

Australian Lure Fishing Podcast Episode 322



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Cam Cronin

Sponsored Angler & Jewfish Specialist

Cam has been lure fishing for Jewfish in Sydney Harbour since he was a schoolboy and is obsessed with bettering his personal best 140cm jewfish, putting in tons of hours and racking up heaps of jewfish in his quest.



Cam's Sydney Harbour Jewfish Tips

- Jewfish are far more prevalent in Sydney Harbour than most people think. A ban on commercial fishing and a pollution problem that encourages catch and release by recreational anglers have combined to reduce pressure on the fish.
- The two key areas for targeting jewfish in Sydney harbour are steep rock walls that fall into relatively deep water and the shallower margins (8-15m) of deep holes, especially areas where there are cockle beds showing on the downscan. Fishing down near the mouth in summer and further upstream in the winter months seems to work best.
- Finding fish in the more open, structure-less areas is a case of getting to know the spots, watching your sidescan closely for jewfish, looking out for baitfish and fishing beneath schools of feeding pelagics such as salmon and bonito.
- Cam reckons Sydney Harbour Jewfish fishing is possible on just about any tide if you adjust your technique to suit the current and get to know where to fish on each tide. Likewise, he

doesn't let weather, lunar cycles or factors affect his decision to go fishing as he's caught plenty of jewfish in all conditions.

- When a big fresh comes through Cam finds the jewfish fishing can heat up and tends to focus on the deeper water areas, especially down towards the mouth of the system.
- On the turn of the tide the jewfish can spread out to feed, making them harder to catch. At other times the tidal run can concentrate the fish and make them more predictable by looking at eddies and other places where baitfish are concentrated.
- If the fishing is tough, cycle through lures, change boat position and try a lot of different things. Jewfish will usually bite fairly quickly when they're on, so if no bite is forthcoming in the first 15-20 minutes it's not a bad strategy to move off and fish a different school of fish.

Cam's Sydney Harbour Jewfish Tackle

- Heavier gear is recommended around the rocky headlands and rock walls. A 4-8kg rod capable of casting fairly heavy jigs, coupled with a 3000-4000 size reel, 20lb braid with 30-50lb leader is recommended. Jewfish are not leader shy.
- A 2-5kg or 3-6kg rod with a 2500 size reel is sufficient when fishing the margins of deep holes where hard structure isn't an issue. 10lb braid and 20lb leader complete the combo. It's possible to go with a lighter leader, but you'd risk being cut off by big flathead or being under-gunned if an opportunity to cast at a quality kingfish arises.

Cam's Top Jew Fishing Lures

- A 5" Z-Man Diesel Minnowz soft plastic is a good choice for the rock walls, fished on a 5/8 oz 7/0 TT Lures Headlockz jig head. Colour doesn't really matter, try and find colours that contrast with the water colour. Let the lure sink down the face of the rock wall until it hits bottom, then quickly whip it back up just as it touches bottom and crank the reel to just stay in touch with the lure on a semi tight line as it drops back down again. It's good to whip the lure up with a double twitch well off the bottom, although it can pay to use smaller hops if there's a bit of flow.
- A 40-60g micro jig in a rounder, slow fall style is a versatile lure when rigged with quality assist hooks to reduce snagging (upgrade thin assists on some jigs not intended for this style of fishing). This style of lure is perfect over flat reefy structure where there is current and wind and can be bounced along the bottom in much the same way as the Diesel Minnowz. It's also a good option for fishing open water in 12m or more of water, especially when big tides or wind make presentation of other lure styles difficult. They can be fished

vertically as a boat drifts over flat bottom, or they can be cast and allowed to drop to the bottom before being hopped along, being allowed to hit the bottom.

- A 4" Z-Man Jerk Shadz is an effective lure in the more open water areas. A ½ oz jig head is often necessary due to wind and current. Allow the boat to do long drifts and use a combination of vertical hopping and fanned out casts ahead of the drift hopped back to the boat until you find fish. If baitfish are visible but not jewfish, fan casts out to cover water, but keep an eye on the sounder and be prepared to make a vertical presentation when fish are spotted.
- Soft vibration baits are deadly on jewfish in Sydney Harbour, as they are in most places. The 30g sizes are perfect for fishing slightly deeper water (12m or more, depending on current), brand is not important.