

# Panache Fishing Notes

March 31, 2019

## Doc's Advice

The following notes are based on advice from "Doc", the Captain of a 92' sport-fish boat. He has spent his life fishing in the south-east USA, Bahamas and the Caribbean. The following are his suggestions for blue-water fishing.

**Fish all the following lures without weights.**

**In general, troll 150-250' behind the boat (but experiment if production is slow).**

## Hard Lurers

Yo-zuri lures are one of his favourites in blue/silver, Mahi colours, purple/black. Below is a Yo-zuri on the left and a Rapala on the right.



A good option is to use 10'-15' of 100-150 lb pound wire leaders (called "Hard Wire") with a Haywire Twist at each end for hard-body lures like the Yo-zuri and Rapala. Hard Wire is very resistant to abrasion, particularly important for sharp-toothed fish like Wahoo. You can't reel the wire into your rod because of the Haywire Twist, so make sure is not too long to land the fish. Stainless steel braided leaders are also abrasion resistant and easier to store.

For a Haywire Twist, make a loop and twist both lines around each other at 45 degrees for 4-6 turns. Then wrap the short end around the leader at 90 degrees about 4 times for the Barrel Wrap. Now break off the end by bending it back and forth along the axis of the leader. See video.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cEKjXXtmjHM>



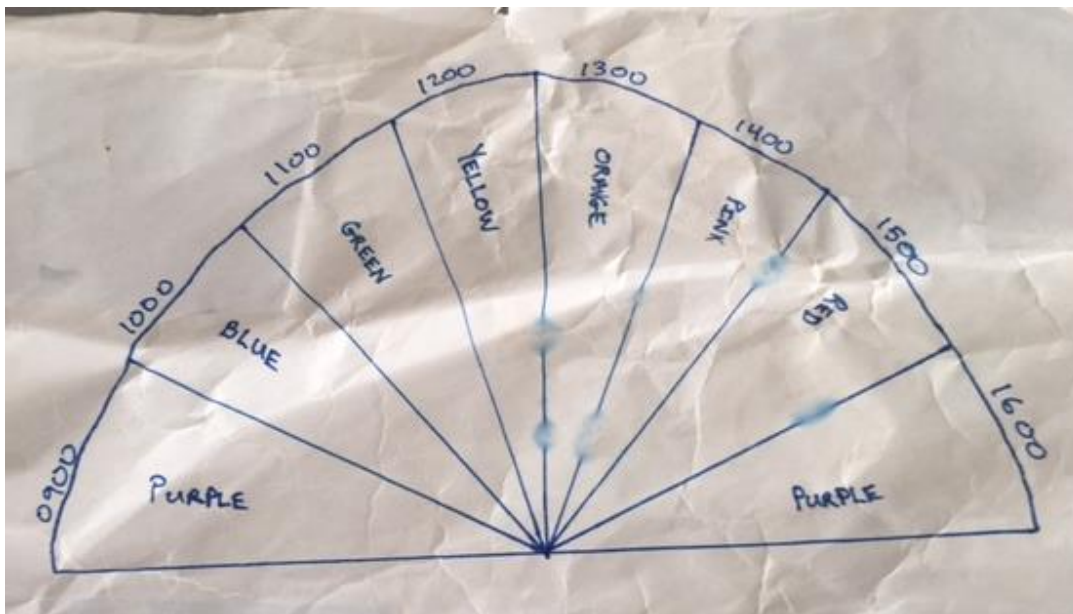
Doc just clips the snap swivel at the end of his main line to the loop at the end of the wire leader. Each hard lure should have its own wire leader.

## Soft Lures

For Hoochies, use red/white, green/white, orange/black. Doc uses Hoochies that have a circular plastic head with holes to make “smoke” in the water. It’s good if they skip out of the water periodically.



Change the colour of your Hoochie with the time of the day, as below:

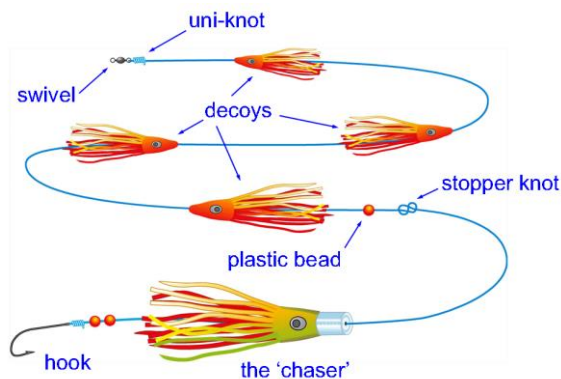


For Hoochies, of all sizes and shapes, he uses a 15’ mono leader of 100-150 lb test.

You can either tie the mono leader or use a crimper. Braided SS leader also needs to be secured with a crimp.



If you are using a Bird Daisy Chain, Doc fishes that close to the boat.



Rubber ballyhoo are also good lures.



Always sharpen your hooks. (Captain Ted, from the Bahamas, puts felt pen on his sharpened hooks to keep them from rusting in storage). Use brass wool to clean off the rust.

## Reels & Drag

Use your fishing scale to set the drag to 1/3 of your line's breaking strength. We use about 24 lbs of max-drag on our Shimano TLD 50's with 80# line. Set the drag on the dock and just "set and forget" – it only needs to be checked periodically. Wash reels with drag lever fully on (but don't change the max-drag setting), then loosen drag for storage.

## Landing the Fish

Let the fish tire before attempting to land it. It may take a number of runs. When landing the fish, guide the leader with your hand (glove is optional, but a good idea).

Gaff the fish behind and under the gill and pull on board in one smooth motion.

If you have to cut the leader to let the fish go, say because it's too big, pull the lure up the leader first with the gaff and cut below so you don't lose your lure.

Stun the fish by either spraying vodka or rum in its mouth (using a plastic spray bottle), put a knife up into its head from the "V" part underneath, or cut just behind each pectoral fin. Bleed all fish, but particularly tuna.

If you put a hose in a tuna's mouth, it will think it is still in the water and continue to struggle, which will drain all the blood through the pectoral cuts.

To skin a Mahi, cut through the skin all the way around on one side. Then put a slit in the head or tail end, put your finger in the hole and pull. Then skin the other side.

You can scale a Snapper using a strong spray from a water hose.

Pass in front of feeding birds as they are chasing the fish from behind.

Leave a Mahi in the water and you will likely catch another one on your other line(s).

## Bonaire Additions

Manuel went out with a local fisherman in Bonaire. The fisherman brought several small dead fish with him. He mushed the fish into a paste in a bucket, added some water and some bread. He then put handfuls of the mixture into the water as chum. This attracted small fish which he caught using small hooks with a piece of tuna on them. The small fish were put into a larger bin full of saltwater to be used later as live bait.

When they caught a Mahi, they left it in the water. Then put a hook through the small live fish and used them to catch 7 other Mahi. When they caught small tuna, the fisherman would put a hook in them as well and threw them in to catch larger tuna.

## Stéphane in Tahiti

Stéphane is a young but experienced commercial fisherman in Papeete. He uses a classic Polynesian fishing boat. You drive from the front of the boat so that you can chase Mahi and spear them. It also gives very good visibility when travelling through coral heads. His has a Yanmar 350HP with twin screws. These boats typically use a vertical rod as a steering lever rather than a steering wheel. The throw is only about 30cm lock-to-lock, making it very easy to quickly turn the boat to keep alongside the Mahi.



Stéphane typically fishes at 7-8kts. He uses mainly Halco lurers and runs them on the surface **about 300ft/100m behind the boat**. In Papeete, Halco lurers (made in Australia) are available at Exocet, near Ocean 2000 and cost about US\$25 each.

The hooks that lurers come with are fine for the size of fish we are targeting. He changes to big trebles as he is after fish ranging up to 200lbs/90kgs. The big hooks can sometimes be seen by the fish, so you get fewer hits, but lose fewer fish.

Stéphane leaves the **drag lever about 80% (8kg) of the way to the max-drag point**. This is called the strike-drag point. He lets the fish take the hook and run, which will get the second treble hook embedded. When the fish tires and he wants to reel it in, he **pushes the drag lever up to the max-drag point (10kg)**.

## Marlin Lurers (also Tuna)

Black-Multicoloured





## Tuna Lurers

Halco Black-Gold



Halco Orange-Gold



## Mahi Lurers

Halco Green-Yellow-Silver-Black Stripes



Halco Aqua-Green



Halco Blue-Green



Halco (Yo-zuri style) Green-Yellow-Orange



# Panache's Setup

## Original Setup

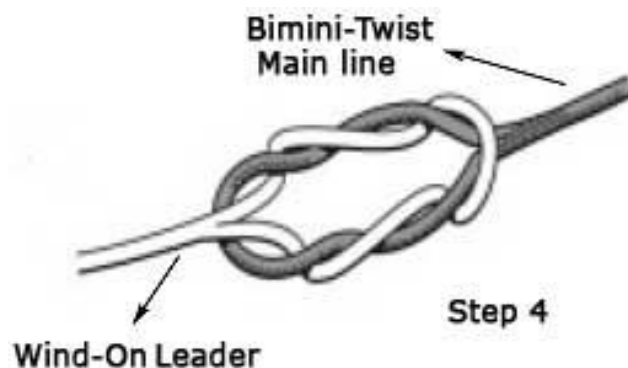
The first point to note is that we are fishing from a boat that is usually under sail. This is not an ideal situation, because it is hard to slow the boat down when you hook a fish, and impossible to chase the fish. We leave the rods in their holders when we fight a fish, as there is no transom or barrier at the back of Panache and standing, fighting a fish in that situation is a bit precarious. So, the bottom line is that we are fishing for meat, not for sport.

The second point is that we do not want to catch really big fish. They are hard to handle, hard to get on board, hard on the fishing gear and yield too much meat to fit in our freezers. We ideally want fish under 50lbs/23kg. So, we select our fishing line such that it will break when we hook a large fish. The idea is to have the line break near the end, so you minimize the amount of line that you lose.

We fish two rods, each with a Shimano TLD 50 LRSA reel. The rods are tied into rod holders, one on each side of the boat.



Each reel has a base of 600yds of 100lb/45kg Spectra Spider Wire. The reason for the Spectra line is that it is much thinner than monofilament of the equivalent strength, so it vastly increases the line capacity of your reel. At the end of the Spectra line we tie a Bimini Knot. This knot is supposed to create a near 100% strength loop. To the Bimini loop we attach the loop end of a 25ft/8m, 80lb/36kg premade mono wind-on leader using a Cat's Paw knot (loop-to-loop connection).





The purpose of the mono wind-on leader is to add some stretch to the system, as the Spectra provides no stretch at all. At the other, non-loop end of the wind-on leader, we crimp on a thimble with a snap-swivel. The short leader that is part of the lurer setup is attached to the snap-swivel. This allows us to easily change our lurers.



### Problems

This system worked well for us during our first year in the Caribbean. When we hooked a big fish, it always broke off at the Bimini knot. In our second year, the line started breaking at the Bimini knot even when the fish was not excessively large. We were losing a lot of wind-on leaders and terminal tackle. We now suspect the problem was a result of UV damage to our Spectra line.

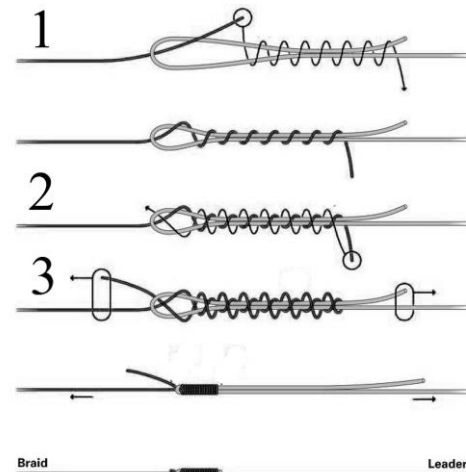
### New Setup

After consulting “Fishing Experts”, all of whom have extensive experience with big game fishing, we are planning to modify our setup.

We are going to cut off about 300ft/91m of Spectra line. This should eliminate all the UV damaged line. We will then add 300ft/91m of Toro Tamer 130#, 16 strand hollow-braid Spectra to the existing solid-braid Spectra. The advantage of the hollow-braid is that it can be joined to the solid braid without using knots, thus eliminating that weak spot. It works in a similar fashion to a Chinese finger puzzle. It can also have the other end made into a loop with out using knots (i.e. it eliminates the Bimini knot and provides a stronger connection).



### Improved / Reverse Albright



Instead of using a wind-on leader, we are going to use about 300ft/91m of 80# mono and tie it directly to the hollow-braid using a Royal Polaris or Reverse Albright knot. If we have issues with the knot, we will move to a loop-to-loop connection. The mono will provide a lot more stretch than the wind-on leader as it is much longer. This piece of mono is referred to as a “Top Shot”. Using a Top Shot will make the whole system much more forgiving, making it less likely to pull the hook out of the fish’s mouth and reducing shock loads on the line and gear. The crimp and snap swivel at the end of the mono will be the same as we used with the wind-on.

## Resources

**George Poveromo** (Game fish tips and techniques)

<http://www.georgepoveromo.com>

Top Shot explanation: <http://www.georgepoveromo.com/content.php?pid=60>

**Chark Bait** (Online tackle in San Diego with knowledgeable and helpful staff)

Ask for Blake (the knot guy). +1 877-424-2751

[www.charkbait.com](http://www.charkbait.com)

## Connections

RP Knot: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PYP0RZZPBaQ>

Solid to Hollow Braid Connection: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AG43SwM2eic>

**Common Tuna** (Red Stars are found in South Pacific)



Albacore ★



Bigeye ★



Bluefin



Bonito



Dogtooth ★



Little Tunny



Longtail ★




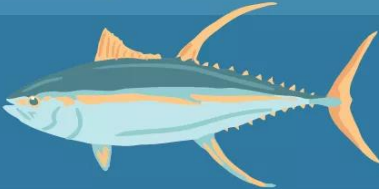


Skipjack ★



Yellowfin ★



<i>Albacore</i>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Lightest flesh &amp; mildest flavor</li> <li>- Canned as white tuna</li> </ul>
<i>Bluefin</i>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Dark red flesh with more fat &amp; flavor</li> <li>- Best fresh tuna choice</li> </ul>
<i>Skipjack</i>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Strongest flavor &amp; highest fat</li> <li>- Canned as chunk light tuna</li> </ul>
<i>Yellowfin (Ahi)</i>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Pale pink with mild flavor</li> <li>- Costs less than but comparable to bluefin, also canned</li> </ul>

## Yellowfin Tuna



<b>English:</b>	Yellowfin Tuna
<b>Latin:</b>	Thunnus albacares
<b>Other Languages:</b>	Netherlands: Geelvintonijn, Spain: Rabil, Aleta Amarilla, Italy: Tunnu monicu, Denmark: Gulfinnet tun, Germany: Gelbflossen-Thun, Portugal: Atum Rabil, France: Thon albacore, Japan: Kidaha, Indonesia: Gantarangang, Papua New Guinea: Tetena keketina, China: 黄奇串, Philippines: Badla-an
<b>Characteristics:</b>	Easy to recognize by the sickle-shape of their anal and second dorsal fins.
<b>Common Size:</b>	40-150 cm / 1,3-70 kgs
<b>Maximum:</b>	Size 200 cm, Weight 175 kgs, Age 8 years
<b>Biggest Angled Fish:</b>	184 kgs - San Diego (US) 2010 by Mike Livingston
<b>Maturity:</b>	Size 105 cm, Weight 25 kgs, Age 2-3 years
<b>Catching Areas:</b>	20% Eastern Pacific 41% Western Pacific 29 % Indian Ocean 10% Atlantic Ocean
<b>Catching Methods:</b>	Mostly purse seining, long-lining, pole-and-line
<b>Share of all Tuna Caught:</b>	About 26% - 1.037.000 m/t
<b>Main Production Areas:</b>	Thailand, Philippines, Indonesia, Mexico, Venezuela, Ecuador, Colombia, Spain, Italy
<b>Life Cycle:</b>	About 7 years
<b>Major Markets:</b>	Japan, Southern-Europe, United States
<b>Popular Product Forms:</b>	Canned Fresh (whole fish) Frozen pre-cooked Loins Fresh Fillets Raw frozen loins + steaks

# Albacore Tuna



<b>English:</b>	Albacore Tuna (long finned tuna)
<b>Latin:</b>	Thunnus alalunga
<b>Other Languages:</b>	Netherlands: Witte tonijn, Spain: Bonito del Norte, Atún Blanco, Italy: Tonno bianco, Denmark: Albacore, Germany: Weisser Thun, Portugal: Atum voador, France: Germon, Japan: Binnagamaguro, Indonesia: Albakora, Papua New Guinea: Albacore, China: Chang chi we, Philippines: Bayot
<b>Characteristics:</b>	Long pectoral fins, which reach behind the anus and by their dark blue backs and blue-grey flanks and belly.
<b>Common Size:</b>	40-100 cm / 4.5 – 11 kg
<b>Maximum:</b>	Size 130 cm, Weight 40 kg, age 15 years.
<b>Biggest Angled Fish:</b>	40 kgs, 123 cm - Canary Islands (Spain) 1977 by Siegfried Dickeman
<b>Maturity:</b>	Size 75-90 cm, Weight 8-15 kg, Age 2-5 years.
<b>Catching Areas:</b>	32% Northern Pacific 31% Southern Pacific 21% Atlantic Ocean + Mediterranean 16% Indian Ocean
<b>Catching Methods:</b>	Longlining, Pole-and-line, trolling
<b>Share of all Tuna Caught:</b>	2011 - about 6% - 237.000 m/t
<b>Main Production Areas:</b>	Thailand, Indonesia, United States, Japan, Spain (Bonito Del Norte)
<b>Life Cycle:</b>	About 5 years
<b>Major Markets:</b>	United Sates, Canada, Japan, Spain
<b>Popular Product Forms:</b>	Canned (white tuna) Fresh Frozen

# Tongol



<b>English:</b>	Tongol (longtail tuna)
<b>Latin:</b>	Thunnus tonggol
<b>Other Languages:</b>	Netherlands: Tonggoltonijn, Spain: Atún tongol, Italy: Tonno indiano, Denmark: Tonggol-tun, Germany: Langschwanz-Thunfisch, Portugal: Atum-do-índico, France: Thon mignon, Japan: Koshinaga, China: 小黄鳍鲔, Philippines: Bakulan
<b>Characteristics:</b>	Dark blue back and short pectoral fins.
<b>Common Size:</b>	90 cm / 15-20 kg
<b>Biggest Angled Fish:</b>	35,7 kgs Australia, 1982 Tim Simpson
<b>Catching Areas:</b>	65% Western Pacific 35% Indian Ocean
<b>Catching Methods:</b>	Mostly pole and line, Long Lines
<b>Share of all Tuna Caught:</b>	About 4 % or 125.000 m/t
<b>Main Production Areas:</b>	Thailand, Indonesia
<b>Major Markets:</b>	United Sates, Sweden
<b>Popular Product Forms:</b>	Canned (light tuna) Fresh

# Skipjack Tuna



<b>English:</b>	Skipjack Tuna (stripe-bellied Bonito)
<b>Latin:</b>	Katsuwonus pelamis
<b>Other Languages:</b>	Netherlands: Gestreept tonijn, Spain: Listado, Barrilete, Italy: Palometta, Denmark: Bugstribet bonit, Germany: Echter Bonito, Portugal: Palamida, France: Listao, Japan: Katsuo, Indonesia: Cakalang, Papua New Guinea: Tjakalang, China: Then chien, Philippines: Gulyasan,
<b>Characteristics:</b>	Skipjack Tuna can be distinguished by the presence of four to seven dark, longitudinal stripes on their bellies. Their dark blue backs are accentuated by a clearly defined area of green above the pectoral fin, which fades away towards the middle of the body. They have silvery flanks and bellies, and short fins. These subheadings do not cover the Atlantic or belted bonitos ( <i>Sarda sarda</i> ), which have oblique bands on their backs.
<b>Common Size:</b>	40-80 cm / 2.5 kg
<b>Maximum:</b>	Size 110 cm, Weight 30 kg, Age 15 years
<b>Biggest Angled Fish:</b>	20 kg - Mexico 1996 by Brian Evan
<b>Maturity:</b>	1 year and around 2 kg Female: 42-50 cm Male: 45-52 cm
<b>Catching Area:</b>	73% Western Pacific Ocean (63% WCPO, 8% SPO, 3% NPO) 7% Eastern Pacific Ocean 11% Indian Ocean 9% Atlantic Ocean
<b>Catching Methods:</b>	Mostly purse seining, some pole & line (8%)
<b>Share of all Tuna Caught 2012:</b>	About 46% - 2,776,833 M/T
<b>Main Processing Nations:</b>	Thailand, Philippines, Indonesia, Ecuador, Ghana, Colombia, Ivory Coast, Senegal, Samoa, Spain, Italy, Papua New Guinea, Seychelles, Vietnam
<b>Flags of Main Fleets:</b>	Taiwan, US, China, Japan, Indonesia, Spain
<b>Life Cycle:</b>	About 3 to 4 years
<b>Major Markets:</b>	Europe, United States, Arab World, Japan
<b>Popular Product Forms:</b>	Canned (90%), Pouched, Dried (Katsubushi), Fillet (Tataki)

# Bigeye Tuna



<b>English:</b>	Bigeye Tuna
<b>Latin:</b>	Thunnus obesus
<b>Other Languages:</b>	Netherlands: Grootoogtonijn, Spain: Patudo, Italy: Tonno obeso, Denmark: Storøjet tun, Germany: Grossaugenthun, Portugal: Atum patudo, France: Thon obèse, Japan: Mebachi, Indonesia: Tuna mata besar, Papua New Guinea: Matana Bwabwatana, China: 大目仔, Philippines: Bangkulis
<b>Characteristics:</b>	Similar to Yellowfin tuna, they are hard to distinguish. Long pectoral fins that usually extend well past their anal fin, which together with their large eye, characterize the species.
<b>Common Size:</b>	40-180 cm / 1,4-130 kg
<b>Maximum:</b>	Size 230 cm, Weight 210 kg, Age 15 years
<b>Biggest Angled Fish:</b>	197,3 kg, 236 cm - Perú 1957 by Russel Lee
<b>Maturity:</b>	Size 105 cm, Weight 25 kg, Age 3-4 years
<b>Catching Areas:</b>	21% Eastern Pacific 38% Western Pacific 22% Indian Ocean 19% Atlantic Ocean
<b>Catching Methods:</b>	Longlining, Purse seining and Pole-and-line (by-catch)
<b>Share of all Tuna Caught:</b>	2011 about 10% - 398.000 m/t
<b>Main Production Areas:</b>	Thailand, Philippines, Indonesia, Mexico, Venezuela, Ecuador, Colombia, Spain, Italy
<b>Life Cycle:</b>	About 7-8
<b>Major Markets:</b>	Japan (sashimi)
<b>Popular Product Forms:</b>	Fresh (whole fish) Fresh Fillets (sashimi)