

Fishing on a budget

■ Lake Windamere Murray cod

IF the missus is on your back about blowing your hard-earned dollars on expensive fishing gear, maybe it's time to look further afield for some great budget rod and reel combos.

Due to anglers requesting advice via our website on the appropriate arsenal to tackle our natives, we have over the course of the past few editions given you an insight on the tackle to help you get connected and stay connected.

We stress to our fellow anglers that we have never been fishermen to spend a million bucks on gear but rather source the best gear for the best price and still achieve the best results.

In a world where everyday living is becoming more expensive, anglers are now looking for more bang for their buck!

Now this doesn't mean the dearer the combo the better it performs.

We're talking from experience here and not as some inexperienced person selling tackle.

Keeping up with the Joneses, especially in today's fishing world will quickly burn a hole in your wallet.

Many combos on the market can easily run into hundreds of dollars and some even thousands.

But does this catch you more fish? Keep dreaming!

So where does budgeting borderline on bodgie, inferior setups?

Yes there are a lot of cheap and nasty outfits on the market today that are catching a lot of anglers red-handed.

But little do many people realise that for nearly the same price spent on an inferior setup they could have bought a combo that will handle a good fish and last a long time.

It appears to us as more of a feel good thing for anglers to be swinging off the end of a \$700 rod, putting their faith in apparently the best of the best.

One of the biggest things we see in our travels is the amount of misguided notions given to anglers from some tackle outlets that capitalise on an angler's inexperience.

They look amateur, so we'll tell them they need to spend this much!

Now selecting the ideal rod doesn't necessarily come naturally to all anglers but in coming issues we will be giving a few pointers that will start you on your way.

Back in 2008 when the barra impoundment scene was switching on some electrifying fishing and



Freshwater Northern NSW
by MATT & NICK WELLS



Cool change

It's now the time of year when the days are shorter and the trees begin shedding their foliage.

Water temperatures starts to drop and fish begin to acclimatise to the cooler conditions.

Golden perch will traditionally slow and Murray cod will start to become more active in shallower waters.

Shallow bays and rocky points in our local impoundments will deliver the goods while in our rivers, casting to the dormant willow trees and many snags our rivers bear will find you in the hot seat.

Bassman spinnerbaits will be our preferred choice during the cooler months and head weights of 1/2oz and 5/8oz will get the job done in any northern NSW rivers.

For any other information don't hesitate to contact us via our website www.wellsbros.net and click on the 'Contact Us' link. ↵

before we teamed up with L. Wilson & Co, we were fishing Lake Awoonga with a friend who wanted a good rod to start him off that could handle a decent barra.

So off to Gladstone BCF it was.

After looking through their large selection of rods we picked out a Wilson LCS Snapper medium rod, a light and gutsy 7ft spin rod, for a mere \$99.

We kept the rod for our own use and three years on after copping a flogging doing some hefty work on metre-plus barramundi and Murray cod it still takes pride on the rod rack among a great variety of our other Wilson setups.

How's that for great value?

Most of our combos are able to be found in various tackle shops around the country for under \$250.

Now some may say this is expensive but compare it to other setups pushing the till near \$1000 and you will find yourself out of pocket for an outfit that will do the same job.

Now another major myth we would like to sign off on is that cheap rods always snap. Bullshit!

A few years ago a good mate of ours who was a rep for a tackle company that had rods at a fairly cheap price was up in arms about anglers returning rods that had been snapped in two or more pieces to the store from which they purchased it saying they snapped them while landing fish.

I indicated to him that these rods most likely had broken due to high sticking, getting jammed in car doors or boots and even being walked on in the shed or boat.

We were using the same rods at the time and were throwing them around fairly heavily and never had any dramas.

Back to Lake Windamere

Last issue we brought you a report on our first visit to Lake Windamere near Mudgee in central west NSW.

After having a great run at Lake Windamere in February, we couldn't help ourselves and headed back to the lake for another three days of fishing in March.

Once again the fantastic Sebile range of lures did the damage and surprisingly after the first few minutes of casting a Murray cod of around 15kg smacked a Sebile Flatt Shad 66 SK fished off the banks on a Wil-

son 7ft LCS ultra light bream rod decked out with a SureCatch REMY Custom RCF 525 spin reel spooled with 8lb Platypus Super Braid tied to a 10lb leader.

Was this fish specifically targeted? No, but quality light gear stood the test in what was a good five minute wrestle.

Nick managed to land his best golden of 63cm pulled off the banks, once again on a Sebile Flatt Shad 66.

The Sebile Flatt Shad range boasts a low frequency vibration to more accurately mimic an ailing fish.

This makes these lures a highly attractive target for opportunistic predators.

They continue to astound us with their consistent performance especially being able to excel when the fishing is melancholy.



Note the length and size of the tail on this yellowbelly which is an underrated sport fish.



Steve Wells with a yella pulled from a small pocket of water ridden with submerged blackberry bushes.



Nick with a solid yella that took a liking to a Sebile Flatt Shad in Blood Red Amber on a foggy morning. The fog in the background isn't half as thick as it was!



Another solid golden that fell victim to an extra heavy sinking XH SK Flatt Shad. This type of Crank Bait excels when targeting yellowbelly in deeper water.



Nick with a thumping 63cm Windamere yella taken slow rolling a Flatt Shadd over a shallow point.



Matt displays a 15kg Murray Cod that smacked a Sebile Flatt Shadd intended for a golden perch. Great fun on 8lb Braid and an ultra light Wilson bream rod!