



October 07 Newsletter!

Howdy All!

We've had a great couple of months fishing and indulging in plenty of fresh seafood! The new Stabi is going a treat and we've just got back recently from an epic adventure to Vanuatu. All in all, we've got lots of epic tales to share this month, so grab a drink, kick back and enjoy the read!

Fat king, light line!

Early in September we had Justin and Hamish Pilkington from Cathedral Cove Macadamias out fishing with us. Those that managed to get along to the Whitianga Scallop Festival this year will know them well, they managed to serve up 20,000 scallops coated in their macadamia crumb and cooked in macadamia oil. We'd been talking about getting the guys out to catch a few kingi's as a wind down from the festival and with a nice weather window things all fell into place.



We got out to the reefs and it took about three drifts to find the kingi's - Justin hooking into the first fish, and battling hard to get a 12kg kingi boatside. Hamish hooked up straight away on the next drop and a similar sized kingi made it to the boat. The guys were using our 24kg braid sets and while you don't lose a lot of fish on them, you feel every run of the kingi's and you definitely feel the arms burning after a few minutes on a good fish!

I had a 15kg mono snapper rod rigged up with a smaller jig for bottom bouncing and Justin snuck this over the side on the next drift, I think hoping to hook something a little less hard to pull up!

Well, a monster decided to pounce on it and pretty soon the rod was buckled over and line being pulled out at a great rate of knots. There were a few times we thought it would end in tears



but Justin did well to keep the kingi out of the reef and 40 minutes later we had a big round kingfish being pulled aboard.

High fives all round – the kingfish went **20.2 kgs** back at the clubhouse, a great effort on 15kg mono. Plenty more kingis, all released to fight another day and we made out way back to Tairua.

The kingfish tasted damn fine in some chilli kelp macadamia crumb that night!!



Epic Adventure to Vanuatu

In our last few newsletters you would have seen us advertising a trip to Vanuatu. Well, three lucky people signed up for the trip and experienced first hand just what a fantastic destination Vanuatu is.

Well done to Lonnie McAlister, Bill Pepper and Ian Hogan who came along, all hooking into some great fish, and experiencing some of Vanuatu's famous hospitality.

Bill and Ian flew with me to Vanuatu where we met Lonnie who had flown via Australia from Taiwan. We were picked up at the airport by Leanne, who took us back to the Nautilus base where Pete and Kenny were busy getting 'Shogun' ready for the trip.

Pete filled us in on the plan for the week, and you could see the excitement build when Pete told the guys our plan to cruise up the 'Marlin Highway' the next day. The marlin were so thick Pete told us that you needed to indicate to change lanes in order to avoid a marlin hitting the boat from behind....!



A few Tuskers beside the water at Erakor Lagoon and then a great feed at the Waterfront restaurant and we retired in preparation for the big trip ahead.

8.30am the next morning and we had the first marlin of the trip up behind the boat. It hit Pete's big blue pusher, his favourite marlin lure and broke the line free from the long rigger, coming in and devouring the Zuker on the short corner.

It erupted behind the boat and looked like a huge fish. Pete called it as a Black of about 190kgs and Bill settled in to fight the fish, which went straight down beneath the boat. We were down to the last 200m of mono when the hook pulled. While it would have been nice to get the fish beside the boat, we were all pretty happy to have played a marlin in the first hour of fishing.

The rest of the day the guys hooked into some dinner. Lonnie got a huge mahimahi, Ian a nice wahoo and Bill contributed some yellowfin for sashimi that night.

Close to Epi Island which was our destination for the rest of the fishing trip, the same blue pusher got knocked down from the outrigger. We turned around to see him sitting under the lure, Pete gunned the boat to encourage a strike but the fish just cruised along, eventually putting on an awesome display free jumping towards the boat and then leaving us.



That night we sat on the deck overlooking Lamenu Bay at Epi Island drinking Tusker while the sun went down over Shogun, moored out in the bay, recounting a fair few fishy stories and a trio of fresh sashimi. The local ladies from the village cooked up mahimahi which I swear had some secret ingredients but just turned out to be coated in a bit of salt, cooked in oil – it tasted wicked!



The next day we steamed around the corner to Lopevi Island, a volcano which rises up from the sea. As Pete put it well, you expect to see King Kong charging down from the mountain as you pull up beside the island, but the only creatures to greet us were wahoo – three of them which all struck at once and Lonnie, Ian and Bill were all hooked into wahoo, the biggest going 26kg!!



We trolled a big skipper on the downrigger in the hope we might find a dogtooth tuna lurking, but pulled the pin on that after a while, towing some lures in the hope of finding some more wahoo. It was lunchtime by this stage and Pete went below deck to put together some lunch for us and I noticed a big red blob on the sounder in 50m. Must be some bait I thought. Then the big red blob started to arc up to 40m, 30m, 20m, 10m I was just about to yell out something is going to hit the lures when the shotgun rigger snapped off and the Shimano Tiagra howled as a huge Blue Marlin erupted from the water. The guys rushed out from lunch in the cabin yelling “marlin” and Lonnie was soon in the chair buckled into a long fight. Pete had the 34ft Blackwatch full tit

backwards into a 2m sea, the guys getting a good drenching – yeah, this is what gamefishing is all about!!!

The fish went deep pretty quickly and Lonnie battled away gaining and losing line. After a good hour the fish came boatside and was a long and solid fish, easily over 200kg. We were hoping to get it up on the surface to tow beside the boat for some photos but as soon as any pressure was put on the short leader it snapped, thanks to one of the wahoo earlier on! Anyway it was high fives all around for Lonnie and the crew, a legitimate fish and Lonnie’s first marlin.



Once again that night there were plenty of stories to share with a few of the yachties and a handful of backpackers who were staying in the village up on Epi. We fired up the barby (literally, to turn it down you chucked a log off...) had a few Tuskers and enjoyed an awesome spread put on by the ladies from the village once again.

The next couple of days we fished seamounts between Epi and the Maskelyne Island for wahoo, yellowfin and mahimahi, the first day produced some red hot fishing with all the guys hooked up on big fish, the next day was dead, but just like anywhere you do get the odd non-productive day, that is fishing.

It was a sad day pulling out of Lamien Bay for the trip home, but we were comforted by the fact we were about to head back down the Marlin Highway! As soon as we left Epi Island and the bottom began to drop off past 700m the pearl Ton Gun lure on the shotgun sprang off and a Blue Marlin danced off towards the upcoming sun.

Pete threw the boat into reverse while we were still pulling in the gear, making sure we didn't lose too much line and Ian had the fish well under control. It got a bit feistier near the end of the fight, but it really wasn't until Kenny put the tag in that the fish went ballistic and screamed off some more line. Ian soon had the fish back to the boat, Kenny leaedered the fish close to the boat to release him and get some photos and the marlin put on a great show, dancing all around the boat and giving us a split second to get a good shot before he started thrashing



around again and Kenny had to let him go. A very stoked Ian made his way up to the flybridge for some R&R having tagged his first ever marlin.

It wasn't long before we were back into Vila with a lot of flags flying from the outriggers. We spent the last few days tiki touring round and checking out some of Vila's famous cuisine at some of the best spots and a few drinks as well.

A huge thanks to Pete and Leanne for looking after us all so well.

Vanuatu trips 2008

If this report has you amped to get over to the tropics next year, we will have three or four trips back to Vanuatu running next year, so just email Carl info@epicadventures.co.nz and put your name down for one of the trips.

At this stage we are looking at
June,
August,
September and
November.

As well as being a lifetime experience it is very affordable. The package includes flights, majority of the meals and 5 days gamefishing.

Booking on a group tour means you do not have to worry finding the numbers to fish yourself and you can afford to be out there for five days giving you a better chance of finding one of those classic Vanuatu days where the fishing goes bananas!!



Epic morning on the kingi's

A few weekends back we had two mad keen kingi fishermen join us for a trip to the Aldys.

Adam Bartley-Smith and Mark Edwards have both done a lot of jigging but hadn't been amongst the kingi's for a while and hearing some of the luck we've been having out there were chomping at the bit to get amongst it. Adam was hoping to top his personal best kingfish of 15kg.

The new boat blasted out to the pins in record time. The first drop of the jigs and Adam was into a fish, stoked to be getting pulled over the side by some feisty kings once again. A nice 12kg kingfish came boatside and we released it to fish another day.

Both guys only just wanted one kingfish each to



take home and so we were going to be a bit choosy about which kingis we put into the fishbin.

Mark was next and had a big grin on when a similar sized kingi was brought aboard for a few photos and then thrown back to fight another day.

Every drop of the jig produced a fish and we finally kept a fish when Adam got a big fat 16kg fish to the boat. Mark released one that would easily have gone 15kg, eventually keeping a 12kg fish for some sashimi and seared kingfish!!



The fishing eventually went dead and so we fished a lot more of the pins both North and South of the Aldies, producing a fair few rats but nothing like the first reef we fished.

A quick stop back in at the Aldys and we picked up some nice snapper on softbaits. The Mango GULP Pogy/Swimming Shad being the hot bait.

More Sensational Softbait Snapper

The Berkley rods were continually doubled over on big snapper prior to our Vanuatu trip.

The end of winter saw day after day of strong winds, keeping us in shore but the GULP softbait saved us, producing heaps of good snapper in to 10-15 pound range.

The skipper even managed to sneak this 14 pound snapper into the net!



Braving the conditions for a kingi!

Steven Avery recently came out with us, keen as a bean to get stuck into his first kingi. We nearly pulled the pin on the trip, but Steve decided to come out anyway, despite the conditions. I was pretty sure we'd get into a kingi, there had been gannets and other birds working the shore all week and I'd seen a big school of kingi's on a dive earlier in the week.

The new canopy at the back of the hardtop was zipped up at one stage while we sat out a squall and had a nice hot coffee and cake. As soon as it passed a slimy mackerel was put to the bottom in 8m. Five minutes later the Shimano Dominator was bent over and the Tyrnos squeeling on a big fish. The anchor was pulled up and Steven played the fish out on the sand from Te Karo Bay. Steven did well and we soon had a 16kg kingi on the boat – a nice winter kingi for in close!



Macadamias and Seafood

Earlier in the newsletter you would have seen the guys from Cathedral Cove Macadamias with some nice kingfish. Justin, Hamish and their family have been busy promoting the health benefits of macadamias at many events around the country.

We've been lucky enough to try out a range of their products in many different dishes over the last few months. Macadamias are the perfect compliment to seafood and we now use it in most seafood dishes we cook up at home.

Last night we had snapper crumbed in their lemon macadamia crumb. This afternoon I put a bit of their macadamia dukkah and chilli crumb into a fish cake mixture (with celery, fish, red curry paste, cornflour and egg) and both the dukkah and crumb into a fish curry tonight.

Crayfish are superb split in half and coated in a mixture of dukkah and breadcrumb.

The guys welcome visits to their orchard and we're currently putting together a package incorporating a visit to their orchard and a meal cooked up incorporating their products in between days out gathering fish and other seafood.

Scallop Festival promotion

Speaking of seafood, thanks to all of those people who came and had a nosey at the boat at the Scallop Festival. Sorry I wasn't at the boat to say giddy as I was a touch busy behind the scenes.... but thanks to Richard we had heaps of entries

on the day. Congratulations to **COLIN BEERE** who has won a coastal fishing trip for two people. We look forward to getting you out on the water Colin!!.

For those that missed out, we hope you're keen to get out anyway at some stage, just get in touch with us.

2006/2007 Tairua/Pauanui SFC Kingfish Pinfish

We had the Tairua Pauanui Sports Fishing club prizegiving recently and we won the Kingfish Pin (ie: biggest for the year) with a 22kg kingfish we caught back in February. We also managed to take out the biggest east coast fish for the Thames Angling Club with a 19kg kingfish caught back in April.

Summer bookings

We're getting pretty chocka from now right through to May next year, so if you are thinking of coming out for a fish, or coming to stay on the Coromandel make sure you get in touch early and let us know.

We'd love to see you again soon.

Cheers

Carl, Belinda, Bella and Oscar

PS: We'll leave you with a couple of pics from Saturday just been. Wayne Merrick joined us from Hong Kong. His mission was to catch a solid NZ kingfish and also he wanted to catch his first snapper. By 9.30am we had both – a 17kg kingfish and 11 pound snapper – both caught on a 400gm Williamson Big Pink jig

