

THE TRIDENT

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The Trident is the official newsletter of the Long Beach Neptunes, a non-profit organization. The Trident is published monthly and is provided free of charge to the members of the Long Beach Neptunes and associates.

The Long Beach Neptunes would like to thank the following members for their work in obtaining our 501(c)(7) non-profit organization status:

Jeff Benedict, Brian York, Jon McMullin, Will Wither, Steve Parkford

2021 CALENDAR

FISH STANDINGS

CALIFORNIA

Calico Derby	Closed
Calico Bass	Juan-Carlos Aguilar - 5.62 lbs
White Seabass	Jeff Benedict - 72.0 lbs
Yellowtail	Juan-Carlos Aguilar - 41.8 lbs
Halibut	Open
Sheephead	Open
Bonito	Open
Barracuda	Open
Dorado	Bill Peratt - 12.3 lbs
Bluefin Tuna	Dan Keeler - 142.4 lbs
Lobster	Ron Warren - 11.375lbs

OUT OF STATE/COUNTRY AWARDS

Yellowfin Tuna	Open
Reef Fish	Jorge Veliz Ramirez - Grouper 78.94 lbs
Pelagic, non-tuna	John Hughes - Yellowtail 45.5 lbs

Kent McIntyre Award

Jeff Benedict - 72.0 lb WSB + 24.8lb YT = 96.8 lbs
Steve Parkford - 64.2 lb WSB + 29.8 lbs YT = 94 lbs
Juan-Carlos Aguilar - 51.6 lb WSB + 41.8lb YT = 93.4 lbs

Perpetual Big Fish Trophy

Dan Keeler - 142.4 lbs Bluefin Tuna

- October 31st - Halloween
- November 3rd - Monthly meeting at Me 'n' Ed's Pizzeria
- November 25th - Thanksgiving
- December 4th - Christmas Party at Acapulcos in Marina Pacifica Long Beach
- December 25th - Christmas



MONTHLY CLUB MEETING

November 3rd, 7:00 PM



**This month's club
meeting will be held at
Me-n-Ed's Pizzeria
4115 Paramount Blvd,
Lakewood, CA 90712**

**THE LONG BEACH
NEPTUNES
CHRISTMAS PARTY**

December 4th, 2021

**Acapulco Restaurant &
Cantina**

**6270 Pacific Coast Highway,
Long Beach, CA 90803**

**PLEASE RSVP by sending PayPal payment to
lbneptunes@yahoo.com**

**Please select "family and friends" when submitting payment
or pay at the November Meeting**

[EVITE LINK](#)

PRESIDENT'S LETTER

Hello fellow Neptunes,

The Fall Classic has come and gone but the memories will last me a lifetime. Not because of the fish that were or should I say weren't weighed in (the green water and wind on the outside made it tough) but because the turnout was so strong which was only second to the comradery at the post weigh in. There were 47 divers in the event and I think almost everyone came to the BBQ. The Raffle was fun with lots of great prizes given away. Thank you to everyone who participated. This is such a great club!

Now it's time to focus on lobsters, boat work and travel to warmer water. I've been getting out like most of you in between the rain and swell. For me the fall is usually better than mid winter and I was able to grab a 9.2#er. It doesn't compare to some of the other ones I've seen weighed in lately but still a respectable one.

I know some of you have been to Baja recently and can't wait to hear the fish stories at the next meeting. Hopefully I'll have my own stories after my adventures south in November.

In the interim the Flattie will get some work too and be ready to go.



Lastly, the Christmas party is December 4th at Acapulcos restaurant in Marina Pacifica in Long Beach. 6pm and \$20 a person. An Evite has been emailed to all members. I'm looking forward to celebrating the end of a great year with all of you!

Paul Zylstra
President

EDITOR'S NOTE



With Thanksgiving fast approaching, I reflect on this past year's challenges, triumphs, and moments of joy.

I am thankful for my family, friends, and all the marvelous moments I've had this year on and in the water.

As we begin to end the year, let us all remember how lucky we are to be able to enjoy the bounty with which we are blessed with.

**JUAN-CARLOS
AGUILAR**

2021 LONG BEACH NEPTUNES FALL CLASSIC



The Fall Classic was a fantastic success, as long as you don't look at the fish count. This year's competition landed in the middle of some challenging (to say the least) conditions. With strong winds, heavy seas, and miserable visibility, the competitors braved the questionable conditions to make the trek to the isthmus.

There were multiple sightings of fish, but few were weighed in. In fact, only a single yellowtail was brought in on the day of the tournament. One calico and, luckily, a solid assortment of lobster rounded out the podium. It's amazing to think of the difference between this year's Blue Water Meet, where we had a record breaking combination.

It only goes to show that sometimes mother nature gives up her bounty easy, and sometimes she makes you work for it. Difficult conditions did not dampen the spirit of the weigh in or the bonfire, BBQ and raffle that followed. I think, the herculean efforts put forth by all, galvanized us into a formidable force of enjoyment. Congratulations to all competitors, with a special acknowledgement to those who managed to weigh in fish.

Official Results:

Gamefish: Mark Wyneken - 21.2 lbs Yellowtail

Lobster: Jason Taylor - 9.3 lbs

Calico: Juan-Carlos Aguilar - 5.6 lbs

Juan-Carlos Aguilar





'A Salt Weapon'

Loads Up by Dan Keeler

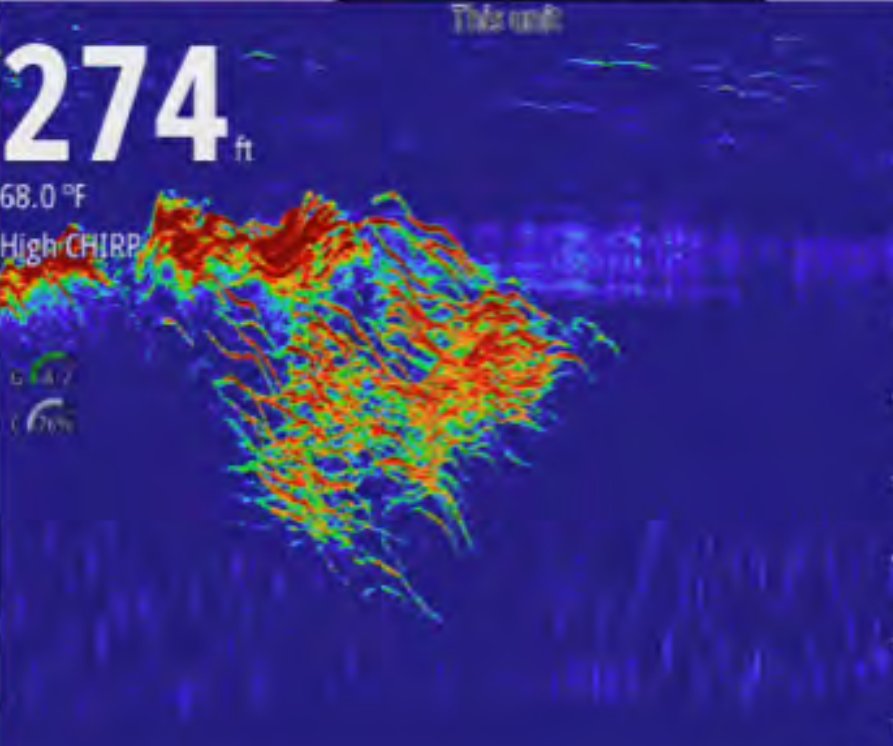
For most of you that know me, you know Tuna is my absolute favorite type of game fish to hunt. For me, finding that offshore needle in a haystack, is something that I am extremely passionate about. I didn't get to spend as much time chasing BFT this year as I would have liked, mostly because right when it started to pick up I decided to sell my Glacier Bay and pick up Bruce's 30 Skip. Bruce, thanks again for the sweet ride, I absolutely love this boat. And as most of you know, any time you get your hands on a new boat, you have to make it yours. And making it yours definitely takes water time away. With that being said, a few electronic upgrades later, and some other miscellaneous items to check off the "To Do" list, I took 'A Salt Weapon' out on my first Tuna trip of the season.

My buddy Dan, Jared, and I put 3 trips together this past season, chasing BFT. Our first trip we got on some unreal diving less than 0.25 mile off the front side of SCI, in about 400 feet of water. Breezers as far as the eye can see in the late afternoon. Dan hopped in first and shot his new PB at 187#, atta boy Dan. Then Jared hopped in and shot a nice 80#er. I hopped in after they got their fish to the boat and first dive I shot an 80ish# fish. Jared plugged another 70ish# fish shortly after I got mine to the swim step. All of us could have shot limits that day but I wanted to be a little more selective with my second fish (Jared is still young, he can't help himself sometimes), so I ended up passing on all the smaller grade models that seemingly wouldn't leave us alone for the remainder of the afternoon. It was that easy on this particular trip. We decided to pack it in and head for anchorage, hoping to get find the larger models on the morning tide.



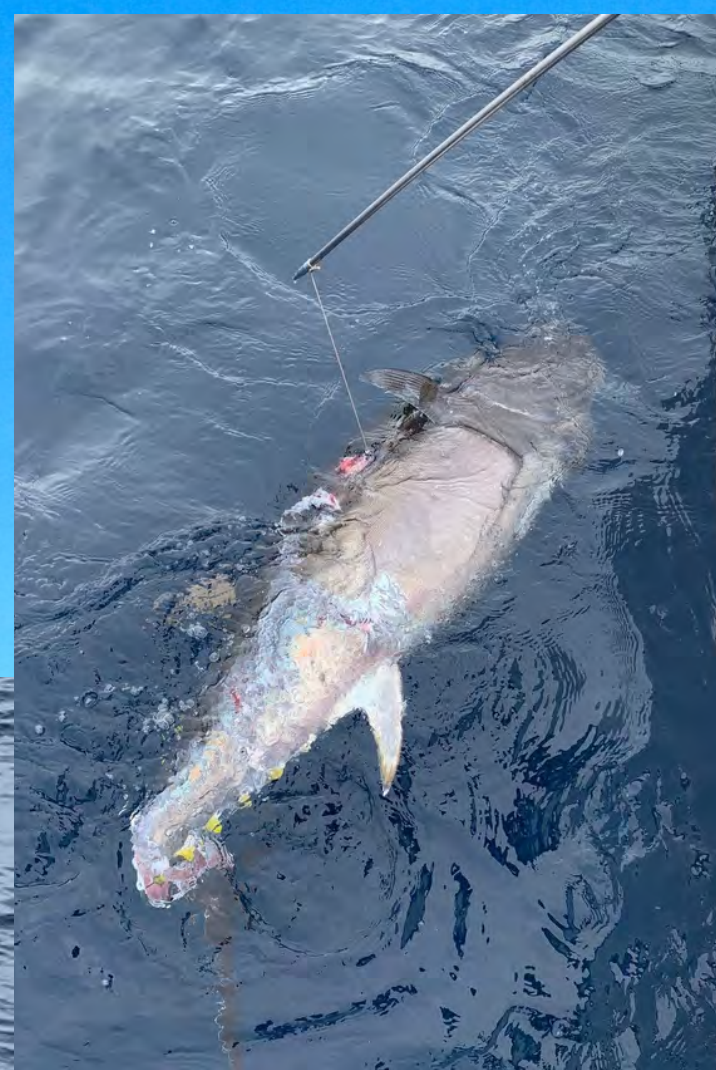
The tide change arrived and we had just got back to the area we wanted to start looking, and then Murphy struck. Turns out a hose clamp on the turbo broke and I was having some throttle issues with the starboard motor. With all the fish and ice on the back deck, I didn't want to start bringing fish bags into the cabin on the "new to me" boat. So, we limped home at 8 knots and called it a successful trip.

The second tuna trip that Dan, Jared, and I went on we ran to Tanner. The fish had settled in here pretty good by now and the weather was flat calm. Diving conditions were just about as good as they get out here. Jared shot a nice 125# shortly after we arrived, and a mako decided to try and chew off the tail while he waited for the fish to tire. We didn't know it at the time, but we had all mentioned and wondered if a shark was on Jared's fish. About 5 minutes after the fish settled in and the float was on the surface, it pulled under for about 15 seconds. It seemed very odd that a fish would take the float under after it had been on the surface for a while. Jared got the shooting line up to the float and Dan dove down to check out Jared's fish. Dan was greeted by a mako in his grill. Dan popped up the surface and I kept telling him to dive, as we had meter marks all around us. Dan swam back to the boat, said "No, no, no, no!" and said a 10 foot mako on him like white on rice. We got Jared's fish to the boat and now I was kind of doubting the size of the Mako that Dan was claiming to be 10 feet.



The teeth marks on the fish didn't line up to that of a 10 footer so I chummed it up so Dan could get a glimpse of his 10 footer. Um... no Dan, it was a baby, a 5 to 6 footer. We teased Dan about that for a little while longer and moved on to find the next school that wasn't being harassed by a shark. We put a couple more fish on the boat after that, but they definitely weren't giving it up. Diving these fish on this day, was definitely a little tougher. There were some bigger models mixed in as well, but regardless of the size, the fish seemed to want to keep their distance on this trip. We would meter them down at 150 feet or so, and if we were lucky they would come up to about 60 - 80 feet. Constantly having to adapt and try new things with to get these fish to come up to where you can get a shot on them. This was one of those days. We came home with about 300# of fish and considered it a very successful trip and had some good laughs, at Dan's expense of course.

The third and final trip that us three did together was just a couple of weeks ago. Fish were still hunkered down on the Tanner, as they had been for a solid month and half by now, and we could see wind in the not too distant forecast, i.e. Fall Classic Tournament, was going to start picking up. I kind of felt like this might be our last shot at these fish for the season and so we arrived on the grounds the Monday afternoon before the Fall Classic. As soon as we got to the numbers where we wanted to start, we were immediately greeted with meter marks that never seemed to disappear from under the boat. Dan hopped in first, shot a nice 75#, fish, followed by Jared who put a nice 90# on deck, and once again, I suited up last and on my first dive I punched down to about 50, in some dark ass murky water and couldn't see a damn thing below me. I looked up and could see a nice school coming just into view above me (White Seabass silhouetting up style), and I had no clue as to the size of the fish. I didn't have any under my belt yet so I let it fly and stoned the fish. As soon as I got my fish back to the boat and lines untangled etc. the tide had changed and just like a light switch, it turned off.



We anchored up on the Tanner high spot for the night, and wouldn't you know, this was the highlight of the trip. It was a Nat Geo night spent out there. Lightening, thunder, and sideways rain all night long. The lightening was coming from all directions, and it seemed to come every 10 to 15 seconds. We stayed up past our bed time watching the Dodger game (sore subject right now) and the amazing light show. That is something that I don't think I'll ever forget, it was an amazing sight to see. We woke up that morning and headed back to the grounds a few miles to the west, and after a valiant effort, and not having enough time to wait it out for the afternoon tide change, we packed it up and went home. I called Mori at about 8:00pm as I was leaving the slip, and Mori was nice enough to stay at the shop late and weigh and cut up my fish. It ended up going 142#, and although not a PB, I was still happy with the results. Thanks again for staying late Mori.

I think we were all hoping that these fish would come back a little closer, to what we to refer to as Cow Town off SCI, but that never seemed to be the case this year, at least not at the time of this write up. And unfortunately, with all this recent wind starting around the time of the Fall Classic, it seems that the BFT are moving on as the counts just aren't what they use to be. Maybe that will change, but my gut tells me that we will have to wait for next year to venture out and dive on schools of BFT, in hopes of finding that next personal best. Now on to lobster... Dive safe all.



Paint me like one of your French Girls





The one that got away, AND SURVIVED

So earlier in the year, I went diving with a few buddies. One of my friends is in the entertainment business and all he touches turns to gold. He's the guy that usually waits out all the cold months of diving seabass and usually around April decides he'd like to shoot a fish so he goes out and shoots one. Usually this happens within his first 3 dives. By the end of the season, he has typically hunted 5 or 6 times and has 3-4 seabass under his belt. This year, he went gangbusters and probably dove 12 times and had 6-7 fish under his belt. It probably doesn't hurt that he's got us hunting like fiends throughout the season and he piggybacks on our info, but bottom line is, he's a real prick. Even when we don't dump him in the fish he seems to effortlessly slide right into them.

This season started about the same. I had already been hunting for a few months and I got the call that he wanted to dive. I didn't even have a fish under my belt so I figured maybe I could piggyback on his luck this year. First time out, nada. I gave him some grief and told him he was losing his charm because last season we went out and his first dive he shot a 52 pounder right next to me. Of course, I saw nothing. He laughed and said maybe we could try a few days later.

The few days later came and it wasn't all that nice. Overcast with a little swell on it. One of those cold days you don't really want to get out of bed. But we did. We dove a number of spots and just kept bouncing up the line. It was still Covid and I was still unemployed with plenty of time to dive in between kid duties. I was impressed with my buddies stamina as it was nearing late afternoon and we were still at it. I was pretty worn out after all the diving I had been doing in the previous weeks. We decided to hit one or two more beds and then call it quits.



I never saw it take off but I could see the reel line zig zagging from it's initial run. I've had seabass spool me good but usually it's in areas that have a little more open water. I was in the thickest part of the bed and this fish dumped my spool in seconds and for the record I've got 150' on there. Just as I came down to the last few feet, I felt the fish stop. With all the zigs and zags, there had to be a tremendous amount of pressure on her, but I still felt pretty confident knowing I hit her with a fairly solid shot. Still, I was anxious and wanted to get to the fish as soon as possible so no big breath up. I just started punching quick little dives racing under the surface as quick as I could to reach her. Again, not a graceful process and my heart was thumping through my chest.

I finally reached a point where I could see my shooting line and it looked like she was tied up on the bottom in about 20'. I could see my shooting line head all the way down and around the corner of a big clump of kelp. I couldn't quite make out the fish but I had gotten there pretty quick considering the thickness of the kelp and my pathetic breath hold. I decided to spend at least a minute up top before I punched down to retrieve her.

Maybe it's just me but no matter how many seabass I've shot, digging out a big one always brings up the same anxiety. It's like the first fish you ever shot. I can't ever seem to calm down. Breathing up for the retrieval, all the normal thoughts ran through my mind. I hope she didn't tear off! I think she looked bigger than my buddies, he's going to hate me haha! Definitely my biggest seabass ever. Slow down the breathing! I hope it didn't tear off. I'm the man!! I'm glad it's shallow, slow down. I hope she didn't tear off.....

Not calm but not wanting to wait any longer, I dove the 20ish feet down to the bottom following my shooting line. Turning the corner around the kelp getting to the end of it hoping for thrill all I experienced was the heartbreak of defeat. Instead of a big silver fish, all I saw was a big silver shaft. NOOOOOOOOOOOOOO! Hope shattered instantly. Taking a moment to feel the shock all I could do was feel the pain before drifting back up to the surface without my gear.

During the process of untangling my gear and swimming back to the boat all I could think of was the lost opportunity. Replaying the situation in mind as I would 1000 times over the year the only thing I could see was the back half of the monster and the little tail wiggle before the shot. I pictured where I aimed and where I thought I hit the fish figuring it must have moved forward a foot or so by the time the shaft hit. Instead of hitting her mid back in the really thick part of the fish, as she moved forward the back of the fish got smaller and my shot must have landed high in the back on the back third of her. With so much pressure from the zigging and zagging through that painfully thick kelp it must have put too much pressure on the shot and it tore out. The only consolation I felt was that I was fairly certain it wasn't a death blow for the fish. I was pretty certain with a tear off in that area she would live to fight another day.

I was feeling the blow of defeat as I got back to the boat where the guys were high fiving and taking pictures and taking bets on how big she was. I was the only one who bet over 70 because I've shot a lot in the 60's and this one was definitely on a different size scale. Happy for my bro on his new personal best, I tried to get with the celebration program. I really was stoked for my friend and it was a truly amazing fish he shot but in the background of my mind my shot and loss played over and over in a loop.

We got back to the dock and went through the process of weighing it. She went 72 pounds and we took more photos as the sun went down. I posted one here of the fish in the bag. It was long and FAT just like the one I lost.

So fast forward to two weeks ago from today. I get a call from another friend of mine and he's asking about the monster I tore off earlier in the season. When I tell him the story and tell him where my shot tore out, he says wait one second and sends me a screenshot. Apparently he was just out filming one day and he was going through his go pro footage from earlier in the year and had got some monsters on film. When he reviewed, he noticed one had a discernable tear out right in the spot I said I must have hit and torn out mine. I had never told him or anybody where exactly I had been hunting that day so as a test I asked him where his footage came from. It was the same bed and it's not a big one.

I'm pretty certain this is the fish I shot and lost that day. I posted up the original photo where you can see the tear out in the top back third of the fish. I also posted a photo with the red dot of where I aimed on the back half of the fish before she started moving. The tail is impressive. So is the way she dwarfs the 45-50 pounder next to her. What's even more impressive is in the footage he sent me, as he follows these fish, another one appears just sitting in a kelp room that is even bigger than this one. It's a crazy story and one I won't forget soon just because of the nightmares. The one consolation for me though is that I've always believed the shot wasn't a death blow and as I'd like to believe this is the fish I lost that day, I'd like to believe she's still swimming around out there. You can bet I'll be out there looking for her next season.

John Hughes





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