

Hello all!

The first month of the new year has passed and it is about time to let you know what has happened here on Praslin and to some extent on Mahe fishing wise as far as I got aware.

My own fishing is still a lot less intense than I wish it to be. Partly because I do not have my own boat yet. Partly also because my friend Pierre's Bigarade is more or less out of order and due for the dock. We went out twice, though, for a bit of Bottom Fishing rather close to shore. This resulted in the common colourful boxes of Groupers, Snappers etc. We got nothing really big, but had lots of fun and secured some fine meals.

When having a rented car I went a few times to the western side of Praslin to cast a bit with artificial lures. At one place in Anse Kerlan the reef is rather narrow and wading in a bit allows casting nearly to the break. I found that most of the little assortment of lures I brought is rather unsuitable. Soft Plastics create attacks, but only one per lure as then the tail is gone and the thing is ready for the bin. Any metal lures are completely ignored. Just a Devon Spinner produced a single attack but the fish came off right away. Quite productive though is - or rather: was - a Gladsax Fiske, a common seatrout lure at the Baltic Sea. That little thing had already brought me a small Barracuda and a double miss of two Green Jobfish fishing from a rock near my place. There at Anse Kerlan it was taken by a much better fish. After some 15 minutes fighting I had a fairly nice Yellowspotted Trevally (I believe) of 10-12lbs already close to shore. But then it came off. Very much to my disappointment and even more to that of the three local guys that had come to watch. A few casts later I got a similar attack and my 25 lbs steel leader got ripped. There went my only Gladsax. So back at my place I ordered half a dozen new ones from Germany. The next day I went again. Some Salmo jerkbaits looked good in the water but did not produce. A SavageGear Freestyler looked very convincing and it was. On the third cast I got a hefty strike, strong resistance for a second, and then nothing. Whatever it was got past the new titanium leader and the 6 feet of mono shock leader to the braided main line and of course just cut it. Needless to say I had only one of these lures also ... so back to the internet ... Now I wait for the new stuff to arrive.



Wading spot

Besides these little bits and pieces I made contact with some of the other skippers here on Praslin. Had not done that before as I could never be sure that I was able to stay here. As this is sorted out now I felt it was time to let them know about my plans to help this place's fishing get the attention it deserves and the first steps I am now taking. Of Lester Robert, who operates the cat Lazio out of Cote d'Or, I already knew he is a very experienced skipper and I also found him to be a very reasonable man. Christian Lablache on the opposite is quite young but has already won a handful of tournaments in recent years from his Djab Lawal. He obviously is not only an excellent skipper and angler but also a very open and friendly guy. Same goes for Martin Wartelsteiner, an Austrian living here for 26 years already. He runs the 30 foot center console Makaira and the 42 foot Venture from which he caught the winning 250kg Black Marlin at last December's tournament. I asked them to just call me half hour before they get to shore and tell me about their catch, so I have the chance to come with my cameras to grab some footage and comments. This is to feed into different channels and thus produce them some publicity. I have a few more skippers on my list and am very curious to find out to what extent they all are going to make use of that. Already feeding me is Precy Vidot, who operates Rainbow out of his l'Hirondelle Guesthouse at which I am currently residing. The foto shows a catch made on a short trip close to the island due to rough weather: a Dorado, a small Yellowfin Tuna and the usual Bonitos of which one reached 10lbs. His son Mathieu last weekend caught two Yellowfins of 30lbs and 42lbs close to Felicite. These are quite decent specimen for so close in. Divers told that they have seen a lot of those and bigger ones. Let's hope they will stick around!



Precy's shorttrip catch

On the 20th of January I travelled to Mahe to meet with Christophe Houareau, the chairman of the Seychelles Sports Fishing Club (SSFC) who I got to know a while ago. From him I learned that a number of Shortbill Spearfish have been caught recently. This is great news as it brings the number of billfish species abundant to six: Black, Blue and Striped Marlin, Sailfish, Spearfish and Broadbill Swordfish. So, Slam Anglers, please note! In the course of my visit I had planned to follow the next day's weigh-in of the annual Seychelles Marlin Slam Tournament at Eden Island Marina. 25 boats were accredited. Simple rule: The heaviest marlin takes it all! As mentioned, Bigarade is out of order so I could not compete together with Pierre as I had much wished to do. But Christophe invited me to the skipper's meeting. That was really nice as I met a lot of fishermen again and got to know numerous more. He also introduced me to Faizal Suleman, the IGFA representative for Seychelles. Faizal is very motivated to push Seychelles' sports fishing ahead and promised to feed me with information from Mahe. Also he works hard to establish Tag&Release here and is supported on that by Ali Al Harazi who some of you will know from Hemingway's in Watamu-Malindi/Kenya. Ali had produced some tag sticks that were received eagerly together with the tags (from the African Billfish foundation) which Faizal had gathered. The weigh-in on Saturday afternoon was a great show with a big crowd and the usual Seychelles party atmosphere. Luckily there were some main protagonists seen at the scales also: 5 marlin altogether; 3 Blacks, one Blue and a quite decent Stripey. The winning one, caught by Charlie Marzocchi's team was of exactly 132.35 kg. Also the next two exceeded the 100kg mark. Besides that I saw a good sailfish and a 30kg dogtooth tuna. A number more of such have been caught as I learned but many boats did not come to the scales any more, as they already knew they had no chance of beating the winning fish.



Tournament catch

Unfortunately the foto is not of the best quality as it is a snapshot from the videos I took. But I placed a short clip of the event on YouTube that can be found through clicking the following link:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lr70cYh-HMc&feature=youtu.be>

The Marlin landing pictures in the clip are from Christian who also provided me with this fantastic foto (among many other really good ones that will follow over time):



3 decent Dogtooth Tunas

Back on Praslin I learned from Pierre that his grandson Greg had been out on the small boat with a client for some jigging. The client - using a metal pirk with some plastic octopus over 120 feet of water - caught a Bonefish of about 13lbs! This is very exceptional to say the least as these are considered flats and fly-only fish. I googled quite a bit to find out on other incidents like that, but could not find anything like it. Could well be this was a one-of-a-kind. No surprise though that such calibers are around Praslin. I saw some myself already and know of catches. But to get one on a pirk is very special, I guess. Andre told me that the jigging in those days was very productive by numbers even they got no really big fish. But numerous Trevallies around 15lbs and Bonitos over 20lbs were good fun.



13lbs Bonefish - caught on metal pirk!

Finally, yesterday I saw Mervin's Vicinity cruising the bay with flags on. On some research I found out that they had caught a Sail and two Marlin that day. Really nice!

So much for this time here from Seychelles. I hope that from now on I will be well fed with information and can also report of some catches of my own soon.

So long, Tight Lines and best regards from Praslin,

Daniel

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