

# Australian Lure Fishing Podcast [Episode 538](#)



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## Russell Babekuhl

Australian Hobie Champ 2022

Russell is an accomplished tournament angler, and although we've listed him above as the 2022 Australian Hobie Tournament Champ that's just the latest in a long line of accolades that stem back over a decade and are too numerous to mention here. Russell grew up in Wingham, NSW, which gave him the opportunity to fish the Forster area regularly – he still counts it as one of his favourite fishing destinations.



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## Russell's Forster Bream Fishing Tips

- Bream can be targeted year-round at Forster, although Russell prefers May for the really big fish, which congregate in the lower reaches of the estuary at that time in preparation for spawning. They thin out during the winter but start to come back in July/August and are lean and hungry, making them easy to catch.
- During September the fish start to scatter through the system, making it pretty hard to pinpoint where the fish will be.
- The bream fishery at Forster is characterised by big fish, clear water and plenty of heavy structure. During July-September it's all about fishing the bridges, rock walls, oyster leases and occasionally flats down at the bottom end of the system.
- On a run-in tide Russell likes the rock walls, bridges, flats and shallow ground where the fish move up onto structure with the rising water. On the last of the runout tide

(Russell's favourite) when there's not much water the fish are limited as to where they can be – look for structure such as a bridge that's near a flat that the fish have retreated from with the falling tide. The poles at the top and bottom of oyster leases also have holes that fish often retreat into.

## **Russell's Bream Tackle**

- Russell prefers slightly heavier rods and typically uses rods rated from 2-5 kg up to 3-6 kg, with 8lb braid and 8 lb leader or 10 lb braid and 10 lb leader. Reel size is important because in this heavy structure it's necessary to keep that fish moving towards you as fast as possible, so it doesn't have a chance to get back into structure.

## **Russell's Forster Bream Fishing Lures**

- 2" Gulp Camo Crabby is fished by casting it super tight to cover and waiting for it to get hit as it sinks to the bottom. This is fished on a 1/24oz Berkley Nitro hook in size 4 most of the time. This makes the lure sink headfirst with the claws up. Once it's on the bottom it is best to give it a couple of shakes and then crank back and cast again, as nine times out of ten the bite comes on the drop.
- A 3" Gulp Minnow can be worked a fair bit faster than a Crabby, allowing the angler to cover a fair bit more water in search of fish. This is rigged on a 1/24oz Berkley Nitro jig head when fishing structure or 1/16oz jig head when Russell wants to cover more ground and work the lure with a faster, more erratic action.
- A 2" Berkley Gulp Shrimp rigged unweighted on a weedless an Owner #1 worm hook is useful at the top of the tide when fish are right on top of oyster racks. Skip it across the surface and then let it sink as slowly as possible and the fish will often charge out and smash it.
- A deep diving hard body such as an Oar-Gee Lil Ripper or JP Runt in black/purple is a great searching lure for rock walls and bridge pylons (fish the shallowest side). These are worked in ways that they crash into the structure, the bib keeping the hooks safe from snagging. Running parallel and in the shadow of structure works well – remember that fish always face into current, so cast up-current and work the lure back. Deep divers can also be worked through shallower water simply by winding slower with plenty of pauses and rod tip twitches.
- Russell rarely throws grubs, but occasionally a Gulp Nemesis gets a cast or two. He rigs these weedless, but on a standard jig head, going up in hook size to 1 or 1/0 with

a 1/8 or 1/6 oz head. To rig, feed the jig head through the front of the lure for 5-6mm and twisting the lure around to rig it in much the same way as you would on a worm hook. Being a slim profile lure, the nemesis rigged in this way squashes down and allows the fish to get easily hooked when it bites down.