

Redemption

By Brett Craik

After his brother Doug had been ribbing him for quite some time about Dan's poor performance both diving and hunting which are one in the same for those two, Dan had only one option to find a quality fish to shut up his brother and stop the relentless barrage of slander.

Considering the time of the year it was most likely that redemption was going to take shape in the form of a large cobia, a fish that Dan back in his hey day when he still had his mojo had speared on numerous occasions.

Greeted by a slight ocean and a crisp blue sky we hit the first spot knowing something was about to happen, the sounder had picked up a significant amount of activity and we just know the area so it was most likely to be cobia especially for this time of year. Doug rather generously gave Dan a slight head start I guess he thought he must have needed a confidence builder, after all the first shot on these fish is the easiest after that they become very wary.



I drifted over the spot where I could just make out the deck some 20 metres below, it was then I saw some dark shapes on the edge of my vision. I yelled out to Dan and he began finning over towards the action with Doug hot on his heels. The shapes that were milling around beneath me began to peel up off the bottom just as Dan arrived. The school consisted of about 40 fish the majority of which were quite large over 20kgs.

It was an impressive sight watching as individual fish would break from the almost circle like pattern they were following one by one they would peel upwards in the classic cobia swagger similar to the movement of a shark before turning tail and heading back down to join the pack, it was like they all had to get a look at us. Dan waited patiently he wanted to see a large one rise off the bottom but with Doug fast approaching there was not too much time to wait. Then he picked his target a very large cobia turned skywards and Dan was on his way. The cobia as expected turned early and began to slide past Dan but he was now well within range and did not hesitate sending the shot smashing into the side of the fish, the fish countered with a powerful run sending all the other cobia scattering and beginning what was to be a tough fight.

To complicate matters after filming the ballet of the hunt I was looking down filming the fish run while slowing finning up towards the surface, because I was concentrating on capturing the action I did not look up and as luck would have it I was surfacing just underneath Doug whom was just ahead of me. Doug had just hit the surface when he felt a bump from below which was my head smashing into his loaded 1.6 metre cannon. Now I have to say taking a spear in the head is very sore, Doug looked down to see what it was and witnessed me grabbing my head in agony, I had to call for the boat from that point. I climbed into the boat and sat on the esky sitting forward while blood ran out from within the hood down and off the tip of my nose, I got that sick feeling in the stomach. It's a strange thing, I don't mind cuts and bruises on the body as I get plenty of them but when it relates to the head it always seems more serious, still I guess I was lucky that firstly Doug had a relaxed grip since his finger was on the trigger and also that the impact did not cause the trigger mech to fail and release the shaft which I have no doubt would have killed me instantly. In hindsight I guess what goes around comes around or Karma if you will all the things I have put spears in over the years it really was inevitable that I would end up copping one myself.

While I spent another few minutes gathering myself, Doug had grabbed the still camera to get some shots of the while Dan tried to deal with it. The cobia was strong and Dan was apprehensive to grab it before it was sufficiently tired, quickly he realised the second shot Doug put in it was not stopping it so a third was required. The Cobia would simply not give up typical behaviour really, even with three spears in it the fish still pulled everything down giving me enough time to get back in the water and claim some footage of the titanic tussle unfolding before me. Both Doug and I were keeping well clear of the rig lines as they were looking like a dangerous proposition, Dan too was dancing around in the spaghetti trying to stay clear.

As is always the case the runs became shorter and less powerful and Dan was eventually able to get his hands firmly around the fish and with the assistance of Doug they heaved it in the boat. Just then the fish decided the fight was not over giving his father the boatie and myself a few headaches having to deal with it and the last thing I needed was another headache.

With the fish finally subdued for good, we were able to relax for a moment and take a few breathers while Dan posed for some pics and film, we also had a chance to weight the fish and it came in at an impressive 35 kilos. While Dan and I were trying to figure out how to get it into the esky Doug rolled over the side and plugged another cobia easy as that it was a much smaller one around 10 kg's.



After dealing with the fish we quickly headed south where we picked up a few crays and witnessed a couple of wahoo disappearing into the distance. No too worry we had a fair amount of fish to deal with and plenty of footage to put on line at bluevisions.net so we packed it in. The four stroke began to purr as we scampered off home a little early in time to barbeque up some cobia steaks a favourite amongst some of the fans at home.