

Batman and Robin save the day...

We went out recently for some evening fishing: Bob Kelleher, Oscar Boreth and I. We started out at 17:00 on Oscar's boat, but the engine was coughing and sputtering so we quickly went to Plan B and the use of Bob Kelleher's boat. We had heard that we might have some luck with larger striped bass outside the inlet between the green cans, so we started to fish there, using both clams and chunk mackerel at the onset of the outgoing tide. We had a few hits while at anchor, so we tried drifting and had no hits at all. "Time to try Joppa", I suggested.

We found a few boats near fishing near Can 13 inside the river, so we anchored just outside of the channel, or so we thought. We had just started fishing, when over the horizon came the all-too-familiar profile of the Newburyport Harbor Patrol. "Here it comes", I thought. Sure enough, the patrol boat, as commandeered by Batman and Robin, wanted to do their best to preserve Truth, Justice, and the American Way. They said that Bob was protruding "a few feet" into the channel and that he would have to move. Bob's GPS showed information to the contrary and we tried to argue, but to no avail. We hauled up anchor and went back to the dock – protesting in silence all the way. You can't beat City Hall, so to speak.

I fished off of the stern of Bob's boat while docked and caught 2 small stripers, but the evening had been ruined at that point.

A better story follows: Young Gregory Kruse had a day of fishing on the Clipper Fleet. While Gregory did not catch a keeper, the crew - according to his Mom- was extremely helpful and friendly. Gregory had a wonderful time and, thanks to the generosity of some of the other passengers, he actually came home with some keeper haddock. Stories like these warm the cockles of my heart.

Kay Moulton over at SurfLand on Plum Island had been logging in a few good-sized striped bass. Kay said that she weighed a 21-pounder last Monday – the angler was using black Sluggos fishing near the mouth of the river. Kay also weighed in a 28-pounder, caught off of the oceanfront. Want bluefish? Kay said that they were on the beach last Friday. It looks like a few larger stripers have moved in...

The report from Tim's Bait and Tackle in Salisbury was that Tim Roland-Anderson was at home, continuing to recover from his stroke. Tim's shop is continuing to operate and has seen a few keeper bass along with some bluefish. Their advice was to try for bluefish "off of the reservation."

Rene Vigneault of Bridge Bait and Tackle in Salisbury said "lots of blues 5-6 lbs off of High Sandy." Rene said that the blues would hit "just about anything." The striper fishing, according to Rene, had slowed down considerably and that a few keepers were still trickling in.

George Charos of Captain's Parties said that the offshore cod and haddock story was "normal fishing, with a fair amount of haddock and the (unwelcome) return of some dogfish" George said that the large pollock were also offshore but not in the numbers we'd expect this time of year. As it related to bluefish, George said that "medium-sized bluefish" were around, but "erratic." George said that he'd get them solidly then be next to a boat slamming them while his customers had a slow pick. George said that the striper fishing was "fishing, not catching", and that it had slacked off a great deal. Please call 1-800-427-1333 for reservations.

The report for August 17th, from Captain Rick LaPierre of the Yellow Bird: Very good fishing today, we caught a bunch of haddock and pollock, and the weather couldn't have been better. The tide wasn't as bad as it has been, and toward the end of the day we were able to drift." Please call 1-888-234-3531 for Yellow Bird reservations.

As always, I thank Kay and Martha Moulton, Rene Vigneault, Tim Roland-Anderson, and the local sport-fishing captains for their forecasts and news. If you have your own stories, please call me, John Altson, at 978-499-9972 with your news, recipes, and stories. Better yet; send them by e-mail to jaltson@comcast.net. I'd love to hear from you. This column is available, along with other good fishing reports, on www.surfcaster.com.

Have a great weekend!