

2008 Fish-On News from the Captain

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Think the season got off to a slow start? This just wasn't the case for the vessel, Reel Attitude, Captain Eddie and her first mates, Eric Awalt and Steve Kean. She landed her 1000th Bluefin Tuna even with a slower economy, gas prices up, and many fishing anglers wondering whether they would be able to make it out on the water this year. Even though we were all confronted with challenges, we still fished and moved the boat to as many strategic spots to forget our worries and catch the big one each and every time. There's just something about being out on the water and enjoying the fruits of our fishing labor.

Many of you, loyal clients and friends just kept coming back every year while many new angler's got to enjoy your first time experience on Reel Attitude and chasing Striped Bass and tuna from Martha's Vineyard, Nantucket and Chatham. We did some great fishing and as you know, there is nothing quite like it! In fact many of you sent pictures and videos, which we continue to post on www.sportfishthecape.com for everyone to see your proud catch of the day! Please keep them coming as our photo gallery is capturing all of our experiences out on the water.

In June, we were off to Sankaty Light and doing some serious trolling, when out of the blue, appeared a brown stretch of water for what seemed to be three miles. There were birds everywhere! This certainly was a Captain's dream of over 900+ birds and a clear indication that the brown water was really a fertile Striped Bass migration. Needless to say, I thought I had died and gone to heaven! Within five minutes, we had hooked 13 Striped Bass, all over 44 inches and on Umbrella Riggs. The sweet news was that we were one of three boats experiencing the fish-on frenzy of this migration so we just kept landing fish. We caught and released 115 fish in two hours; all over 40 inches. We experienced it early, being one of the first boats to find that great fishing location. However, the word got out quickly to other boats with the fish staying for 4 days. We were fortunate as we experienced an incredible fishing day and one of our best experiences we've had out on the water.

June was a great month for bass with July slowing down as the commercial bass season opened. Although we started to chase Bluefin Tuna, we caught many large bass that migrated out into the offshore shipping lanes. All these bass were caught on our Squid Riggs and released due to the fact that they were in Federal waters. In addition to catching Bluefin Tuna, Striped Bass, we also landed a number of Bluefish between 14 to 17 pounds.

The school tuna bite went off early in June and the fever hit many boaters who were east of Chatham and waiting for the first fish to come on their northerly migration. We chose to wait until the end of June to begin our tuna trips and continued on in July so we could be sure the numbers of fish were staying around. Offshore tuna fishing took off and the school tuna bite was tremendous with many days of 10 plus fish mixed in a series of weather challenges. We still managed to land 3-4 fish a day. We ended up the season from June through November with 278 Bluefins caught with 30% released and/or tagged.

Our best Blue-Fin Tuna day had us with another record-breaking 24 fish from a full day ten-hour charter. On one of the days east of Chatham when seas suddenly changed from 4 to 7 feet, we had just discussed going back to port when three rods went off at the same time. A husband and wife team jumped up; one took the fighting chair while the other stood poised to land a fish. Both of them caught fish in very big seas. We released the third fish and headed back to port where we had over a two-hour ride. I'm proud to say, we had some very happy anglers on Reel Attitude that day.

Our shark adventures were action packed and incredible last year. Brian Lafauce and his fishing team took a number of sharks with a couple of big blue sharks in the 400lb class. Matt Newman and his team did equally well with him taping his experience using an underwater camera. This action packed video ended up on YOU TUBE. We certainly felt famous from this experience.

The monster shark tournament, which we participate in every year, gave us a number of sharks from makos to big blues. We had one great opportunity to make a major move on the second day, with a huge porbeagle shark at the back of the boat. This fish worked on our bait for over two hours without taking any of our lines. We still ended up catching 14 plus sharks and had one mako we released the first day that may have made the weight, but we chose not to take him. My mate and Bill Magni's team had a great Monster Shark Tournament and will be back again.

We again fished with our clients on numerous offshore canyon trips in 2008. I have now fished the individual northeast canyons over 70 plus times successfully. I plan each and every trip from the knowledge I have over years of fishing the Cape and from information I collect from a network of Captains and resources that I am affiliated with. We share and trade feedback about the best canyon locations, talk about where we have recently fished, discuss fishing patterns, new lure technology and we utilize a special set of offshore temperature charts provided by Len Belcaro.

I recently had a discussion with Len Belcaro of Big Game Fishing on how we were using his offshore water clarity charts not only in the canyons but also on catching school Bluefin tuna east and south of Chatham. I have been using a new set of offshore Australian lures that proved to be a real difference-maker on billfish we were catching in the canyons. As a result of this type of planning, our charters have caught numbers of mahi-mahi on light tackle along with yellowfin tuna, wahoo and marlin. However, fish patterns change and last year was a slower season for the canyons in general whether you fished from New Jersey or in our Northeast areas.

We had a number of days we were pushed out of the canyons due to weather and the bait was not always available as it had been in previous years. Even the chunking bite in the evening never really materialized like it had in the past. The good news was the marlin bite was great and we hooked on two exceptionally large blues marlins that we lost on hooks thrown as they gray hounded away from the boat. Matt Newman caught a large beautiful white marlin on a stand up Penn International 50.

We had a good canyon season in 2008. If you choose to do one of these trips, as your Captain experienced with canyon runs, make sure you come see us on Reel Attitude. Should you choose another boat due to our lack of availability, always select a boat and Captain who has a great deal of Canyon experience; both for your fishing pleasure and for safety reasons. It's quite a trip out and the weather can change instantly.

It was great to see all of you catch so many fish and best yet, take home your catch of the day. As many of you know, my wife Karla, loves to cook and will be sourcing us with fish recipes this year. She actually is going to provide a personal chef service on the Cape and happens to be in a culinary school in San Francisco that focuses on French based training as part of their professional chefs program. I'm proud to say that she graduates in mid-March and will be back on the Cape. At last, I will finally eat something other than my beloved peanut butter and jelly. Maybe on some these long runs out to the Canyon, I can put 'my Chef Karla' on the boat to cook for us!

We'll be posting some 'catch of the day' recipes on the website for you to view. At the same time, please don't hesitate to share yours with us. Reel Attitude plans to publish these good recipes for all to enjoy!

As always, thanks to all of you for making my passion so enjoyable. It's great being your Captain, navigating Reel Attitude every day and sharing these fishing experiences with everyone who just wants to be out on the water catching fish! Thanks to my first mates, Eric Awalt and Steve Kean for always making a difference and for sharing with all of you their wonderful skills and expertise.

See you in 2009!

