

# Australian Lure Fishing Podcast [Episode 518](#)



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## Eric Brandao

Kingfish Enthusiast And Lure Maker

Eric has lived in western Sydney for his entire life and has been a kingfish fanatic for the past decade or so. He's particularly keen on high-speed jigging, but recently turned his hand to making wooden stickbaits and now has a lure making business to his name!



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## Eric's Tips For Catching Sydney Kingfish On Lures

- Many people think of kingfish as being aggressive, pelagic predators that will attack any lure in their path, and they can be. But often kingfish can be extremely fussy and difficult to tempt, no matter what lure or bait you put on their nose.
- The Sydney area is often thought of as an area where kingfish are predominantly a bait fishing species, but plenty of fish can be taken on lures, too.
- The key to finding kingfish is to identify major pieces of hard structure that cause the current to upwell, such as a pinnacle, large rock, wreck or artificial reef. If there is bait on such a structure, then kingfish will be there at some point in the day or tidal range.
- If you find bait and especially if you can see fish marking up but not biting, take a note and try the spot again after a tide change and sometimes the fish will have become more interested. When you find bait mid-way up the water column and off the bottom you know that the kingfish are feeding on it!
- Kingfish will bite right through the day, but tide changes that coincide with moon rise or moon set are definitely worth fishing, so be sure to have identified structure and baitfish in advance and be on the spot when the window occurs.

- In winter as the water cools the kingfish tend to congregate on the deeper reefs in 30-50m or deeper. Starting at the 50m mark and working out to the 120m mark is not a bad strategy.
- Residential kingfish can sometimes be found in the deeper holes of the Harbour and estuaries during winter, but they tend to be unpredictable and unreliable. It's important to have plenty of spots to visit when the kingfish are on because the boating traffic and the number of bait fishos on the better known reefs is crazy. There are lots of little pieces of structure you can have to yourself for at least a fish or two before another boat catches on, so study the Navionics charts and be sure to avoid the crowds.
- High speed mechanical jigging takes practice, so be dedicated and focussed and put as much time on the water as possible whilst you're developing a good, smooth jigging technique. It's important to focus on technique first and then speed will come, getting a good half turn of the reel handle as the rod tip is rising and another good half turn as the rod falls is the aim. As you get into a rhythm it will get easier and you can work the lures faster and faster.

## **Eric's Tackle Recommendations For Kingfish**

- Eric uses mechanical speed jigging and suggests that you need both the right tackle and a good level of fitness before giving it a go. It's a style of fishing that is easier if you do it often enough to maintain "jigging fitness" and is difficult to do properly unless you have the right tackle. Overheads reels are super-efficient for cranking a jig through the water and are less tiring to use than spin reels.
- Eric's favourite kingfish jigging tackle is a Jigstar Twisted Sister PE 2-5 jigging rod coupled with a Maxel Transformer F50C reel low speed. Don't make the mistake of getting the high-speed version of this reel, it will make life much more difficult! The reel is spooled with PE5 Powerpro braid as he finds this is the longest lasting and toughest, but not the prettiest, braid on the market. Black Magic Tough Trace of 80lb is the normal starting point, size up if the fish are bigger or down to 50-60lb if the fish are a bit fussier.
- The Twisted Sister is an acid wrapped rod, meaning that the guides are configured to start on top of the rod near the butt end up below the rod near the tip during use. This stops the rod from twisting in the hand and helps with the line lay on the reel.
- Spin gear can work too and has its place. It's also a cheaper option these days as the medium price point reels such as a 5500 Slammer's and 10000 Saragosa's are capable enough to handle most Sydney kingfish if coupled with a PE5 rod and PE5 braid.

## **Eric's Top Kingfish Lures For Sydney**

- Over the last ten years it has become increasingly hard to find vertical knife style jigs.
- It's important to rig these jigs properly. Unlike slow pitch jigs they shouldn't be rigged with multiple hooks, only ever with a single assist hook near the top. Eric makes his own assist hooks and regardless of the jig size uses Owner SJ41 hooks in size 9/0 and 300lb Kevlar assist cord in red colour only.
- The Samaki Hummer Version 2 is a "must-have" in sizes 200, 250 and 300 with the 200 size being the most versatile. Colour is not as important as most anglers think, but Eric likes pink jigs and silver jigs.
- The Jigging Master Rocket is a very difficult lure to find, so snap them up if you can get them. Eric has sizes from 200 to 550g and reckons they're his favourite jig,

especially in the 250g size. These jigs are very fast sinking in current and take less effort to work than most other jigs.

- The River2Sea Spike is a discontinued line that (unlike the others mentioned here) is not tail-weighted but head weighted. The 200g size works well, but the 150g size is almost as good.
- Always start upcurrent of the reef or pinnacle and put the boat in reverse to slow the drift and drop the jig down to the depth where the fish are, using colour change braid to judge the depth of your jig. Work the jig up 2-3 colours and then drop the jig back down and start again.