Barra back to their best

WITH classic build-up conditions now in full swing, the usual culprits are well and truly on the job with the barra at their aggressive best on the flats in Darwin and Bynoe harbours. Bynoe Harbour has been very good for barra and threadfin, with barra to 80cm working the flats over the dropping tide and also on the rock bars over the low tide and the first of the run-in. The threadfin are around in good numbers, but they are very fussy and very flighty. The barra on the other hand are becoming more and more bold, particularly in the skinny water on the flats. Small, hard-bodied lures like the Baby B52 and the little gold Bomber are working a treat, but you must change the hooks on the Bombers straight out of the packet as they will just straighten out on any reasonable fish.

In the really skinny water the barra to 80cm working the flats over the dropping tide and also on the rock bars over the low tide and the first of the run-in. The threadfin are around in good numbers, but they are very fussy and very flighty. The barra on the other hand are becoming more and more bold, particularly in the skinny water on the flats. Small, hard-bodied lures like the Baby B52 and the little gold Bomber are working a treat, but you must change the hooks on the Bombers straight out of the packet as they will just straighten out on any reasonable fish.

Plastics can be deadly, but the hook-up rate on the single hook can be frustrating. The bottom line is they do work, particularly when the fish are selectively feeding on small prawns.

The other build-up target is the golden snapper and once again they are not disappointing, with plenty of the tasty scrapers doing the rounds of the harbour rock bars. Darwin Harbour wrecks and the closer-in ishoes feels like the Charles Point grounds.

One crew bagged out on the weekend trolling pink Tilsan barra lures over the upper rock bar on the Elizabeth River. Another tactic that works well at this time of year is to drift and bounce soft plastics on the rock bars over the neap tides. You don’t get the numbers you get with bait, but the fish you do score are usually-quality models. For barra and salmon, try Darwin Harbour and Bynoe Harbour flats on the falling tides, the Adelaide River mouth/ Saltwater Arm and The Daly River. They are the pick of the spots.

The mouth of Sampan and Tommocutt are good for threadfin along with the mouth of the South Alligator River. Shoal Bay is really starting to fire with good barra in the low tide holes on live bait and up the back of the Little Howard on lures.

Carrboro Bilabong is also starting to produce the odd good barra, while Bathurst and Melville Island creeks are well and truly worth the fuel bill.

For golden snapper, try harbour rock bars in Darwin and Bynoe, along with the Charles Point grounds, Darwin Harbour wrecks and the wider grounds including North and South Gutter. Don’t forget wide of Bynoe and Dundee, and Middle Arm has been good for golden snapper and the odd good jew. The Perron Islands have produced good coral trout, golden snapper and mixed reef fish. North and South Gutter have been good for golden snapper and the Vernon Islands have produced golden snapper and coral trout on the deeper drop-offs over the turn of the tide.

Wide of Dundee has produced good reef fish for the bottom-bouncers. Darwin Harbour wrecks have golden snapper and jew on offer. For crabbers, there are still plenty of good buccus doing the rounds of Darwin and Bynoe harbours and Shoal Bay is still your best bet for numbers.

Middle Arm and the western side of the harbour is your best option for quality crabs to better than 2kg. If you’re short on time or reluctant to spend too much on fuel, the Elizabeth River is a good close-to-home option.

Female fishos get on board for challenge

DARWIN’S female fishos are gearing up for the annual Secret Women’s Business Barra Challenge at Corroboree Billabong next month.

The women-only tournament — no male skippers allowed — is in its seventh year, and this year will see a record number of competitors signing up, with more than 140 getting ready to hit the water.

This year the fishos in the lure-fishing tournament will be tagging barramundi, and organisers are proud their challenge has been recognised as environmentally sustainable.

“We are committed to preserving the environment and the beautiful fisheries in the Northern Territory and have recently obtained a 4.5-star Neatfish accreditation, which we are very excited about,” said Christina Hurren, challenge co-ordinator. They are also excited to be raising money for a good cause.

“This year, part of our co-ordination of the tournament is raising funds for a charity,” said Ms Hurren. “We have chosen Carers NT and have, throughout the year, held fundraising events. “On top of that, our sponsor, Trafficco NT, has pledged $60 for every dollar we raise.”

Ms Hurren said this year’s event has plenty in store for participants, with great entertainment each night at base camp, Corroboree Park Tavern.

“It’s a chance for like-minded women to come together and enjoy a weekend of fishing and to form friendships as well as raising some great prizes,” Ms Hurren said. The event takes place October 4-6.

HOPE YOU HOOK UP ON THE WEEKEND!

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WEDNESDAY 18</th>
<th>THURSDAY 19</th>
<th>FRIDAY 20</th>
<th>SATURDAY 21</th>
<th>SUNDAY 22</th>
<th>MONDAY 23</th>
<th>TUESDAY 24</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0515 6.76</td>
<td>0512 6.76</td>
<td>0514 6.76</td>
<td>0100 7.30</td>
<td>0133 7.39</td>
<td>0204 7.39</td>
<td>2118 6.74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1120 6.76</td>
<td>1216 1.33</td>
<td>1215 1.33</td>
<td>0100 7.30</td>
<td>0133 7.39</td>
<td>0204 7.39</td>
<td>2118 6.74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1724 6.60</td>
<td>1812 7.07</td>
<td>1812 7.07</td>
<td>0100 7.30</td>
<td>0133 7.39</td>
<td>0204 7.39</td>
<td>2118 6.74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2344 1.42</td>
<td>2344 1.42</td>
<td>2344 1.42</td>
<td>2344 1.42</td>
<td>2344 1.42</td>
<td>2344 1.42</td>
<td>2344 1.42</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

HOPE YOU HOOK UP ON THE WEEKEND!