



The author with a nice red emperor and large-mouth nannygai caught during a three-hour bite session about 120km out from Kurrimine Beach.



Snorkelling the reefs is a must in NQ and a highlight while doing this was spearing massive painted crays.



Foxy with two very solid gold-band jobfish caught on a flat rubble bottom while using squid on a pater-noster rig.

Fishing Kurrimine Beach

I LIKE nothing more than taking a couple of weeks off work every year to enjoy a hardcore fishing holiday.

Each year we tend to try a different location and this has led to some great experiences in areas around Lucinda NQ, Stanage Bay, 1770 and Fraser Island.

This year we opted for another location and this one had been on our to-do list for several years.

The destination this year was Kurrimine Beach, which is located north of Mission Beach and about an hour and a half south of Cairns.

My usual deckie Foxy purchased a block of land up there a few years back and has since put up a decent sized shed and decked it out into a very comfortable holiday house.

Match this with a tractor to launch the boats during mid to low tides and you have a perfect setup for a fishing holiday in this area.

We had two boats and 10 blokes on this trip and after 23 hours of towing the boats from Brisbane we reached Kurrimine Beach hassle free.

We were all excited and pumped but the three weeks of consistent 30-knot south-easterly wind prior to our arrival had us very worried.

Luck was on our side when the forecast for the day after our arrival was only 10-15 knots.

We were up early and put the boats in on the high tide before making our way south along the beach to where the deeper water was.

The importance of local knowledge in making your way out from Kurrimine Beach is a must as you have King Reef not far off the beach that runs a considerable distance north and south from the beach.

Even the surrounding areas have little bommies scattered everywhere so a lot of caution has to be taken particularly towards a low tide.



Fishing Adventure – Part 1
by GREG LAMPRECHT

Foxy has spent many years holidaying at Kurrimine and over the years has got to know the locals well and gained plenty of valuable knowledge, so this was a big bonus for us.

About 30km out we started weaving our way through the reefs and then some more about 50km out.

We planned on fishing isolated areas well out from the outer reefs towards the shelf.

We sounded around some areas that Foxy had found good fish on at Christmas time but most spots only had small shows on them.

I found one spot that clearly had some larger fish surrounding a large bait school so we had a drop.

The boys got smashed before hitting the bottom and rods were well and truly buckled over.

They turned out to be big bludger trevally, which was disappointing but made good bait for the day's fishing.

Persisting on this spot, it wasn't long before the trevally moved on and we could get our baits to the bottom.

I was hit soon after and had a fight with a good sized blue maori cod and Foxy followed with a school sized red.

I was starting to think the fishing was heating up but what followed were many hours of boredom as we hit bommie after bommie.

One very large pinnacle produced the odd trout and a spanish mackerel on my bottom bashing rig but things were extremely slow.

I sounded around for hours and hours and fished some of the most impressive looking country you could ever hope to see, but the fish were simply not around.

Then I found a school

of bait that produced a few nice reds but the bait wasn't on any structure and moved away quickly, with the reds following them.

More hours of searching and boredom passed but we pulled the odd trout, red-throat, cod and gold-band jobfish off one spot and I thought on dark it may fire but it didn't happen.

The boys in the other boat were struggling as well in the same area and we pulled the pin and headed back to the beach at about 9pm.

The next day it was blowing a good 15-20 knots so we headed to the closest reef for some spearfishing.

We weaved our way through the bommies on top of Alison Reef and spent the day snorkelling and spearing in beautiful clear water, which was a fantastic experience.

Macca and Ed in the other boat had speared a trout and a nice jack that got half eaten by a shark before Ed wrestled it from its mouth.

We decided to chase the crays and it wasn't long before Foxy had speared some monster painted crays.

Spearing crays for most of us was a new experience and diving down around the base of large bommies and into caves and large cracks was daunting to say the least.

After driving around and diving lots of different bommies we anchored up for lunch and had a good snorkel around the surrounding areas.

Having massive schools of barracuda and trevally surrounding you within arm's reach was awesome and we headed back to the ramp with smiles on our faces and eight big crays in Eskies.

I hate to rub it in but damn the crays on the bar-

becue with garlic butter tasted good that night.

The next day we had a late start as we wanted to do an overnighter in an area that was a considerable distance away.

We fuelled the boats up and I put 450 litres into the Riptide ready for some serious hunting around.

We headed out and found the water to be like a dead flat mirror and perfect for our travel out wide.

About 60km out we stopped on some flat gravel grounds with a small show of fish.

As soon as my squid hit the bottom it was taken by a very solid fish and the boys also followed with some nice fish.

My fish was a big gold-band jobfish and Foxy followed with one as well while my old man pulled up a gold-spot cod.

Several drifts later resulted in nothing so we moved on and fished some reef about 10km away.

There was more structure on this spot which resulted in a steady stream of trout, red-throat and a large and small-mouth nannygai.

We headed east out past the last set of reefs and started searching in an area about 120km from Kurrimine.

The fishing was slow and with the afternoon getting on we started looking for a suitable reef to anchor on for the night.

We decided on a nice rock in 70m of water and as night fell it didn't take long for fish to start chewing.

The wind was blowing a good 15-20 knots but the next three hours resulted in fish being pulled one after another.

We had a good flow of quality reds, large-mouth nannygai, jacks, long-nose emperor, red-throat, iron jaw and gold-band jobfish, spangled emperor, cod, red bass, barracuda, trevally, chinaman and a dogtooth tuna.

The variety of species was a welcome experience although we lost a fair amount of good fish and tackle to the reef, but

really we couldn't complain.

The reds were patchy but we got a bit of run on them at the end of the session before we swung off the mark.

We then anchored on another rock at about 11pm and pulled a few more spangled emperor, red-throat and a red before it slowed up so we got some shut-eye.

The lads were close by in the other boat and had struggled to get among the fish but this wasn't helped by two of the crew becoming sea sick as soon as the wind got up.

Trent stayed up most of the night by himself and managed to pull some nice reds and other mixed reef fish to show them how it was done.

With the wind still blowing a good 20 knots in the morning, we decided to head for home as our Eskies were full and Reg the owner of the other boat was still very sea sick.

The 120km trip back in was a long one but the Riptide ate up the rough seas and a few hours later we were back at the ramp.

The weather continued to be good for fishing in our second week and we had more memorable experiences, including a monster GT that I caught while chasing reds.

For all the details don't miss Part 2 in the next edition. ⚓



Terry with one of several reef mangrove jack caught on dark. These fish were mixed in with a huge variety of other fish in 65m of water.



Coral trout were a common catch on most isolated reefs in 50m-plus of water and there were no complaints about the many that came over the side during the trip.



At mid to low tides the only way to launch and retrieve a boat at Kurrimine Beach is to use a tractor, and just about every resident in town has one.