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Jack Erskine and President Marina

THE RON DEMPSTER AWARD 2000 The recipient of the Ron Dempster Award for 2000 is a man who not only helped shape the Australian National Sportfishing Association in its formative years, but was also instrumental in developing much of the tackle used by sportfishing anglers today. The man is Jack Erskine, he cannot be here today due to his prior commitment to the Brisbane Boat Show.

Jack sends his apologies and expressed his disappointment at not being able to attend. He is unaware of the nature of this award, however he is aware we are giving him recognition in some form.

He also expressed regret at not being able to address the forum today.

Jack was involved in the the early days of ANSA, when NSW got wind of this new sportfishing movement being formed in North Queensland in 1967. As Vic McCristal stated, once the southern boys realised those barefooted louts up north had started something, it wouldn't

be long before they wanted to be part of it ... and this is exactly what happened.

Jack was part of the NSW group which formed ANSA in that State, however it wasn't long before he moved to Cairns to be part of the fishing action everyone was talking about with Black Marlin.

Jack's background was in the motor mechanic trade and this mechanical know how was sparked into interest when he realised just how inadequate the tackle was that was being used to catch the myriad fish in the region.

As those of you who know him will attest, if Vic McCristal is considered the Father of

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Sportfishing, then Jack is acknowledged as the Developer of Sportfishing.

He saw the rods and reels being used by the local boys realised the type of fishing equipment needed in the area and then worked with his American counterparts to design and develop the appropriate tackle.

Drags were a disaster in those early years of Sportfishing ... line and rods constantly broke until Jack pioneered the streamlined systems still being used today.

His custom rod designs were 20 years ahead of everyone else and are still rated as the best in the business. Many anglers talked of improved tackle ... many anglers wished for better gear but Jack was the one who was instrumental in developing the improvements and bringing the tackle to the anglers.

Jack's reputation was such that everyone turned to him for his knowledge and expertise ... however in the words of longtime friend John Mondora - " as a businessman Jack was an absolute shocker!"

He is considered by many to be the best tackle angler around and the best tackle salesman around, but his biggest failing was that he gave most of it away!

Kids would go to his shop, check out the the extensive range of lures ... then when they left, they usually had bulging pockets whilst Jack's till remained comparatively lean. these same juniors, in many cases,are still dedicated sportfishers.

Jack's generosity was boundless ... both of his stock and of his knowledge. He gave freely of his time to the Clubs in the Cairns area sharing his fishing techniques but more on how to look after and maintain the tackle. He usually left behind a rod or a reel to help with Club fundraising.

Jack was made a Life Member of the Cairns Sportfishing Club in 1980 and became the Club Patron a few years later. Although he regarded these honours highly he was modest in how he saw his contribution to both the Club and the sportfishing movement.

As a piece of fishing trivia for the members of ANSA Queensland, the winners of the very first State Championships was the team of John Mondora, Laurie Woodbridge and, you guessed it ... Jack Erskine.

It is with pleasure that we in ANSA Queensland honour Jack again, in bestowing the Ron Dempster Award on him, for an outstanding contribution to recreational fishing in Queensland.