

# **OFF THE DOCK**

**WITH D. A. MANN**

## **~ The Fisherman's Code ~**

**9/12/25**

Rule #1: *Never* give up a good spot to a moron.

Rule #2: *Always* give up a good spot to a friend.

Rule #3: Keep your friends to a minimum.

While fishing behind Snake Island yesterday on a strong incoming tide, I was getting solid hits on every cast and netting the occasional Pompano. Very few boats were travelling the Intracoastal and drifting the center of the channel had only a couple challenges. That is until Dumb and Dumber showed up in a beat-up old Jon boat with a noisy two stroke Evinrude. Two guys, two dogs, six rods, and not a brain between them, they proceeded to attempt to anchor – in the middle of the side channel on the west side. As I drifted and watched, the guy in the bow threw the anchor as far as he could. A loud splash was heard by all. He tried a dozen times to get it just perfect and finally settled for his last toss. Any fish within a hundred feet were long gone. Forget the fact that the other idiot was gunning the outboard.

The spot they chose was 30 feet from a Ram Marine barge that had been setting pilings for a dock and a lift that was damaged by the recent storms. They looked to be fishing with small Pins under big weights trying to cast under the barge and/or around the pilings. First, there would be no fish under the Ram boat; and secondly, there would be no fish around the new dock and lift. Repeatedly, you could hear them bouncing their sinkers off the barge or cussing the pilings when

getting snagged. So, being the experienced fishermen that they were, they moved – 3 times. Each time going through the whole dozen tosses of the anchor ballet but never leaving the barge. As I drifted by a hundred away with a Pompano circling the boat, they continued their circus. Still sitting in the middle of the side channel, boat traffic had to circle around them near the sandbar in order to pass. One boater I knew. He asked the morons if they were catching anything and they responded, “I caught a Grouper once.” The boater eased over in my direction for I was still drifting the incoming tide a hundred feet away and asked me the same question. I answered, “The occasional Pompano; no Grouper today.” He was right between the Jon boat and me as he turned towards them and said, “There’s Pompano over here!” Ok, introduce moron #3. I can’t make this shit up.

Today, I returned to the same spot only to have a Freedom “fishing boat” anchor in my lane as I was drifting – in the middle of the channel. Meet morons 4 and 5. I recognized the couple for I had seen them in other *Freedom* boats fishing in this same general area over a few months. In the past, I would acknowledge them with a wave or a greeting as I would drift by where they were anchored. They always just stared back scowling in my direction. Not friendly in the slightest. She was obviously the fisherman of the two; he was along to anchor and drive. I altered course on the next pass and as I went by I said, “Having any luck?” “We caught 9 Pompano yesterday!” she hollered back. “Did they grunt?” I asked. “All of them!” “Interesting - congrats!” Grunting Pompano are more commonly known as *Jacks*. If they have been eating them, then that explains the scowl.

So, my friends, this report morphed into a story. The fact remains that Pompano are running behind Snake Island but not on a consistent basis. For reasons unknown, they are not running at all in Blackburn Bay. The Bay is loaded with Grunts and small Trout and the occasional Sail Cat; but, nothing worthwhile. I did catch a Grouper once though.

