

OFF THE DOCK

WITH D. A. MANN

~ My Pinky is a Hero ~

Just when I was about to succumb to the fact that fishing was not going to improve, my drag starts screaming and that old Pompano-pull is tracking around the boat. I am in the middle of Blackburn Bay after I resigned myself to Trout fishing and decided on a whim to drift the Intracoastal. I had drifted the flats in front of the Gardens on the west side with a couple on ice and wanted to try the east side. As a joke, I told my Pinky that he would be my hero for life if he found a Pompano; and he did – on the 1st cast. A few drifts later, I had 3 on ice. I was delirious. It had been a year since I had caught a Pompano in this *once productive* spot. My hero for life.

I didn't mind the 2 Ladies that got in on the action; but, was glad that the Cats were in their litter box somewhere else. I also had some tiny grunts hit the Willy which I took as a sign that things were improving. Then, the tide went slack and the bite immediately feel off. It was only noon. OK, let's go to plan "B".

My theory had been, up until today, that when the Pompano started returning, they first would be caught in the Jetties, around Snake Island, and maybe Midnight Pass. During the previous month, this theory looked as if would pay off. I caught a couple in Midnight, a few outside the Jetties on the south side, and several by marker 16 behind Snake. Now, that assumption has been blown to Hell. These boys made it all the way into the middle of Blackburn Bay undetected. They did not give themselves away anywhere in between.

Plan "B" was a bust; from noon to 4pm, not a thing. A couple hits but nothing to show for it. Just going through the motions will wear you out, hurt your back, and in general, it's depressing. Plan "B" is now in the toilet. Tomorrow, you'll find me drifting the Channel throughout the Bay in search of utopia.

So, when I asscrack in the morning, will I be a second tier fisherman and target Trout? Will I just settle for getting *something* on ice? I don't think so. Now that I know that they are back in the Bay proper, I just have to find them; and that means move, move, and move some more. Drifting the channel is what I do best. My faith has been renewed and my desire rejuvenated.

...and I now have a Hero as a fishin' buddy.