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RON DEMPSTER AWARD 2007

JEFF SORRELL

Jeff's lifetime love of fishing started in western Queensland at Cunnamulla where he learned to explore and fish for yellowbelly in the local creeks. His fishing interest grew to be an obsession when his family relocated to the coast at Redcliffe. It wasn't long before he was participating successfully in the SQAFC Schoolboy Championships. He honed his angling skills as a "Jetty Rat", once even dodging the school cross-country run to chase jewies and tailor at Scarborough Reef. After he left school he fished even harder and for a time engaged himself in a professional line-fishing career.

ANSA

Jeff joined the Bribie Island Sportfishing Club Inc. in 1990 and immediately accepted the responsibility of serving the position of Club Vice President. He has served on the Club committee continuously for 17 years now, mostly as President, but holding every other position at least once and sometimes several positions concurrently. He is Club President for at least the next year!

During this time in the Bribie Club, he has been involved in setting up and running the Longtail Tuna World Flyfishing Challenge, which is the longest running Saltwater Flyfishing event in Queensland.

He will fish in all categories of fishing including freshwater, estuary and offshore.

He regularly fishes in Lurecasting, Flyfishing, Gamefishing, Sportfishing. In recent years he has particularly concentrated on tag and release. He has achieved masters awards in Sportfishing, Lurecasting, and Gamefishing. In recent times he has caught many masters fish, but has chosen to release the fish rather than take them for Master's awards.

In tagging, he has achieved Tagging Achievement Awards for Yellowfin Bream, Dusky Flathead, Snapper and Barramundi. He has achieved a Tagging Excellence Award for Yellowfin Bream. In total he has tagged over 3500 fish.

In general fishing, he likes to spread fishing styles over as many types of fishing as possible, rather than concentrating on any particular one type. Always believed that it is better to participate and appreciate as many types of fishing as possible.

Following the closure of the Pumicestone Passage to commercial fishing in 1995, he was prominent along with other club members in achieving NHT funding for a three year tagging project within the confines of Pumicestone Passage to assist in gauging the impacts that recreational only fishing would have on an enclosed fishing area. The NHT report titled "Pumicestone Passage – Recreational Fishing Impacts" was the end result of that project. Apart from ongoing Suntag Program, it remains the only research into fish stocks to be conducted in this area since

Events

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Runs all year to 30th June 2015

Open to all ANSA QLD members

Junior and Senior Categories

The North Queensland Sportfishing Championships with be on 6th & 7th June Put it in your calander now



that time.

He is currently heading the push for a "new direction" in Sportfishing competitions in South East Queensland. He has organised the inaugural South East Queensland Snapper Challenge to be run from the Redcliffe Peninsula in mid July. This event is being run with the intention of promoting ANSA to the current crop of 'catch and release' anglers within this area. Initial indications are this will be a well-attended event. A sideline to this will hopefully include a healthy fund raising event for the local Coast Guard organisation.

He was awarded the honour of Life Member of the Club in 1997.

ANSA QUEENSLAND

Jeff was encouraged by John Doohan to join the State Executive of ANSA Qld Inc in 1993. He was elected to a Committee Member role in that initial year. In 1994 he took on the role of ANSA Qld Treasurer and held that position for two years. He was then given the State Secretary role and held that position for a number of years. He then went to the role of Events Co-ordinator before becoming Vice President. In the second year of being Vice President, he was asked to step up into a caretaker President role for the remainder of that term. In all, he was an active member of the State Executive for 8 years.

On stepping down from the State Executive, was asked to take on the role of Secretary to the ANSA National Board. He performed that role for a twelve month period.

He has since been a Critique Officer for ANSA Qld on two occasions, and is currently serving in this role.

His ANSA service has extended far beyond the formal requirements of the positions he has held. As a roving Ambassador he often takes time to travel to other clubs and groups to talk about ANSA. He regularly gives presentations at Boat Shows and other events.

He, amazingly enough, still finds time to fish and keeps two boats ready to drop in to the water at a moments notice. Despite his boating enthusiasm, he is also regularly sighted fishing from the shores around the Redcliffe Peninsula, usually tagging flathead and bream.

SUNFISH QUEENSLAND

Jeff helped John DOOHAN set up the North Moreton Branch of Sunfish Queensland, and was immediately placed in the role of Vice Chairman. Following John's election to the role of State Chairman of Sunfish Queensland, Jeff was elected to the Chairman's role in the North Moreton Branch and consequently held that role for 8 years before stepping down when work commitments made it impossible to continue in the role. In this time he was actively involved in the running of the branch and in working for recreational fishing interests in this area. He organised a number of events that drew widespread media attention, including a rally to bring the public's attention to the state of parts of Moreton Bay. This rally attracted an audience of over 600 people, and ensured the Minister of the time attended. The event was lead story on all major television programs that day.

When Queensland Transport decided to replace the existing boat ramp at Donnybrook in the Pumicestone Passage with a new 2 lane ramp, they intended to close the ramp for an 8 week period while the work was being done. This caused a lot of worry for the people and businesses in the town as this closure of the towns only ramp would severely impact on the viability of many of those businesses. He was asked to represent the people of Donnybrook on this issue. He organised a meeting with the Marine Safety Board, other relevant Transport Department planners and the EPA, to get the Army Engineers to lay a

“combat ramp” across the mud that would allow access to the water for a reasonable part of each day while work was underway. Eventually they reached agreement on the work proceeding in a two stage process with one lane being kept open as work was completed on the other side. This achieved an outcome that was greatly appreciated by all involved.

Even after stepping down from Sunfish, he remained active in support of recreational fishing ideals and goals in South East Queensland.

MORETON BAY ACCESS ALLIANCE.

In the lead up to the last State Election, the Moreton Bay Environmental Alliance, a “green” lobby group began making a series of announcements that they had reached agreement with the State Government to trade green preference votes for wholesale closures and go slow zones in the upcoming review of the Moreton Bay Marine Park. A public meeting was held in Brisbane to highlight this issue and bring it to the public attention. This meeting was attended by 400 recreational and commercial anglers, charter boat operators, marine dealers, tourist operators as well as local, state and federal politicians. The meeting received large scale press coverage. At the end of the meeting it was agreed to form the Moreton Bay Access Alliance to represent the interests of the “User Groups” within the Moreton Bay Marine Park region. He represents the members of ANSA on that Alliance.

He immediately set about organising a protest boat rally for the Saturday prior to the State Election to highlight the concerns of the recreational anglers on projected closures to Moreton Bay. The rally was well attended with nearly 300 vehicles towing boats converging on Parliament House from the North and South side of Brisbane. The rally again received wide scale coverage by television media and resulted in the Deputy Premier agreeing to a meeting with the Alliance members in the days before the election. They were able to secure agreement that the Alliance would be given 6 seats on the stakeholder reference panel in all negotiations over the Marine Park review. Through this panel, we have been able to stop the green elements pushing for large scale closures through incorrect science and outright lies. Continuing to work closely with the other Alliance members as the review process continues.

The Moreton Bay Access Alliance is a first for this area as it has brought all areas of the main users of the Marine Park together to work in accord with each other towards a common goal. For the first time, recreational anglers are working with the commercial fisherman and seafood retailers with the realization that unless we work together to keep as much of the resource open, then both sides of the industry could become unviable. Also on the Alliance are Boating Clubs, The Boating Industry Association of Queensland, Queensland Industry of Recreational Fishing, Moreton Bay Seafood Industry Association, Seafood Retailers Association and Seafood Lovers Association.

There has been considerable concern shown particularly from EPA staff that all sides of our industry are working together so closely over this issue instead of being kept apart and squabbling with each other as in the past. Time will tell whether we are successful in

minimising closures in the Marine Park Review, but all sides are certainly agreeing that Moreton Bay Access Alliance should continue to meet regularly and work together on all issues confronting our fisheries in Queensland. We would like to see this initiative spread to all areas of Queensland to help provide a united front to the radical green groups intent on putting a stop to our treasured way of life – access to an open healthy fishery.

OTHER ISSUES INVOLVED IN.

Grey Nurse Shark Closures.

Jeff found out that the local branches of Sunfish were not intending to fight the proposed closures of fishing areas on the pretext of protection for Grey Nurse Sharks. Together with Keith Hall a local charter boat operator, they organized two public meetings that attracted several hundred concerned anglers, and ensured that DPI and EPA staff conducting the "review" had to address the angling public on why they intended to close areas. They organised and submitted responses from a large number of anglers and also arranged for responses from experts such as Julian Pepperell and Ernie Grant. In the lead up to the issue going before State Parliament, they participated in a meeting with then minister Henry Paluschuk to place our reasons why the closures should not take place. During that meeting two of the proposed 6 closures were struck from the plan. While anglers still lost important fishing grounds, we at least minimized the amount closed.

Released Fish Survival projects.

Jeff has directly participated in two of the recent DPI studies on the survival of line caught fish after release. The first was the study of juvenile red emperor off Double Island Point. This meant spending 3 days on the DPI Research Vessel 'Tom Marshall', fishing from dories to catch juvenile red emperor in fairly rough conditions. Helped to ensure that enough fish were captured so that researchers had sufficient fish to conduct the different release studies.

The second study was on dusky flathead in the Jumpin Pin area of South East Queensland. Together with other ANSA members spent 2 days catching flathead on bait and lures using different hook patterns. He helped ensure the success of this particular study with fellow anglers Peter Griffiths and Gary Sturdy. They captured nearly 40 percent or 78 of the fish over the weekend to contribute to the total of 176 overall. DPI researchers have since advised that our efforts directly ensured the success of the research through the numbers of fish captured and the accuracy of the data recorded on capture forms during the weekend.

He will tirelessly continue to work for the recreational fishing community for many years to come.

The members of the State Executive of the ANSA Qld Branch Inc. believe that Jeff Sorrell is a worthy recipient of the Ron Dempster Award.