



First Big Fish

Editor's note:

Jason Sapp is a 17 year old high school student from Georgia

who took the initiative to pursue his two passions: spearfishing and underwater videography. For his senior class project, he sought out a suitable mentor throughout the diving community and ended up with yours truly - Tony Grogan, the new owner of Spearfishing Magazine. I had never taken on the task of having an intern in my film and video production company, but I welcomed Jason's polite, enthusiastic and respectful approach with a resounding "YES, let's give it a try." Jason is a freediver and a scuba diver. For three weeks of diving on my boat "Enterprise," I watched Jason refine his technique, however not find that elusive "big one." On the last weekend of his internship, he struck cobia gold! And, the great part was I caught all of the exciting action on underwater videotape that we edited into an amazing three-minute video Jason was able to show his senior class back in Georgia. Jason exemplifies the best ethical and good sporting qualities that spearfishing can bring out in today's youth. That is why

I want to start an initiative in the spearfishing community throughout the world to get more young men and women into the sport. Spearfishing will be preserved for all of us and the sport will prosper as more and more high-quality youth like Jason join the ranks every year. You will hear more on my "Spearfishing Youth Initiative" idea in upcoming issues. Now let's get to the action! Here is Jason's "First Big Fish" story in his own words.



My name is Jason Sapp and I am from Macon, Georgia. I am pretty land-locked and don't get the chance to spear big fish because I spearfish in fresh water mostly. The biggest fish I had speared up until this point was about 10 pounds. It was so exciting to finally get a big fish, a 42 pound cobia. I was waiting at the back of the wreck Esso Bonaire in about 80 feet of water off Jupiter, Florida. I turned around and there was this big cobia swimming towards me. So, I swung my gun and shot the fish.

The shaft penetrated all the way through and I knew it was a good shot. But, he was such a strong fighter he just kept swimming around me in circles. The shot was a bit low, through the cobia's side, and I wasn't sure if it was going to hold or not. I was kind of worried about that, so I did not put too much tension on the line and waited as he swam around me in big circles hoping he would tire out. My dive buddy, Tony Grogan, came over and put another shaft in him to try and slow him down. But, that did not slow him down for long and he just kept fighting and fighting.

He was a really strong fish! I would swim up to him to try and string him, but he kept thrashing and thrashing. I tried multiple times and eventually I got the stringer through his head. Even then he was still fighting and thrashing around.

On the way up, I remember that I was so relieved because the cobia was finally on the stringer. I knew he wasn't going anywhere and he was going to make it onto the boat. I was so excited I finally got my first big fish and I can't wait to get out there and get more!

To see an action-packed, 3-minute streaming video of Jason's First Big Fish, go to the website: www.spearfishingmagazine.com



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