

The Portland SBT Challenge . . .



Growing up in the small regional community of Portland Vic 'couta fishing with his uncle, few boating writers and fishermen know these waters as well as F&B's Victorian Editor, Greg Edwards. This report is, he admits, a 'labour of love' as he is very excited about the long term potential of this re-discovered Southern Bluefin Tuna (SBT) resource. As a very keen sportsfisherman with a brand new platey, he's keen to share his knowledge of this newly 'discovered' area with F&B readers, in one of the most comprehensive - *and fascinating* - reports we've published for some time.

Top Left: Typical hard bodied lures suited to offshore trolling for bluefin. Colours generally reflect the food source but the classic red head works here too.

Centre Left: Skirted lures in different sizes. An appropriately rigged rubber squid is a cheap (and effective) alternative especially when the fish are feeding on schools of squid.

Lower Left: Bibless styles can generally be trolled a little quicker than the bibbed variety.

Main Pic: 101kg of prime Southern Bluefin taken from "Red Hot Charters" on March 23 this year. A massive fish of 126 kg was weighed two days later.

Right: After nearly fifty minutes, Greg Edward's son Simon finally nails a tough fighting southern bluefin - fish like this make the run from Melbourne a real proposition.

The historic town of Portland in Victoria's far south west has long been a favoured coastal destination for people in the western half of the state, and particularly for people with a fishing bent who want to sample some great fishing to go with the other charms of this green and fertile corner of Victoria.

Often labelled as the site of Victoria's first permanent settlement, Portland has a long and rich maritime

history that pre-dates the first European settlements established by whalers and sealers in the 1830's, intent on exploiting the riches of this maritime Garden of Eden.

Indeed, in contrast to the popular belief about the indigenous people living a nomadic lifestyle, the *Gunditjmara* people of the Portland district had constructed permanent stone dwellings as evidence of the richness of the food supply available to

