

Australian Lure Fishing Podcast [Episode 480](#)



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Lee Rayner

Fishing Personality, TV Host

Over many years, Lee has left his mark on many styles of fishing for just as many different species. A very versatile angler, Lee is well known for his television productions, from "Tuna Bluefin Tactics", "Snapper Fishing Tactics" and "Whiting Fishing Tactics" back in 2008 to his long running fishing show "Fishing Edge", which takes him all over Australia fishing for every imaginable species.



Lee's Top Melbourne Kingfish Tips

- The kingfish fishery in the greater Melbourne area has improved dramatically over the past few years. There's the occasional small fish in Port Phillip Bay, some quality fish around The Rip, schools of quality fish in Westernport and rats through to horses in shallow water and deep reefs along the coasts east and west of Melbourne.
- One of Lee's favourite ways to find kingfish is to slow troll a popper and/or a stickbait, holding the rod and twitching or blooping the lure until it gets smashed, then stop and fish!
- Kingfish can be very frustrating and often the bigger fish will be at the back of the school and the rat fish at the front – so run your lure 20m or so behind your mate's lure if you want to hook the bigger fish.
- Kingfish will more often chase down a popper than a stickbait because they're attracted by the noise and commotion. If the fish are swirling around a popper but not taking it, sling a stickbait out while your mate works a popper.

- A lot of really good fish can be caught in 3-8m of water where you can see the bottom, but you'll also get them in 100m of water dropping jigs vertically onto structure.
- Kingfish are a summer species in Victoria, but weather is always a factor. To a large extent Lee attributes the recovery of the kingie fishery to the fishing pressure being limited by weather conditions and ocean swells.
- In the late summer and early autumn it's worth focusing on headlands, islands, reef systems and other places where there are both hard structure and decent currents. They're generally on the upcurrent side of a piece of structure, so where they aggregate depends on the direction of current and tide.
- Hot, calm weather is ideal for kingfish and it's important to find your own fish, away from other boats. Kings go off the bite if there is a lot of boating activity, but fortunately there are lots of places where you can fish without seeing another boat.
- Electronics are vital not just for finding Victorian kingfish, but for identifying the active fish worth targeting – a lot of fish are not active and you can waste time putting lures in front of them. Be constantly looking for any kind of structure, especially if it has bait on it.
- Watch the water temp on your sounder, above 17C is good, but if you're getting into 20-23C is even better, especially if the water is clear and blue.
- The leadup to the full and new moons and the associated tides either side are always a good time for kingfish, but it depends where you're fishing. Tide changes are worth staying out waiting for.
- If the fish are being cagey, be sure to switch lures and try different things. It's much better to have a bunch of decent quality rods on the boat that are rigged with different lures, rather than just one high-end rod that you need to cut the lure off and rerig. If a king follows a lure to the boat he'll be gone by the time you cut off your lure and tie another one – instead pick up a different rod and sling a lure in front of him!
- The “puppy dog” strategy allows Lee to land quality kings on lighter gear than most people use. He fishes a firm drag for the hookset and then backs the drag off and leads the fish away from structure before tightening the drag once they're away from structure.

Lee's Kingfish Tackle For Vic Fishing

- Lee is in love with Shimano's Saltwater Stradic in sizes 8000 (casting rods) and 10000 (jigging rods). He finds these reels to be super smooth and very light and he loads the 8000 size reels with 30lb braid and 10000 reels with 50lb braid.
- A casting rod of 7'2" to 7'8" will give good casting distance with the lures used for kingfish.

- A 60-80lb mono shock leader of 8' in length puts the FG knot between the reel and stripping guide and the lure hanging down a similar distance. This gives a bit of stretch and cushioning during casting but also gives some abrasion resistance when fish get back to cover.
- Lee is using Oceans Legacy jiggling swivels with a roll-on snap at one end and a 100lb breaking strain. They make switching lures super quick.

Lee's Melbourne Kingfish Lures

- The smaller Rapala Williamson Jet Popper model 5 tends to fish better than the larger model 7 and is perfect for kingfish, as is the X-Rap Xplode in Purple. Calm conditions are best as the poppers don't tumble around as much. Try not to overwork the lure, they can be cast a long way, so the first pop can be using the rod at 45 degrees upwards. Experiment until you find a cadence that keeps the popper working properly, not overly fast. Bloop, pause, bloop, pause..... repeat. Make sure you cast well in front of where the fish are travelling.
- For stickbaits, the Rapala Subwalk is a good, economical option that can be slow rolled or fished with sweeps. Likewise, the Nomad Riptide has proved it's worth on kings. These lures can be worked a fair bit faster than the poppers and it doesn't hurt to burn and kill from time to time when a king is following.
- The 12" twin-hook Lunker City Sluggo is deadly on kingfish and it seems to draw them from a very long way off. These are a very good option when the fish aren't eating that aggressively and are marking up mid-water. These are usually fished unweighted, but they can also be fished with a size 2 or 3 ball sinker in the loop knot if you need to get them down a little.
- The number of quality high speed jigs out there that will catch fish is staggering. Oceans Legacy 120 and 170g jigs are great, as are the Samaki Hummer jigs. These are fished vertically and at high speed, letting them hit the bottom and then wind flat out 4-5m before starting an erratic, jerky retrieve. It's not always necessary for the rod tip to be lifted 3ft during high speed jiggling, sometimes little 8" twitches while fast winding can be deadly effective and a lot easier on the angler.