

Praslin-Seychelles Fishing Newsletter - Edition 11/2012

Hello all!

November delivered plenty catches. Not so much because there was more fish than usually but simply because the calmer weather offered more opportunities to go out.

On the 4th I went with Robin and his uncle Steve from GB for a few hours trolling. We did not find any activity expect some normal size Bonitos for a while but then an area with a large school of smaller specimen. And below these were the predators. So we caught a small Yellowfin Tuna, then a nicer one of around 13kg and a presentable Wahoo of about 18kg.



The same day the neighbours from Mauritius had 2 Wahoos and a Yellowfin Tuna. Also that day Christian was fishing the Drop with guests. Besides some Wahoos and a Marlin of 75kg he got some Rainbow Runners. The biggest was 11kg.



The day after Martin was at the Drop for some jigging. Next to many Groupers and stuff they got 2 Amberjacks of 20kg. Also the guest cast a Popper into a school of Bonitos and hooked one right away. This fish was then instantly taken by something big enough to break the guest's rod. Pulling in the line by hand a huge Barracuda came to the boat, only to spit out the rest of the Bonito. And below was a big shark. Not the moment to take a dip I guess. The next day Martin was out there once more, for trolling this time. But as the wind had ceased completely and the water was flat fishing was slow: They only got 2 Wahoos and lost one more. Also they had a hefty strike but the fish did not hook up and could not be identified. Martin told me that one of the Wahoos just before striking had jumped vertically out of the water in front of the boat and far higher then he was sitting on his flybridge.

But the next day already, so on the 7th, the bite out there was on again. Very much to Christian's and his guest's pleasure. They got a large mixed bag of all sorts of gamefish and on top of that 10 Doggies of up to 35kg! So noone really had reason to mourn too much about the Marlin that got away after some 20 minutes fighting time.



On the 9th I then bugged off to Brasil for the German Championships held in the city of Vitória some 400km north of Rio. First disappointment came right on arrival when I learned that they had brought the tournament forward due to bad weather. And the forecast said that 'maybe' fishing would be possible on Tuesday and Friday. So instead of 4 days fishing (1 training, 3 competition) for me only 2 at the max. My forecast predicted only about 11 knots of wind so I was wondering what the problem was. Well, on Tuesday fishing at some 7-8 knots I knew why: the swell was crazy, anything more is just impossible to fish there - even on these 40ft+ boats. This second day (so my first) produced 8 strikes for our boat of which 2 were White Marlin. Unfortunately no strike at all was on my rod and we ended up with just 2 Dorados. And things did not get any better for our Wahoo-Team: On the last day we heard on the radio: 'Marlin released! ... Sailfish released! .. Marlin doublestrike!' and so on while we did not see a scale til noon. Only then a Whitey grabbed my teammate Klaus' Ballyhoo briefly but let go right away. And a half hour from lines out finally mine was also taken, but again dropped after a short run. Tried to tease him back and he really took again. I let him go on the circle hook for some endless seeming 20 seconds as we were told to do and then closed the drag very slowly - fish on! But on the 3rd or 4th jump that crook managed to shake of the circle hook - shoot! So with no points that day we became last overall and also I missed out on the White Marlin I so badly had wanted to catch as this is the only Billfish we do not have here in Seychelles.



But in spite of my personal misfortune my overall conclusion is very positive. The whole event was organized perfectly and our Brazilian host were fantastic. And also from an objective point of view one can only say that the fishing there is excellent. This fishing with Ballyhoos hair-rigged on Circles is quite demanding. And the abundance of White Marlin is really astounding: 6 teams on 3 fishing days saw about 50-60 of which around 40 took the baits and some 15 were hooked and then all released. I think that is quite gigantic. Add some Sails, Wahoos and plenty of Dorados - there are for sure worse places to fish. A few impressions of the marina and a nice sequence of a Whitey release (thanks, Andi!) can be seen in this month's video.



Interesting also: None of the boats there is for charter. All the skippers - very much the influential people of Vitória - have them only for their personal fishing. On my question why nobody offers charters for such great fishing I learned: 'It's not worth it. Due to the rough seas we have too few fishing days.'

Last but not least I want to thank Geraldo, Mario and all the other great lads from the late Clube de Espirito Santo for the really splendid time we enjoyed with you. I keep fingers crossed that you will be awarded to hold the 2014 World Championships - and that I will be able to then fish with you once more! And that mount of your World Record Blue Marlin will for sure keep spinning through my dreams.



As Seychelles is a bit of a bottleneck flightwise I `had to` spend a few days in Rio. Well, I admit that a lot worse things can happen to you in life. Fantastic city, if you ever have a chance to visit, then do so. Due to this I missed out on the tournament held in Mahe last weekend. Not too much of a pain, though, as catches were somewhat below par. 17 boats `only` caught 3 Sails and 2 Marlin. Strange also that none of the Marlin was the here most common Black, but a Blue of 112kg and a Stripey of 70kg. Also the `by-catch` was less then usual with `only` a little more than a metric ton altogether. Still some very nice fish were caught, among them a Yellowfin Tuna of 40kg and a Doggie of 45kg. Here is a pic of the winning Marlin caught by team `Special K`. I want my car in these colours!



Meanwhile from Praslin the guys kept catching fish during my absence. Martin had already sent me an email to Rio that he had had a wonderful day: 4 Wahoos, 2 Dorados, a Sail and 2 Marlin of 98 and 110kg!



Also Andre & Greg and their guests were pleased. No billfish that day but they pretty much filled the boat with Dorados, Tuna and Wahoos of which the heaviest was more than 20kg. Quite interesting how these big ones, about double the weight of the average ones, reliably appear when the Southeast ceases. Really wonder where they hang out the rest of the year.

And Andre had 3 days of Fly-Guiding. That also went very well with many Groupers, Garfish, Bluefin Trevallies and Doublespotted Queenfish of up to 5kg.

In the last week of November I also had three days on the water. Did not fish though, came just for filming. A group of three German anglers had booked accommodation and charters with Martin. Helmut, his son Christoph and Alwin are very experienced fishermen that have dropped lines pretty much everywhere but never yet in Seychelles' waters. The first of their days - Monday, the 27th - was a bit mixed. At the Drop they got only a Dorado in the beginning that got away right after striking and somewhat later a Wahoo. Just when they started to jig a rainfront came on us and the wind picked up to some 12 knots. With a driftspeed of nearly 3 knots and the heavy jigs by a misunderstanding left behind in Germany there was not much to earn but a few small groupers and a Green Job of about 5kg.



Resorting to trolling produced one more Wahoo and another bigger one got rid of the hook. Fortunately right before Lines Out a Sail was on to save the day. Sadly it was hooked so unfortunately that we had to take it.



The next trip was on Wednesday and they fished the northern Bank to find some Doggies. That became a more than entertaining day with some 30 to 40 fish when accounting for the Bonitos also. And many of these were big, up to 7-8kg. The biggest one went lost as also a Wahoo and a small Dorado. But they got 2 Wahoos, 2 Yellowfin Tuna, a small Rainbow Runner and a rather juvenile Doggie of about 8-9kg. Still they got some adrenaline and proof that much bigger ones are always lurking: when playing some hooked Bonitos a bunch of large Doggies came up to chase those. I was certain that these fish had at least 30kg and Martin said he saw two well above 50kg. In any case these fish were as big as sheep and the three anglers quite impressed (as we all were) confirmed that for their next visit they would for sure bring heavier tackle.



On Thursday Helmut, Christoph & Alwin fished the Drop once more. Only a few minutes after Lines In a Sail took a Stickbait and sort of released itself at the boat. And briefly after that there was another one behind the lures for quite a while, testing some but not getting hooked on several attempts. As the next hour or so produced a Wahoo and two Yellowfin Tunas of about 15 & 18kg it looked to become one of these special days.





But unfortunately things slowed down a bit and in the next two hours they added 'just' one more Tuna. A bit of jigging also was not too productive with some smaller fish of different kinds so they decided to troll again for a while and got another Tuna. The last hour or so they spent jigging again but it was simply not a day for that as again only a few small fish came up.

Altogether these were not exceptional results for our waters, but they had lots of action. Subsequently this month's video is a bit longer than usual. Here is the link, just click and enjoy:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CK5UixrBdqU>

Admittedly I was somewhat relieved as I had told them beforehand to expect an entertaining fishery that at any moment bears the potential for something special to appear. It seemed to me they were quite happy with their experience of Seychelles as they were already talking about what to do and bring next time. As they on top are a really pleasant and funny bunch I am looking forward to some point going out with them again.

As usually I phoned Faizal tonight to find out how the fishing was on Mahe that month. He said rather slow but due to a lack of charters, not of fish. I learned that during the tournament quite a handful of Marlin got lost and that a nice one was caught just a few miles off Mahe some days ago. Also Sails and Tuna are still around. And he mentioned that someone had 4(!) Marlin attacks on stickbaits. There must be a video of that somewhere on the web. As soon as I have time I will look for that.

Right at 'editorial deadline' I learned about Martin's result as of today. I knew he was due to fish the Drop again. When I saw the sea flat like liquid lead and no wind at all this morning I had expected him to probably have a hard time getting anything on the troll. But it was not all that bad: A Wahoo, a decent Yellowfin Tuna and a Sailfish lost show that even in these unfavourable conditions it can be worth going out. And the amount of Bottom Fish they got makes clear that they had only been trolling part of the time.

So what's left for this edition? Well, of course to wish all of you a Merry Christmas! Funny, I know, but the next report will only come after the holidays which I hope you will enjoy.

So long, Tight Lines and best regards from Praslin

Daniel