

WhimAWay's tackle:

The Trolling Lures

Whim Away's primary fishing functions will be offshore based and as such, the lures and tackle reflect this.

Any time that *Whim Away* is doing anywhere from 4 to 18 knots, be it in a pure fishing mode or perhaps to conserve fuel during long voyages, there is a set of lures that can go over the transom. Whether it is for trolling the Gulf's river mouths for queenfish and trevally, or fishing with purpose for Montague Islands yellowfin tuna and kingfish, there are lures that will do the job. And do it well.

The Skirted trolling range.

The selection of lures was purchased from Wellsys Tackle on the Sunshine Coast, so there is an emphasis on the lures that Paul and Helen Wells stock. The associated hook rigs are pre-made custom rigs that Paul has in stock as well to suit the lures involved.

This is a selection of resin and metal headed lures that have vinyl "octopus" skirts attached.

These lures are designed to work within the surface layer of water, smoking, bubbling and swimming along. They are meant to represent feeding and/or distressed baitfish.

They DO NOT come with hooks.

THE TACKLE BOX



Instead, the angler has to rig the lure by

placing appropriate leader material through the head of the lure, then attaches via knots, crimps or shackles the hooks that the angler wishes to use.

Since *Whim Away* is going to be in areas where toothy fish such as Spanish mackerel, Wahoo and barracuda hang out, there is a preference for wire to be at least used in some part of the hook rigs, if not as part of the leader as well. This helps recover the lure once the fish has been hooked, played out then released or kept.

Monofilament, no matter how heavy, will always get cut by mackerel teeth.

One snip and there goes \$50 worth of lure...

The Billfish Spread

In times, or in areas where the

With Aaron Concord

possibility of, or the desired species are the billfish clan, I have chosen a "spread", meaning a selection of lures that are purposely for this reason.

Whim Away has a pair of Relax outriggers to increase the width and length at which these lures

can be presented behind the boat. With three main trolling outfits, I have selected 5 resin headed lures that have designated slots. These are the best positions to run these lures, though in times of lure loses, the other lures can fill voids where necessary.

Note that though these lures may have been designed with billfish in mind, they do take all manner of pelagic game fish.

Please keep in mind that 1000lb marlin are not the sole drive here, so lure sizes and hook rigs chosen reflect this.

Please also note in brackets the 2 corresponding numbers which relate to Wellsys colour numbers for the inner and outer skirts.

Short Rigger

Wellsys Small Kokomo, black pearl head, skirts purple/blue over with black inner (106/22). Hook rig is a pair of Maruto SS1962 8/0 hooks offset at 60 degrees or a single 7/0 SS1962 if head biting tuna and dolphin fish are not present or wanted.

The hook rig is heavier in gauge than the fine wire hooks I use on 10kg line or less.

This is to prevent hook failure on the heavier 24kg braid we are going to use.

This lure is a sliced faced straight runner, which looks like a little tuna ripping the water apart.

At 220mm (8 inches), she is the largest, most aggressive lure of the spread.

The rule of thumb here being the largest, darkest lure is positioned the closest to the boat, followed by the smaller, more natural coloured, less active lures.

The Small Kokomo has become a favourite for black marlin and sailfish. I have also taken Yellowfin, Wahoo, dolphin fish and cobia on this lure.

Long Rigger: Top Gun Terminator





#2, skirts lumo with blue stripes and red vertical stripe over, green/chartreuse with red vertical stripe under (**29/57**). This is commonly known as **Lumo**, which represents a *small dolphin fish*.

Hook rig is a pair of SS1962 7/0s or a single SS1962 7/0. Choice of hook rig on the day is determined again on geographical location and other species that may be present.

The lure has a symmetrical cupped face that causes it to run straight with a prominent bubble trail.

For some reason, this colour lure works ridiculously well out on the long rigger in clear, un-aerated water. Peter Pakula's Lumo Sprocket really brought this lure colour to the attention of the world. This lure is similar to Peter's, though more easily found.

At 200mm (8 inches), this is the second largest lure in the spread and has accounted for sailfish, black marlin, Wahoo, cobia, dolphin fish...crikey; everything has a crack at it.

There are times when nothing else comes close.

Shot Gun: This is the term given to the lure run right down the middle of the spread or pattern, though it is also the farthest away from the boat.

There are 3 lures I have picked for this spot and depending on locale and again, species present; any of these 3 will fit the slot.

#1 Top Gun Terminator #1, skirts blue back, silver bottom with black stripes over dark green and gold glitter with red lateral stripes (**69/68**). This colour is commonly known as **Evil**.

The colours present in the skirts mean that the lure has a lot of flashy glitter that pelagic pilchards have. In times when striped tuna are around, this lure gets knocked often, so to a billfish, it must be a reasonable impression. As for other species, again, the who's who will grab it. This lure can also substitute one of the rigger lures if necessary.

At 170mm (6) inches), a pair of 7/0 SS1962's or a single 7/0 will work well.

#2 Top Gun Terminator #1, skirts black with luminous stripe over, with dark blue with crimson glitter inner skirt (**90/64**). This is a black marlin favourite, particularly early in the morning and late in the afternoon. Being a very dark lure, I think it is because it silhouettes well that fish tend to find it better at these times. I have fished it all day in all manner of lighting and again, all pelagics will eat this lure.

Hook rigs are the same as for the above lure.

#3 Wellsys Micro Atun, skirts purple blue over with glitter ice blue inner skirt (**106/110**).

This is the Pee Wee of the billfish pattern at 125mm (5 inches) in length.

This lure can be deadly on billfish in its own right, though its appeal to the smaller tunas, mackerels and dolphin fish can mean the difference between a quiet day and a hectic one.

Trolling small skirted lures such as this one around areas such as the Tweed Nine Mile or Cape Moreton's Hutchinson Shoal can be awesome fun on a wide range of pelagics.

The other purpose for this lure is for capturing live small tuna for bait and/or berley.

A bridled frigate mackerel or mackerel tuna is a sure fire way of connecting to very large Wahoo, Spanish mackerel, Yellowfin tuna and Billfish.

The hook rig I have chosen is one of Wellsys Maruto light tackle single hook SS1920-2x 7/0 rig.

All of the above lures have been rigged on either 150 or 200lb monofilament leader to maximise the action of the lures, and to make them more presentable at lower speeds to other pelagic fish.

The Tuna Takers

The entire above Billfish pattern is great at taking tuna as well.

I have, however, rigged up a couple of **metal** headed tuna bullets on monofilament to compliment this set of lures.

PW wants to go back to fish areas like the 12 mile reef off Bermagui for

albacore and yellowfin tuna, hence the need for lures that will do the job.

For some unknown reason, when the lures that smoke along don't draw any attention from tuna, a metal tuna bullet that, because of its weight, doesn't smoke at all but rather zips along, straight as a "bullet" with little or no action, will get collared every time its put out. These lures tend to end up being the most productive when run fairly short down the middle of the prop wash. In areas of high boat activity, the shot gun position may be the best.

The 2 tuna bullets I have rigged on mono are the **Whistler Cone Jet** in skirt colour (78/110), which is a scaly blue back with pink vertical stripe, silver bottom top skirt with a glitter ice blue inner skirt. This is a really nice *pilchard imitation*, with a heap of glitter flash that tuna love. It's 150mm (6 inches) long.

The other is a **Micro Taranggau** which is 125mm long (5inches).

This is a purple/pink with yellow lateral stripe over skirt, with a holographic pearl tinsel inner skirt (108/tinsel). Even though there isn't a pelagic baitfish that looks anything like this, I have caught some pretty nice striped tuna up to 8 kilos on this, so it should work well down south on Albacore and School Yellowfin as well.

Since these are fairly small lures, a single Maruto SS1920 2x 6/0 or 7/0 will work fine.

High Speed Madness: The Wahoo Bombs

In the South East Queensland/ New South Wales border area, there is some fantastic fishing for wahoo, tunas and mackerels using heavy weighted skirted lures that can handle speeds of 10 to 20 knots.

Every Autumn, as the East Australian Current licks our shore, these tasty speedsters are targeted by anglers who must have shares in B.P.

However strange it may seem to those who watch these boats go by on the plane; there is no denying that it is an effective way to target these species.

Lures that can weigh up to 300 grams are used to make sure the lures stay in the water at these higher speeds, as any lure that "blows out" and tumbles results in a tangled offering.

All seven of the lures I have picked have been rigged by me with 175lb 49 strand cable as their leader. This



prevents bite offs. 49 strand cable is more flexible, allowing more freedom for the lure to work properly. It is less likely to kink and break should the lure blow out.

Listed here are the 7 high speed skirted lures:

Medium Taranggau x 2, one is skirted black top, wine red bottom over pink pearl (93/104); this is a favourite Wahoo colour, seems they have a passion for red.

The second is purple/ blue over blue with crimson glitter inner skirt (106/64). Wahoo also like tuna, which this colour does a reasonable job of imitating.

Both of these lures are 200mm (8 inches) in length.

Midi Taranggau colour lumo over silver tinsel, over pink/orange/red feathers (29/tinsel/feathers). The three layers of skirts incorporate flash and excellent colours for Wahoo; Wahoo love to eat little dolphin fish. Skirted length is 170mm (6 inches).

Out of these lures, I would run the 2 big lures as flat lines; the purple combo the closest followed by the black/red/pink, with the lumo dolphin fish running shot gun.

The next four are 6 inches or shorter in length.

The first being a **Mini Turbot Jet** in Lumo (29/57). This lure is 150mm (6inches) long.

Again, you have to have something out the back that looks like a little dolphin fish. I'd run it from the long rigger or long flat line position.

The next is a **Malisa 105** which weighs 105 grams and is 165mm (6 ? inch) long.

The colour picked is black with luminous lateral stripe over blue with crimson glitter inner skirt (90/64). This lure would be the short rigger or short

flat line position.

Whether they get used from the riggers would be dependant on sea conditions; the flatter the sea or the slower the boat is trolling, the more action the lures would have from being towed from the riggers.

The next lures would be shot gun lures, the first being a **Whistler Cone Jet #1** which is skirted in **Evil** colour (69/68), and is 150mm (6 inches) long.

Evil is another colour that seems to work well either as a long rigger or shot gun position.

The lucky last lure is a **Micro Taranggau** which has skirts black with luminescent lateral stripe over glitter ice blue inner skirt (90/110).

All of these lures have SS1920 2x hook rigs, with 10/0s for the larger lures down to single 6/0 s for the smallest.

And there you have it, the complete range of bluewater skirted trolling lures plus the hook rigs to suit each lure.

Over the coming seasons, this range will likely grow as PW narrows down his location targets and also puts his own personal touch to the gear. Though it would be hard to knock the range I have picked and the reasons why.

Each lure can run in a variety of positions, in a wide range of weather for pelagics all around Australia.

If PW decides a 200kg Blue Marlin is something he wants to tangle with, only the lure sizes, and not the colours need to change. It's this versatility we are always trying to refine. *Next month I will detail the bibbed and bibbless trolling lures and hopefully start on the casting lures.*

F&B