

## **Praslin-Seychelles Fishing Newsletter - Edition 07/2013**

Hello all!

I did not expect this month's edition to end up even more meager than the last one but it happened: no video, not even an external foto. Just a few own ones of some smaller catches. The Southeast keeps blowing at 15-20 knots, sometimes even more. We had a few calmer days at 11-14kn, though. Would have liked to go trolling on some of these despite the still choppy seas but those days always were in midweek when my buddies have to work. So I was reduced to some small fishing within somewhat protected areas. Also there was little to report from the charter skippers til the last few days. Quite understandable as most of their boats are hardly larger than my little nutshell, as open and without protection. If such poor tourist on just a 15min excursion trip to a neighbouring island experienced the rock n' roll and a few washouts he will obviously consider twice if he wants this for a whole day.

Luckily some were ready for it and most of them were well entertained. After my return to Praslin on the 5th Greg told me about a 2 day charter with a German guest. First day they went popping around the Sisters. After getting a few Garfish they experienced a double attack by 2 Dogtooth Tuna. Found the size of these at maybe 15kg noteworthy as so far inside the plateau I never encountered one exceeding 5kg. The next day they went fly fishing but as there was no action changed to inshore trolling for the last hour. That turned out to be a very smart move resulting in 9 Yellowfin Tuna.

Charlie mentioned that the day before he had been out, too. His tally of a handful of those Tuna and 2 Dorados left his guest happy. Just Martin had lesser luck `only` getting 3 Tuna two days later.

For the next few days all activities were stopped by strong winds but from my veranda I could see splashes, probably tuna, outside the bay every so often. On the 12th the wind was forecast to drop a bit in the afternoon. So I grabbed two spinning rods and a handful of lures to troll that area. On approach I had to realize that the conditions still were not good enough and there was no chance for it. But as there were Bonitos in reach I could catch a few on small casting lures, providing sashimi and bait for some small bottom fishing inside the bay.

This I did the following day and it was quite alright. Next to the usual mix of Spotcheek Emperors, some small Groupers and two juvenile Emperor Red Snappers (still bearing their stripes and thus released) I caught a Grouper that I had never seen before and that impressed by its beauty.



Tuesday, the 16th, was an unusually calm day with only 8 knots of wind. Perfect for trolling but as my lads were not available I went popping. Had mentioned my doubts of that 80lb braid in last month's edition already. Some meanwhile testing showed that at about 20kg and a small jerk it collapses. So I found that stuff useless (and will use it to sew stripbaits) and resorted to a 50lb line that turned out to be stronger. Not perfect, I know. But not to harm any fish that might get lost I had exchanged all the trebles on my poppers for just one barbless single hook. The result: 7 strikes of GTs in different sizes - but not a single hookup! Even as some of those fish visibly had inhaled the popper completely and pulled the rod into a bend. Just bad luck or no good a setup? At least when changing spots I caught a quite nice Green Job on a trolled Halco so not returning empty handed.



Two days later I went for my little bottom fishing again when the boat of hotel l'Archipel just returned from a 'half day' with half a dozen Wahoos and Tuna each. Couldn't match that but had fun with the usual mixed bag of Snappers, Pickhandle Barracudas and Groupers. Again caught another so far unknown (to me) species of those. These also were somewhat larger than the common ones and the last one I think is even presentable:



The next day Jude had a 'half day' bagging 6 more Tuna. As I was told these were somewhat bigger than the usual school size. After that the wind again picked up for about a week. So next news came only on the 25th when Christian tallied an impressive 15 Yellowfin Tuna and a Wahoo in just a 'half day'. Also one Tuna was swallowed by a Shark and gave them a hard fight.

As the wind was somewhat cooperative for the following days things started to get going again. Mervin recorded a Marlin the next day, though a small one estimated at 45kg. Martin did not have that sort of luck ending up with one Tuna and Wahoo each on a 'half day'.

Sunday offered good trolling conditions but Carlos had obligations and Ted had changed his day off to Monday for a charter with his uncle. That day the wind was forecast to be at 13kn in the morning dropping to 9kn in the day. So I decided for popping once more. The area around the first spot brought no activity. On the first cast into the

hot zone the popper was taken, the rod bent briefly, but no hookup. On the second cast a GT followed it. On the third the lure was inhaled right when hitting the water. Again the rod bent briefly, but again no hookup. This doesn't work! What now? With trembling fingers I fiddled another single barbless hook onto the belly eye of the popper. Cast, taken, rod stayed bent - yes! But happiness lasted only for seconds. Even as the drag was set hard and I stopped the GT from taking any line with my palm it just went down into the rocks and cut the braid. Absolutely frustrating. At least the fish should have gotten rid of that popper without trouble. After this the spot was dead. Also the next spots produced nothing but some half hearted misses. So again I couldn't lift the treasure. Still I nearly made a 'huge catch': a Frigate Bird appearing from thin air suddenly dived for my popper. Was really glad that it missed it. Doing surgery on such a 6 foot thing with its mean beak is an experience I do not need at all.



Was pretty mad trying to fish those spots under these conditions anyways. Of course the wind did not drop at all. Sitting around those rocks in heavy water and at a drifting speed of 1.7kn is nothing I would recommend. Without another person to keep the boat in position it came down to about 3 casts before the boat was either nearly sitting on the rocks or drifted too far off if on the lee side. That repositioning in such high frequency I guess spooks the fish. Even more as strikes only seem to come within a radius of maybe 10 meters around the rock. All far from perfect. Without adequate conditions and perfect tackle this seems to be hopeless. As my mid-size poppers are for all but one gone now and none are available here at the moment, for the time being I am out anyways. Those GTs will be happy for that I guess ...

Not to forget: Ted's trip that day was very successful with 1 Wahoo and 11 Tuna.

Yesterday Christian had a full day's fishing with another handful of Tuna. Does not sound too special but a lot of time went for fighting a Marlin. Unfortunately the fish - estimated at around 150kg - came off close to the boat after 3 hours.

Finally: Mervin spent that day at the Drop, also missing a Marlin but getting some Tuna and a Sailfish.

Wanted to call Faizal for news from Mahe tonight but found my phone out of credit (shame on me). Had learned from other sources, though, that a few days ago a small Marlin was caught rather close to the island. And 'Special K' had two excellent days with 4 Sails and a Black Marlin on day1 & 3 Sails plus some Yellowfin and Dogtooth Tuna on day2.

So no doubt that there is plenty of fish around - as usually around this time of the year. One just has to go out. Especially the Tuna are pretty much everywhere. It seems the Marlin are coming with them as they are supposed to. Found it a bit strange though that there were so few Sails caught or even seen. It's time I go and have a good look myself ...

Tight Lines and best regards from Praslin,

