

MARCH MADNESS

By Captain Aaron Kelly

March madness applies to basketball as well as the boat yard for us. Three boats gotta get their love now before the spring heats up. Fishing every day affords no time for painting, grinding, sanding, and epoxy. Living the dream! Bottom paint in every crevasse, money flying out at an alarming rate, and for some reason all your buddies stop calling for a couple weeks! Ha, all good!

It's a new start on the year! Everyone's got cabin fever from the long winter. Most hardcore fishermen/women have been hitting the brine at best one or two days a week. You get these warm pretty days "the itch" starts. You get jacked up to go fishing and then it's foggy or freezing again.

Just like the weather being all over the place the fish are all over the place. Not in a rolling on top every cast but scattering about, in transition and on the move. The stripers are making the push up the rivers to spawn. Reds are on the move. I am excited to see how this year shakes out. We have had some really big schools of nice 24-28 inch red drum winter over here. They were pretty much landing them in the surf and inlet all winter, even sight casting them someday! The only problem I noticed is with the water being so cold the lethargic fish did not pull as hard as they usually do. A commercial fishing buddy of mine told me that one day he saw a couple places of them the size of half

a football field. Heck, in that many fish I might even be able to get a bite! So, there should be some drags singing!

The beloved speckled trout will be the third player on the scene. We had a scare this winter when there was a naturally occurring phenomenon, a cold stun, which put a dent in the trout population. How much? I don't know. Some areas had some floaters and some swimming upside



down in circles. Not all these fish die, thankfully. There were also some creeks that made out fine. The DMF cautiously closed it down till mid June. The cold water runoff was just too much for some of these trout.

Do I think we will still catch specks? Of course we will! The little bridge will show signs of life early on. Also, behind the lighthouse seems to be a traditional early spring "go to spot". Last year, it was that flat behind Whalebone Willy's Tackle shop that was a hotspot. Just seems the fish get in the muddy shallows to sun or warm up since the water is going to be a few degrees warmer. Blues? Ehh... really a no show till early May. Flounder not so much, yet. Stick with tossing 1/4 ounce jigs with a gulp or zman with procure bumping on the bottom and you will probably encounter Mr. Drummy, specks, or a striper! Good luck! If you're bored come grab a sander or give us a call to go feshin!

Captain Aaron Kelly
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