



Sabiki

on the frontline



I'm sure those anglers who regularly go boat fishing have had some kind of adverse experience with a Sabiki or Yo-Zuri bait jig – tangles, hook-ups with other lures or traces, and hooking fingers, carpet or clothing is commonplace, making these little multi-hook rigs a relative nightmare. Yet they are a necessary evil in the pursuit of good live or fresh bait that is required for successful offshore and land-based angling.

Text and images by Dean Pretorius

There are some tips that help – such as removing the barbs or shortening the trace – but often you search for the showing and after eventually finding the bait you have to rig up a rod or worse still untangle an already rigged rod, by which time you're off the shoal and have to start again. Obviously this has proved really frustrating to many anglers.

Enter the Sabiki stick! This rather strange-looking rod is an ingenious invention that allows the whole bait jig to be reeled into the centre of the rod – leaving you free to stow it on the deck ready for action at a moment's notice.

The Sabiki stick is a 3-piece unit that comes in an 8ft (for the boat) and 7ft (paddle ski and jet ski) model. Last December Mark from The Tackle Box in Shelley Beach gave me one to try, and I tested the 8-footer, but I reckon the short one is going to be a revelation for the jet ski and paddle ski anglers who have to make the most of really cramped quarters.

The instructions suggest threading the line through the rod with the use of a paper clip, but Mark suggested a piece of 200 lab carbon-coated which worked very well. Once threaded, I attached the bait jig – a Sabiki No6 10-hook – and was amazed at how the hooks just reeled into the rod without getting stuck. The 10-hook wide-gap jig was too long, however, so I modified it by shortening the gaps and it was a breeze. I also tried the 8-hook version, which worked perfectly. The cap at the top of the rod holds a 7oz sinker in place, and the rod stays ready for action at a moment's notice.

During December the bait was wild off Port Edward and I put the rod through its paces, including throwing the jig into far-off shoals. I was amazed at how easily the hooks come out, and the other advantage for those fishing for bait to freeze is that if you have fish on you just carry on winding and as the fish get to the tip they are thrown off by the top cap. We also let the kids use this gadget and for the first time we didn't have to deal with the problems of the past.

I did have the hooks get stuck once or twice, but I noticed that one of the hooks had bent open and this was causing the problem. I would also suggest not using a bigger jig – hook sizes of up to No4 work with no problem. The rod can be used with all reel types, but a grinder is recommended – the Daiwa BG 30 is what I used and it worked very well.



The 8ft Sabiki stick

The jigs wind into the centre of the rod

Even the kids can catch bait on the Sabiki rod!

This is one gadget every serious boat angler should invest in. Wives, get your hubby one for his birthday – you'll definitely be in his good books! \\\\

For enquiries, call Mark or Andrew from
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