



Charter Trip Report



Nearly 100 RISAA members are awarded spots on fishing charter trips each year simply by winning random drawings at the monthly meetings. One member on each trip agrees to write a short story to share the experience with all members. *It should be noted that not every trip can be guaranteed to catch fish. The trip brings RISAA members together and provides an enjoyable day or night on the water. Catching fish is a bonus.

FISHNET CHARTERS • Capt. Mel True

story by BRIAN BELTRAMI

On Sunday, November 12, 2017, members **Bill Hubert**, **Doug Sturgis** and myself (**Brian Beltrami**) met **Captain Mel True** at the boat ramp in Somerset, MA at 7:00AM for a tautog charter that we won at the September meeting.

Also joining us this day was the Captain's son **Nate** who is 9 years old and in training to be a first mate and future charter captain.

This trip had been initially scheduled for October 29, but due to a large storm that came through the area that weekend it was re-scheduled. This may have benefited us as the water temperature cooled over those two weeks. The air temperature was around 30 degrees and we were all dressed in layers with Grunden-style pants, warm jackets, winter hats and boots.



Doug Sturgis was dressed for cold weather



(L-R) Members Doug Sturgis, Bill Hubert, mate Nate True and Brian Beltrami

Captain Mel said it would be short ride to the fishing grounds and after a safety briefing we departed the ramp. Once we cleared the Somerset River his 25' Dusky, powered by a 2017 300 HP Yamaha, had us on the fishing grounds within minutes.

The boat is equipped with Lowrance electronics and Captain Mel scouted the area for structure and then dropped the anchor. The seas were a bit rougher than predicted, but they settled down later on.

Captain Mel set us up with his custom rods equipped with Fin-Nor Marquesa reels. Bill had brought his own favorite rod, also equipped with the same reel, that he had won at the October

meeting.

Captain Mel got to work cutting up crabs and distributing them. Within minutes we started catching fish. First we caught a few black sea bass, then small tautogs and then some larger tog.

Captain Mel explained that this is how it usually goes. The sea bass are on the crabs first; then the small tautog move in, and then after a while the larger tog will show up.

For the next four hours we caught fish, and it was just about nonstop action! There were times that as soon as the crab hit the bottom the fish were on it. If you had too much slack in the line when it hit bottom you missed the bite and the bait was gone.

We were using a simple one-hook rig, a dropper loop with the hook and a 4oz sinker just below it.

We all caught keeper size tautog and it wasn't long before we had our boat limit. **(to page 36)**

Fishnet Charters
Cape Cod - Buzzards Bay - Block Island

Capt. Mel True
USCG Licensed - Fully Insured
4 Passengers

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Member