

This is Part Two (Lines) of a fascinating new series kicked off when a South Aussie reader had the presence of mind to ask Editor PW if we could pick Aaron's mind to learn about the gear that Aaron actually *uses himself* - not the stuff he's got to test, but the gear that's gone past *that* stage, and joined Aaron's personal tackle box . . well, it looks more

like a shipping container than a tackle box! We tried to explain this would require a 600 page edition of F&B just to cover his rods and reels, but we agreed to make a start; it is a good idea. We should finish the series sometime in 2017 . . .

THE TACKLE BOX



“My Favourite Tackle . . .”

Part Two, (Lines) with Aaron Concord



A quality coral trout taken while deep jigging inside the Barrier Reef. The twisted leader is 100lb Duel Fluorocarbon. The main line was 50lb Bionic Braid.

“My Favourite Fishing Tackle” (P-2)

Following last month’s article about Aaron’s fav rods and reels, this month he takes a look at some of the lines that stood out over the past season.

With the extensive assortment of rods and reels that I spoke of last month, covering such a vast range of applications, what lines stood out from the pack?

The types of fishing that these lines have been used for include light, medium and heavy tackle game fishing; sport fishing with lures and baits; fly fishing; beach fishing and estuary ‘bread and butter’ fishing.

Some of these lines are species or task specific, where others have been found to be useful in several roles.

Some of these lines are well known and have been available for some time, while other lines will be the latest available that I have tried exhaustively over the last season.

Yamatoyo Lines.

Yamatoyo products are made in Japan and are of premium quality. Yamatoyo Super PE Zero Pro line is a quality, braided line made from Dyneema designed for deep water jigging.

PE braid is at the top of the quality chart and is generally rated by number, rather than breaking strain. The Japanese have rated their reels and rods around the PE number of the line, eg PE 8 is equal to around 80lb breaking strain.

It roughly follows that #2 is 20lb, #3 is 30 and so on, up to PE 12, which

can be 110-150lb depending on the manufacturer. Yamatoyo’s heaviest is #12 which is 52kg or around 115lb.

This PE number can be a little confusing at first. I still prefer to go off the breaking strain so I know exactly what rods and reels I can use it on.

Yamatoyo Super PE Zero Pro Line is a super line product that is fine in diameter for its breaking strain, ties knots brilliantly and is supple and predictable in nature.

Yamatoyo colour codes this particular line so that every 10 metres it is a different colour. There are also marks every metre as well, so for deep-water jigging, livebaiting and floatlining, you know exactly how much line you have out off your reel to the metre.

The colour coding is handy for trolling deep diving lures. Once you have established how deep a lure dives

A cross section of the various lines discussed in the article. It includes braid, leader materials and monofilament lines.



on this line, you can repeatedly place that lure out exactly the right distance after a fish is caught, by noting how many colour changes are required to have out so the lure can dive to the same depth. Handy for trolling for bass and barra in the dams.

I have used the 37kg, 80lb (rated #8 PE) for deepwater jigging and casting big poppers at giant trevally.

In the lighter 11kg, #2 and 16 kg, #3 PE classes, I have used these lines on my baitcasters for chasing mangrove jacks and barramundi in the snags, and coral trout, red throat and spangled emperor out on the reef.

It's sold in 100m lengths interconnected up to 1200m long, or on smaller 200m spools.

Yamatoyo Super Harris Fighter 100% Fluorocarbon.

This is one of Yamatoyo's lighter range of Fluorocarbon leader materials that suits estuary, fly and bay work, where breaking strains up to 8kg (or 16 old fashioned pounds) is required.

This fluorocarbon leader material has been fantastic used as tippet material while chasing mack tuna and longtail tuna on fly.

This stuff is tough indeed. During the Fraser Island tuna comp in 2004, I even managed a queenfish around a metre long, caught on a small tuna fly with no heavier leader. I expected the big queenie to rasp through the 16lb test tippet without much trouble. The queenie swallowed the fly, but the Yamatoyo line stood up to it.

Its clarity certainly helps when chasing hawk eyed tunas, and its abrasion resistance helps prevent teeth, tails and bony appendages from cutting or wearing through it.

As a leader material for lure fishing, the 12 and 16 lb breaking strains have worked well for squire and flathead.

It's sold on 50m spools and is available in breaking strains from 3 to 16 lb.

Yamatoyo Super PE line.

This may sound familiar to the PE line I have already mentioned, though there are a few differences.

Firstly, it is thinner in diameter, as it is designed as a casting braid.

Finer diameter line casts better than whopper snipper cord, so this is the benefit of reduced diameter. Not that any PE braid is thick!!

Also, it is colour coded every 25

metres as opposed to jigging PE which is colour coded every 10m. It isn't as crucial to know exactly how many metres of line has left the reel when casting . . . well, not as critical as vertical jigging, that's certain.

The colour coding is a great indicator for judging presentation distances with lures or bait.

The line that got a thorough work out was the #2 PE, which is 11kg or 23 lb breaking strain.

This product has been brilliant. I have been using it for jigging rubber tails for mangrove jacks, casting poppers around the Ribbon Reefs for all sorts of sport fish, as well as for presenting strip baits down berley trails for coral trout and emperor families.

Spooled up on a Stella 4000F and mated to the G.Loomis L905 spin rod, this was my favourite outfit during 8 weeks on the Barrier Reef. Period.

The line showed brilliant durability, particularly from hectic fights from all manner of lure munchers on the Barrier Reef.

It too, is limp, ties knots brilliantly and didn't suffer any problems with line twist.

I managed to squeeze a whole 200 metres of #2 PE on the 4000F Stella and there was more than one occasion where there was more line in the drink than on the spool. A top product.

Hawk Tournament IGFA Monofilament.

Having a 1200 pound Black Marlin torture your main line for 1.5 hours and not give up the ghost, must mean the manufacturer got it right.

Hawk is made by the German company Bayer. These guys also make Ande fishing lines, so they know their stuff, all right.

As it turns out, for my bluewater gamefishing, I trust Hawk Tournament.

Over the last season, I ran ragged the 6, 8, 15 and 24 kilogram line classes. Still, the 2 most memorable light tackle captures I have personally been involved with are Damon Olsen's 69kg yellowfin tuna on 8kg, and my own sailfish of 46.9kg on 4kg. Both are Australian Records. That should speak highly enough of this line's reliability.

On *Nomad's* Tiagra 130's, there is a top shot of 150-200 metres of 60 kilogram Hawk Tournament on top of

dacron backing. This is what caught us our largest Marlin ever.

It comes in Coral Pink, Laser (Fluoro Yellow), or Green.

For pelagic trolling, I use the Laser colour exclusively.

Hawk Tournament knots well, is durable (i.e., it handles nicks plus wear and tear well) and doesn't suffer badly from memory. It is also reasonably priced.

I should mention that for my Alvey side cast reels, I use 3 and 4 kilogram Hawk for light surf and estuary work, where the 6 and 8 kilogram classes get used for heavier surf applications.

Momoi Hi-Catch IGFA Line.

I bought this product to try it for light tackle game fishing and so far, it has been a dependable line.

Momoi has been available in this

The Author with a nicely coloured mangrove jack from Cardwell. The main line is #2 Yamatoyo Zero Pro Line Super PE. The leader is 40lb Duel Fluorocarbon.



country for some time now, and this product has shown it to be of a high quality. Made in Japan, it too knots well, retains its strength and is durable. It also tends to resist memory coils, which inferior lines can produce.

I have a spool of 8 kilograms on my Tiagra 20 and it has caught sailfish, small black marlin, and yellowfin tuna to name a few hard fighting species.

It is available in light blue or fluoro yellow, in classes from 4kg to 60kg.

Platypus Pre-Test Game Line.

Australian Monofil, one of the largest and oldest line manufacturers, makes this product on the north side of Brisbane.

It was a product born out of necessity for the rapid evolution of sport and gamefishing in this country. It is still the only pre-tested IGFA rated line that I know of. All other IGFA rated lines rely on their manufacturing standards and don't give a new batch of line any testing for its true breaking strain.

Platypus does both.

It would be hard to find a person involved in ANSA or GFAA who sport or gamefish that hasn't used this line at one time or another.

I gave the 15kg class a thrashing over the 8 weeks up on the Barrier Reef.

The main troll rods used on *Odyssey* were spooled with Fluoro Yellow 15kg Platypus Pre-test.

At any one time, while dodging Green Zones, I would have 2 lines and at time, up to 3 trolling for food and bait.

There were 3 outfits that caught us spanish, shark and school mackerel, wahoo, mack tuna, longtail tuna yellowfin tuna, giant trevally, bluefin trevally, barracuda and small black marlin.

The line would be under the load of lures and fish for periods of days without much reprieve.

Since this line is made thicker than most, I believe that this helped the durability of this product, as it really was treated as a workhorse.

It's available in classes from 1kg up to 60kg.

Bionic Braid.

Another Australian Monofil product that was developed with considerable input from Rod Harrison.

This is a premium braid that has a well established following.

And rightly so. For many people, it has been the first purchase of a higher-grade low stretch and low diameter line.

I still use this line in the 20, 30 and 50 pound breaking strains on baitcasters, spin reels and jig reels. The 50lb is still my number one fly line backing.

The Accurate 665HXM/Shimano Backbone outfits on *Nomad* have 50lb Bionic Braid on them for jigging and trolling.

Again, like many of the outfits listed, they were used almost daily while up off the Ribbon Reefs to troll up various tunas and mackerels that make brilliant



skip baits for the giant black marlin that frequent the 'Reef at that time of year.

The Bionic Braid was an interesting trolling experience, as I had never used a super line product for pelagics before.

The action of the lures surely gets transmitted up the line to the rod tip with far more detail than monofilament.

To prevent hooks from being straightened or prematurely pull, we would incorporate a 3 to 4 metre bungy type wind-on leader into the system, similar to Rod Harrison's Knotted Dog leaders, though considerably heavier.

This set up allowed us to monitor any strikes or near misses when a big shark mackerel or spanish mackerel thumped a lure.

The braid was great at setting hooks and fighting the fish when a more deliberate, slow pump and wind technique, worked well at boating the fish quickly without fear of losing the fish through slack line or pulled hooks.

Aaron with a thumping red bass that ate a popper meant for a coral trout. The main line is #2 Yamatoyo Super PE Pro line casting braid. The twisted leader is 60lb Duel Fluorocarbon.

If you go into action Rambo style, you will probably lose fish from bending trebles.

The little black marlin we released off of 1770 on the return trip to Hervey Bay showed us that this system works, even for these acrobatic fish.

If I was trolling solely for pelagics, I still think mono has some advantages over braid, the most obvious one being the purchase price difference and mono's forgiveness to novice anglers with its built in stretch.

However, for more seasoned anglers who do not need to fish IGFA class line for club points or records, braid certainly would be a very practical, Number One option.

Bionic Braid is available in 300, 500, 750 or 1000-yard lengths. It is limp with zero memory. It knots well and

with its distinctive Pink, Teflon coated colour, is still a popular choice as a super line.

Scientific Anglers Fly Lines.

The vast majority of fly fishing I have done has been from small vessels chasing inshore pelagics, reef species and “ snag bashing” for mangrove jacks and barramundi.

The number one line that I have used is definitely the Mastery Series Tarpon Taper, clear intermediate sink, Tropi-core. That’s a mouthful.

The great thing about a name like that is it’s not hard to figure out what the line was designed for.

This line was made for the largest shallow water gamefish on the planet, the American Tarpon.

How does an American line help an Aussie?

Well tarpon grow to over 150kg. That’s bloody huge. The fly record stands at just under 92kg. They live in tropical climates and take small flies that are cast long and accurately.

Well, apart from a different geographic location and the target species, our tunas are caught the same way; usually with long, accurate casts with small flies.

The clear nature of these lines help prevent shy tuna from being spooked and the sink rate which is up to 2.5 inches a second, allows the fly to get down beneath the wave action and in front of the tuna’s face.

The Tropi-core component relates to the line being made stiffer, with polymers that withstand tropical heat. Lines that are manufactured around

cold-water applications go gluey in the heat of an Aussie summer. Conversely, tropical tapers are a hard, coiled, pain in the neck if used in cold water.

The Tarpon taper is available in AFTMA fly rated weights from 10-14 in clear intermediate and “surf” blue coloured floating in 10-12 weights.

I have used this line for chasing longtail tuna and mackerel tuna from Moreton Bay to Weipa. I found it to be a great line for casting Clouser Minnows over the Ribbon Reefs, stopping coral trout, red bass and other ooglies.

Out of all my fly lines, this one has probably been used the most.

Sink Tip Fly Lines Lines.

These lines are designed to have the very tip section sink to allow a deeper presentation with a fly.

Some sink slowly and are thus suited to shallower work, whereas others may sink rapidly for deeper presentations or to counteract fast tidal flow.

The tip section that sinks can be anywhere from 15 to 32 feet. The remaining part of the fly line floats.

I’ve used both slow and fast sink versions for snag bashing for mangrove jacks and barramundi, flats fishing for various trevallies and even probing rocky holes and under bridges to depths of 30 feet for mangrove jacks, trevallies, tarpon and giant herring.

My 2 favourites are the Mastery Wet Tip Clear in 10 weight.

This is an intermediate sink tip. The tip length is 15 feet on the 10 weight and the sink rate is 1.8-2 inches a second.

I use this line for snag bashing and flats fishing.

The other line is the Mastery Wet Tip ExpressTropi-Core 275 grain.

This line sinks at 5 inches per second, which for a fly line is certainly getting up there. The 575 grain model, which is suited to rods up to 15 weight sinks at 8 inches a second and is designed to cast the largest of flies.

I use the 275 grain on my 9 weight for getting flies down deep under pontoons, bridges and deeper rocky holes.

At times, when there is a fair breeze about or the fly has to get down quick in front of fast cruising fish over the flats, this is a better choice than the Wet Tip Clear.

If I am snag bashing or flats fishing, I generally have 2 rods rigged with each line rigged so I can quickly change my tactics depending on the terrain or how deep I have to get the fly.

This gives me versatility at a moment’s notice to cover everything from surface feeding fish, fish cruising sand flats, snag and rock bar dwellers and fish feeding deeper in rocky holes or under bridges.

By casting the 275 grain up current and counting down before I commence a retrieve, it has been possible to fish 10 feet down in heavy current; 15 to 20 in moderate current and up to 30’ during light current or tidal change periods.

Duel Fluorocarbon Leader Material.

This isn’t a new product either,



though again it has shown itself to be a brilliant line when used as trace material.

I started using this substantially more expensive leader material in July 1999. Since then, there has been an explosion of fluorocarbon products that have flooded our shores, some great, some good and some downright terrible. To me, Duel is the benchmark I judge everything else against.

I use the 20lb when jigging for squire in rougher territory on light braid.

For shock leader when chasing fish on fly, it is my favourite material.

The 30 and 40 pound is still my favourites for leader material when chasing mangrove jacks. 60lb is employed for bigger barras.

80 and 100 is used for live bait rigs for cobia, sailfish and small black marlin.

The 100 and 120 pound is the material I use to construct bungy-type wind-on leaders for casting massive poppers at mega sizes giant trevally. The same leaders are used for deep water jigging for amberjacks, cobia and other deep water dwelling fish.

I fished for 4 weeks solidly casting big poppers with one 100lb twisted wind-on leader before I retired it. (How's that for getting your money's worth!)

Its clarity, coupled with its abrasion

resistance makes it a mandatory inclusion whenever I am fishing.

Platypus Game Leader.

It has become evident to me that when chasing sport and game fish with baits, any heavier leader will do the job at preventing break-offs through wear and tear, and the chaffing that occurs when fighting large fish.

I am talking about going through serious quantities of heavy line.

Rigging large baits up off the Ribbon Reefs, or smaller baits for light tackle fish off Fraser Island or Mooloolaba, can be an assembly line.

Rig bait. Stitch bait. Swim bait to adjust or align bait. Clip bait to outfit. Watch bait swim. Looks great. Damn. Wahoo chopped it. Need new bait.....This can be repeated dozens of times in one day.

When a "big girl" does eat a bait you don't want the leader to part before the tag gets placed.

On the 130 pound outfits on *Nomad* we used 600lb Platypus Game Leader for wind-on leaders and for the bigger skip bait leader. 500lb was preferred for the swim baits, mainly since the reduction of diameter allowed the smaller swim baits to swim deeper and faster.

For light tackle, I primarily use 150lb, though depending on the bait or lure size I might step down to 100 or

A beautiful black marlin caught on 8kg Hawk Tournament line. The happy campers are from left to right: Craig, Tony, Pete and Richard. It's Craig's first Billfish. The leader material is Platypus Game Leader 150lb. Lure is a Pakula Mosquito in "Pilly" colour.

up to 200. The bigger the bait/lure or rougher the conditions, the heavier you can generally get away with.

The Platypus Game Leader knots well and I haven't had a problem with crimping heavier breaking strains.

Perhaps if you were targeting solely the largest black and blue marlin on baits and lures, you may find investing in a harder outer-shelled leader, advantageous. However, at around half the price for a 100m coil to most other brands, for high turnover, repeat rigging, just the cost saving alone is a stand out. Let alone the knowledge that the biggest marlin I have ever seen – at 1200 lb plus - was caught on this product without failing.

So that takes care of the lines used as either leader material or as a main line that I have found invaluable over the last season.

Over the next month or so, I'll push into the lures, hooks and other accessories that made themselves hard to do without when I have been on the water.

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