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A Wet Weekend At Port Alma

At my tender young age I've come to realise that some things are just the way they are, like – fingers that go under a mower usually get cut...badly. That once a barb on a treble goes into your finger, it's hard to get out and means a trip to the hospital. If an axe head falls on your foot it will cut it.... badly and that Port Alma works best on smaller tides.

Unfortunately I've learnt all these the hard way.

So when a weekend with small tides rolled around I knew the Port was the place to be. All I had to do was sit back and wait for the weekend and see what the weather was going to do.

20/25 knots and moderate to heavy rain for Saturday and Sunday....you beauty just what I wanted. So not to be one that is put off too easily I was still heading to the Port no matter what...but who to take. Renee, my partner, was my first option and after reassuring her it was going to be ok and just rain a little bit in the morning, it was all planned.

That was until I got a phone call from a mate I went to school with, inviting me over for beers and to watch the footy...now I was thinking, if I only have 10 beers I should be right...or should I grab some more.

So with the footy watched, beers drunk and back at home in bed by 10, the alarm was set for 3:45am the next morning. As the alarm went off, I later found out that day Renee was quietly hoping I was hungover and would pull the pin... but not to be.

A couple of hours later with the boat in tow we rolled up to Port Alma boat ramp and were greeted by rain.... heavy rain, so out come the rain coats and the expression on Renee's face said it all, "This is s@#\$, its 6am, windy, pouring rain and I should be still in bed". I know that expression, cause I've seen it a few times before.

Now with the boat in the water we headed to one of the creeks we had done well in a few weekends before. As I already had the creek pretty well sussed out, I knew where most of the fallen timber was, the plan was just to spot hop till we found the fish.

So with a tried and tested Richo tied on with both began casting at the first bit of slipped bank. After peppering the snag for about 10 minutes with no luck I was just about to move on till I pulled two small rats in just under 500mm in quick succession. "So maybe today might not be so bad", I thought. With our sprits lifted, but still very wet and wind blown, I managed to pull a 680 barra off the same snag before we moved on.

I haven't done much trolling before and now I'm just starting to work out how to do it right, with results. So it was time to give that a go, and with both lures out

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the back we began the troll run. With the outcome being just what I wanted, I was on....to a good fish. Straight after the hook-up it cleared the water, showing itself to be a fish in the 900's. The boat was kept in gear and steered into the middle of the creek, so the fight was well clear of any timber....well that was the plan. With 20knots blowing across the creek it was actually quite hard to stay in the middle, so the motor was kept in gear to hold us against the wind. All I had to do was take it easy and the fish was mine...and it was after about 8 minutes. Measuring in at 970mm I was quite pleased, only to find out the front treble of the Richo had been completely ripped and was still stuck under the throat of the barra.



As the day went on, the rain stopped and started, got light and heavier and the wind, well just got windier, we just continued moving up the creek. With each stop producing barra and at the end of the day we had managed to tagged 6 small barra under 550mm and one at 680mm. We kept a 685, 690, 680 and a 970mm (you have to kill a few now and again). All in all not a bad Saturday, for me.....Renee wasn't to impressed.



With the fish cleaned and packed away, it was time for more beers while watching the footy at Steve Lills house. That night during the footy, fishing stories were swapped and plans made for the following day.

Now For Sunday

It's not too bad when you leave home and it rains while you're out fishing, but it's a different story when it's pouring down at home before you leave and that's just what Sunday's situation was. With a quick call to "Lilly" that went a little like this:-

"Its coming down pretty hard and it been pouring all night",

"Yeah I know, but I'm happy to go if you are",

"Yeah it should be alright, well if your keen to fish in the rain, so am I",

"Righto, come pick me up then and let's get down there"

I'm pretty sure both of us didn't want to go, but on the same hand, didn't want to be labelled the pussy that pulled out...for what.... a little bit of rain. And just like the day before upon arriving at the ramp the rain was there to meet us again.

Today's plan was to check out a different creek that we hadn't fished before and to do some Barra Bounty spot reconnaissance, as Steve and I fish together in the comp. With spot hopping working well the day before and this style of fishing also giving us a chance to check out the creek quickly, that's what we did. As we headed up the creek there wasn't much timber to work over but the few spots we could find did produce a few small barra. With a few hours passed and only 6 small barra tagged and released the top of the creek was reached and we turned around to head home.

While travelling home I suggested we drop in and have a quick troll in the creek I fished the day before. As we arrived at the beginning of the troll run both lure again went flying out the back and the motor knocked back into gear. 400 metres in the run and several snags trolled over with no result, I was just about to let him know we where just about to hit the spot where I caught the 970mm barra the day before. But before the words could leave my mouth, crack I was on. This time it was a solid fish and when it come up to jump only got its head and shoulders out. With a few expletives about how big the fish was the fight was on. About 15 nervous minutes later we had an 110cm barra resting on the front deck of my boat. With a handshake and a few photos, this was a PB barra for me in this area.



So if anything is to come from this story, it's that no matter how bad the weather is, as long as the tides are good and your prepared to get rained on and blown around, you could be rewarded with some nice fish. Or on the other hand, I quite clearly have a problem when it comes to fishing and will go no matter what. The funny thing is that it wouldn't make a very good story, writing about all the times I've fished in the rain and caught nothing.

Dan Powell

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