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### Ron Dempster Award

The Ron Dempster Award is given to an individual for outstanding contribution to the enhancement of recreational fishing in Queensland.

The guidelines are;

- The recipient is nominated by the State Executive
- The recipient does not have to be an ANSA member
- The award does not have to be bestowed annually
- The award is announced during the Annual Conference

When we look at the former recipients Gerry Cook, Vic McCristal, Don McPherson, Bill Sawynok, Jack Erskine, and of course the dual nomination last year of John Doohan and David Bateman, its not hard to see first the caliber of the recipients but also the type of people we have in the recreational fishing arena.

This year the State Executive has nominated two very worthy recipients – a husband and wife team - John and Jennifer Mondora. They are not able to be hear today because they were doing one of two possible things i.e. wetting a line somewhere in the world to gain more knowledge on fishing or attend another forum to impart their vast knowledge of fishing to the public. This time it's the latter at the Cairns Boat Show.

This couple was around when ANSA was formed way back in 1967 at a little hall at Yorkeys Knob just north of Cairns. At that stage there were only a few rules. One was that there be no rules and the other was no women. While John went to the meeting Jennifer sat in the car outside and

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read a book. After about the third meeting Jennifer was invited inside to take the minutes.

The association has progressed quite a bit since then and so have John and Jennifer. They were very active members of the Cairns Sportfishing Club at that time. They moved away from that club to form the Cairns Rod and Reel Club. Formally an ANSA club

While cane farming was fairly lucrative they took the opportunity to travel to many parts of the world in search of many of the species that most of us just dream of. With this vast experience they were able to achieve a number of world records. Jennifer was the face on the Platypus adds holding up a world record Barramundi on 6kg line.

They have been very active in the Mac's and Zac's since their inception but would never both nominate for the same one, choosing instead to use their knowledge in a much broader way.

As President of the Mulgrave Valley Cane Growers association, John was able to convince the other cane growers in the Russell/Mulgrave river system to keep an eye on the users of the rivers who were doing the wrong thing when all netting was banned in that system. A cunning move when some of those farmers were the illegal netters.

They complained so much about the pollution being poured into the Mulgrave River by the Mulgrave mill that the mill sought an option and employed their son as their PR person to try and shut them up. That didn't work.

When the Barramundi fish stocking started John and Jennifer helped DPI Fisheries capture the brood stock for the breeding program then fought tooth and nail to have the fingerlings released into the Russell/Mulgrave system. The first open-ended waterway to be stocked with Barramundi. This set a precedent for many other fish stocking groups to be formed and for literally millions of barramundi fingerlings to be released into many river systems throughout the north. They can also take a lot of the credit for Tinaroo Dam to be turned into such a great recreational fishery. Most of us would be aware of the magnificent world record and all tackle records achieved to date in Tinaroo Dam.

When the Fishing in National parks issue came up a few years back the Mondora's were there again. This time a certain National Parks Ranger was sent to a remote part of Cape York on a disciplinary transfer. Quite some months later this person chose to have a whinge to Jennifer about his transfer and couldn't understand what he had done so wrong to deserve all this. Jennifer's reply, "Do you want a copy of the letter".

It's been said before and I will say it again "Thank God they're on our side"

This is the type of person we have chosen to be this years recipient of this most prestigious award and hopefully I will be able to get to Cairns next weekend to present the award to them before they hear about it through another source.

It will give me great pleasure to present this award to John and Jennifer Mondora.



John & Jennifer proudly accepting their Ron Dempster Award in their lounge room after presentation  
(Note the 50lb Tinaroo Barra)

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