



2017 Vic McCristal Scholarship Recipients Announced

The first round of Vic McCristal Sportfishing Writer scholarships have been announced by the Queensland Branch of Australian National Sportfishing Association (ANSA QLD). ANSA Qld established the Vic McCristal Sportfishing Writers Scholarship to support budding sportfishing journalists on their sportfishing writing journey.

Three high quality recipients have been selected, with two open scholarships going to Toby Cash from Mackay and Matt Leavy from Townsville. Ryan McCosker from Keppel Bay Sportfishing Club has been awarded the ANSA QLD member scholarship.

ANSA Qld originally set its sights on awarding two scholarships, but due to the quality of applications received this offer was extended to three. As part of the strategy to help recipients prepare their first sportfishing article, the scholarship program has been designed to match recipients with mentors. With an additional scholarship awarded, Warren Steptoe was called upon to join Bill Bowtell and Adam Royle to lend a mentoring hand and gladly accepted the offer.

"Warren is a respected member of the sportfish writing fraternity and is a welcome addition to the pool of mentor's available for our recipients", ANSA Qld vice president and fellow mentor Adam Royle explained.

"It's both a privilege and a pleasure to have Warren join the mentoring team with Bill Bowtell and I and the recipients will gain wonderful insight into the world of sportfishing journalism given the vast array of experience on offer". Adam said.

With support from mentors, each of the scholarship recipients will now begin working on a sportfishing article and blend individual passions with sportfishing journalism skills to ensure readers are drawn to the feature articles due for completion later this year.

"While critiquing writing skills is an important function of the scholarship it is only one of the major components. As mentors, we all agree that it is equally important for recipients to come away from the scholarship with a better understanding of who they are as writers and what sportfishing journalism niche may be the best fit." Adam said.

"Possessing good writing skills and knowing how to prepare an engaging article forms a part of the successful writing recipe for Matt, Toby and Ryan, however this goes hand in hand with developing a network with fellow writers and contacts with publications.", Adam explained.

Over the next few months each of the scholarship recipients will plan, develop and deliver a feature article on a sportfishing topic of interest that incorporates the core values of ANSA QLD - Sport, Conservation and Integrity in angling.

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Meet Our Scholarship Recipients



Ryan McCosker

Spending the majority of his life in Rockhampton, Ryan has grown up fishing in Keppel Bay and the Fitzroy River. However, his first fishing experience involves catching Spangled Perch from farm dams around Emerald as soon as he was old enough to hold a rod. His interest in fishing skyrocketed as he grew up, helped along by a keen interest in the fishing magazines Dad brought home. In 2010, Ryan became a member of the Keppel Bay Sportfishing Club and the fishing addiction only got worse from that point on. Nowadays, most of the fishing he and his father do involves targeting

Barramundi and Threadfin Salmon in the mighty Fitzroy, as well as the occasional Fingermark session, and every so often when the weather permits, the opportunity for some fast-paced pelagic action is too good to resist. His fishing goals for the next 12 months include catching that illusive one metre wild Barramundi, as well as a ridiculously large Longtail Tuna after losing a hard fought battle to one a few years back.

Matt Leavy

Matt was fortunate to grow up on the banks of the Ross River, Townsville where he spent every spare moment on or in this beloved waterway. As a young boy one of his favourite books was Grants Guide to Fishes and he loved it until it literally fell apart, a book that has since been replaced to nurture the next generation of fishers. He spent much of his teenage years and early adult life learning the art of spearfishing with his father who often opted for the straight hook on most occasions. Matt is a keen member of the Townsville Barramundi Stocking Society and avidly participates in the ongoing releasing of juvenile barramundi fingerling into the newly assigned Impoundments of the Ross River. He has also been a valued member of the Townsville Sports Fishing Club and 'crowned Most Sustainable' with the Townsville Skin Diving Club. He is passionate about the promotion of Impoundment Fishing in local areas and is enthusiastic about learning and modelling fishing as a sustainable sport. Matt believes that developing and maintaining a healthy fishing culture is vital to safeguard the future of the sport. He is also of the opinion that impoundment fishing encourages a change in angling mindset on practices like catch and release fishing. Matt's mantra is that you should never stop learning and that everyone has something to offer. Just like the passing on of Grants Guide to Fishes he hopes to use journalism to share and grow the passion and enthusiasm of this great sport with everyone.



Toby Cash



Toby Cash has been surrounded by fishing culture for his entire life, living in the Shoalwater bay area. By the age of twelve, he was completely hooked onto the angling game, when he started doing a lot of his fishing with his father in the local estuaries. Toby is a passionate angler who loves to tackle whatever challenges the marine world throws his way. He always strives to learn and improve, pushing himself past his comfort zones and seeking to become a better angler every day. Though his techniques may have changed, he still chases the same fish - Barramundi. To him, they are elusive and ever-

changing, and he constantly strives to learn more about them, targeting them as often as possible. His love of fishing also means he is a strong believer in sustainability, wanting to preserve the sport for future generations. Toby is hankering to show the world his vision for fishing through movies, articles and more. This vision is a reflection of his adventures, beliefs, and his experience with the marine world itself. With his passion as his driving force, Toby is unstoppable in his desire to improve, and leaps at every chance to fish, and to advance as an angler.

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