the Fisheries Department.

This is despite the call by Sunfish for anglers to protest the proposed limits.

I, for one, welcome the proposed bag limit reductions on listed species - of which only

two are likely to affect the catches of North Queensland anglers.

Spotted mackerel have finally had the maximum bag limit of 30 fish slashed to a realistic five fish, while the minimum size limit for the species has been raised from 50cm to a worthwhile 60cm.

Flathead have received favourable attention with minimum and maximum size rec-

ommendations of 40cm and 60cm and a bag limit of 10 fish.

In all, recreational anglers will be permitted to take fewer, but in a short time much larger fish from perceptibly much healthier fish stocks.

I am disappointed the RIS didn't include several other tropical species in need of regulation. There's little doubt we have been too



PROOF ... the permit scheme is worthwhile

greedy for too long.

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ANGLERS competing in the Cape Bowling Green Billfish Bonanza this weekend will be hoping for finer weather and more superior catches to those of recent local tournaments.

The tournament, open to all boat sizes, encourages anglers to tag and release sailfish and black marlin to gain competition points for titles in a number of categories.

Organiser and Townsville Gamefishing Club member Nick Papadimitriou said other gamefish species including mackerel, tuna and cobia

could well decide the champion angler and champion team titles.

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THE Bowen Wet Weekend Fishing Classic this weekend promises thousands of dollars in cash and prizes when anglers target fish in 15 categories.

A boat, motor and trailer package with a retail value of more than \$23,000 is the top prize to be won by one lucky entrant who buys a ticket.

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YESTERDAY I received a letter from the Department of Primary Industries advising me that my Stocked Impoundment Permit will soon expire.

It was a friendly letter reminding me that I need a permit to fish in any of 25 selected Queensland lakes or dams that shelter under the umbrella of a DPI fish-stocking program.

I was especially pleased when I realised my \$35 (cost of Stocked Impoundment Permit) is being well spent.

In 2001 a total of \$230,000 was allocated to community-based fish-stocking groups.

This allocation allows the purchase of more than one million fingerlings to boost the quality of fish in those selected impoundments.

Species stocked include barramundi, sooty grunter, yellowbelly, silver perch, Australian bass and cod.

The letter went on to say: "A further \$380 000 has recently been provided to fish-stocking groups for 2002."

I suspect the fishing within these impoundments, carefully managed, is only going to go from strength to strength.

Anglers are required to possess the Stocked Impoundment Permit should they fish any one of the 25 nominated impoundments, including Tinaroo Falls Dam, Burdekin Falls Dam, Peter Faust Dam near Prosperpine and Eungella, Teemburra and Kinchant Dams, all near Mackay.

Beware of imitations



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Dynamics of tiny fish

FISH larvae may be small but they play a big role in helping scientists understand the size and nature of fish populations.

James Cook University marine biology and aquaculture Professor Michael Kingsford explained the vital importance of fish larvae during his inaugural professorial lecture at the university last week.

He said the Great Barrier Reef was a complex environment and some of the most pressing issues for managers required a knowledge of where larval fish came from and went to.

"There has been exciting progress on our knowledge of reef fish



Kingsford

larvae," he said.

"It turns out that even at this size (of a few millimetres), they have excellent swimming and navigational abilities.

"Exciting new developments can allow fish to be tagged so that their reef of origin can be determined.

"This is very important given one of the biggest debates in North Queensland right now is the representative program and the role of marine protected areas."

He said recent scientific advances indicated protecting reefs was wise for sustaining fishing and quality of life on the Great Barrier Reef.

Keeping the reef pristine

THE fishing industry has welcomed the announcement of a joint federal-state plan to protect Great Barrier Reef waters from land-based pollution.

Queensland Seafood Industry Association president John Olsen said the industry had been campaigning long and hard for action against land-based pollution of reef waters.

"The fishing industry depends directly on the health of the State's

rivers, estuaries and oceans for its income and so there are tens of thousands of Queenslanders with a \$900 million stake in helping protect water quality," he said.

Mr Olsen said Prime Minister John Howard and Queensland Premier Peter Beattie had signed a memorandum of understanding to develop a plan to identify ways of improving water quality and reducing impacts on the Great Barrier Reef marine environment.