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DELAWARE BAY  
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# THE Fisherman

No. 25

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WIN A NEW  
**Trison**  
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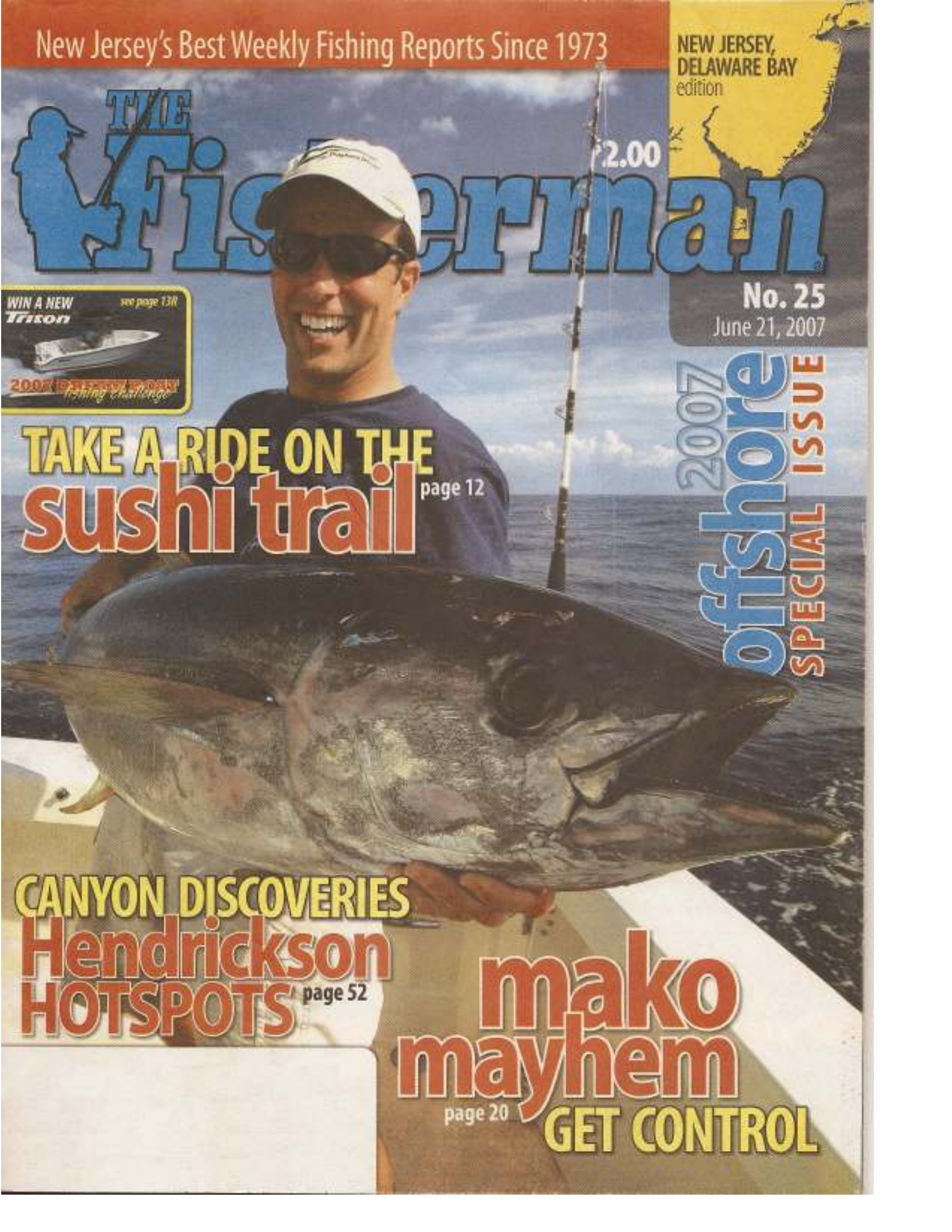
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**GET CONTROL**





While the prime target is usually longfin and yellowtail, adding snout and flounder to the box will often mean the difference between a slow trip and big catches.



# OFFSHORE ALTERNATIVES

## Trip saving tactics for the canyon bound.

By Captain Freddy Gamboa

**H**ave you ever been in the offshore canyons fishing when reports have been less than ideal, you have pounded any area and not gotten a touch, and your crew is threatening mutiny? Well at one time or another we have all been there.

I have fished many days in the canyons where fishing was a slaughter, and other days were fishing slowed to a crawl. During these slow times I have resorted to fishing alternative methods to put some meat in the box and break up a long slow day.

### GREEN LIGHTNING

The first scenario is slow troll bite, I tend to fish the 100-fathom line and along the canyon wall edges. When fishing is slow I tend to work in and out of the lobster pots that proliferate along the edge with small plastics. This keeps

my crew busy and allows us to use light-tackle and sight cast a pot if we see bigger fish sitting underneath and not attacking our trolling spread.

Also when targeting these mahi, I can troll past any flot-sam and use the same techniques. On more than one occasion I have had marlin and tuna erupt from pots and near floating debris, when I couldn't troll them elsewhere.

### DEEP DROP GOLD

The second scenario during a long effortless troll if the water temperature isn't right or if the mahi aren't showing themselves is to deep drop on tilefish. Fortunately this fine tasting specimen is impervious to water temp, clarity or presence of bait. The key to finding them is to fish the canyon wall edge and turn up your fishfinder to find the clay bottom. On my machine the clay bottom is not rough and shows up as a different color.



*If the troll bite is slow, tossing light tackle plastics around floating debris and weed lines like this can be a sure way to score.*



These clay deposits allow tilefish to build burrows. Once you find a fish continue drifting the same area to fish the "colonies." Most of the depths will be from 400 to 600 feet of water.

I use Shimano Torsa reels with 65-pound braid, Trevala TVC66H Rods, and 20 to 30 ounces of lead to reach the bottom. For rigs a dual dropper loop system using 5/0 circle hooks tipped with squid is all that is needed.



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## NIGHT SHIFT MONSTERS

The other scenario offshore fishermen encounter is a slow chunk bite. When this happens most fishermen wait out the bite. My experience has been to fish for other species and return to the chunk later in the night or early morning. If I am drifting it is easy to make the switch. The areas I drift tend to be near the wall edges or structure or along the 100-fathom line with plenty of bait on the fishfinder. My target species are sharks and swordfish. Once situated, I deploy a chum bug and set up my rod spread.

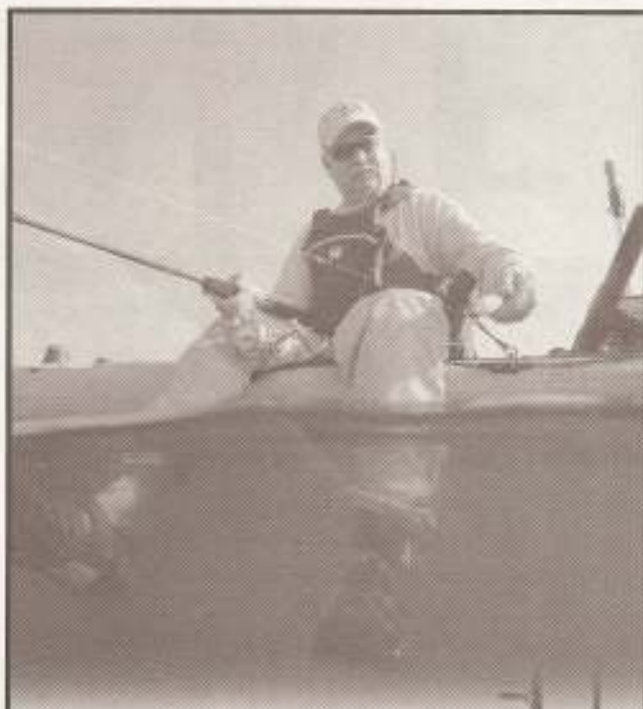
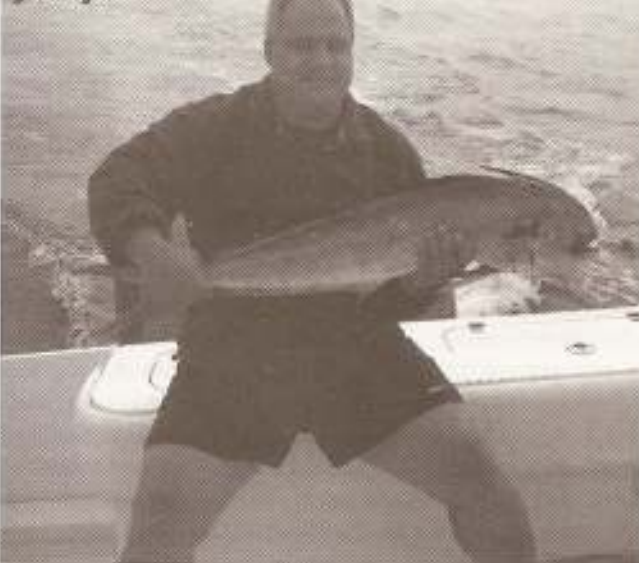
For swords depending on the current I will stagger three rods, one at the thermocline, another 100 feet below that and another 100 feet above. If the thermocline is too deep, I place the rigs 100, 200, and 300 feet down. I use a TLD 50 with a 25-foot, 300-pound wind-on leader, a Lindgren Pittman light, a 6-foot section of 200-pound leader with a caylume light and a 10/0 heavy offset hook with live squid. To keep the baits as straight as possible I use 25 to 50 ounces of lead depending on drift and current.

On the shark rigs I use TLD 50s with the same wind-on leader, a 350-pound snap swivel with six feet of heavy wire leader crimped to a 12/0 heavy offset hook. I then deploy three rigs staggered off my beam on floats 25, 50, and 75 feet down, 50, 80, and 120 feet away from the boat. For bait I will use loins of whatever fish is in the box, heads of fish less than 15 pounds, mahi, tiles, or live squid. At night I hang a Hydroglow light off my beam and start fishing.

Once I am done drifting I return to my earlier spot for a session of tuna fishing later in the night before the bite turns on. Normally my drifts will last no more than three to five hours but allow me to cover more ground, which might have some tuna show themselves on the fishfinder.

With the rising cost of fuel and the time it takes to get to the offshore grounds we need tricks to help fill the fishbox. Hopefully these tricks can help you put more fish in the cooler and cure those doldrums when the bite has slowed to a crawl. 🐟

*This mahi hit a trolled lure worked past a lobster pot at close range. Don't overlook the hi-fliers as they are one of the best fish aggregating devices in the canyon when things get tough.*



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