

## NSWGFA Junior Team 2018 Kiama

On Friday 6<sup>th</sup> April 2018, I travelled with mum to Kiama to fish on Nemo as part of the NSWGFA Junior Team for the Kiama Blowhole Tournament. The Junior Team was one of the best things I have ever done, it was so much fun.

The junior team consisted of Ryan Kaczorowski, Jack Miegel, Rhys Jolly and me (Kaitlyn Schofield) with Harry (owner of Nemo), Grahame Williams and Snappy as our captain and crew for the weekend.

The night of the briefing, we went to the club and had dinner downstairs. All of us except Harry had a chicken schnitzel and I beat the boys at eating all my chicken schnitzel. **Woohoo!!!!**

On the first day, I set my alarm for 5:30am and ended up waking an hour before the alarm went off and got out of bed 30 minutes before the alarm went off. In total, we caught 7 Dolphinfish (Mahi Mahi). Ryan, Jack and Rhys tagged 2 each and I tagged one. I was a bit sad I only tagged one, but I didn't mind because I knew it was only luck and we kept swapping rods.

The second day, I once again set my alarm but this time for 4:30am however, I slept through the alarm. Unfortunately for everyone else in the luxury cabin, they were not able to sleep through my alarm. **Hahaha!!!!!!**

Jack and I tagged 3 Dolphinfish, with Ryan and Rhys tagging 2 each. We ended up with our boat tally of 10 for the day. In the afternoon, a minute and a half before swap over on rods, we were trolling live baits and all of a sudden Ryan's rod went off and we realised immediately he was hooked up, but we weren't sure what he was hooked up to as the fish didn't jump at the start.

When Ryan's Striped Marlin finally jumped, we saw something green go by under the boat. Harry thought it was a shark because it was too big to be a marlin or a dolphin, and it wasn't Ryan's fish.

Ryan's fish was estimated as 80kg but it didn't want to fight like a small fish, instead it kept going down deeper into the water, with the fight taking an hour exactly to Tag the Marlin. Jack got a great video of it playing up on the trace.

Nemo and the Junior Team and Nemo ended up winning most other gamefish tagged and Ryan won the highest point scoring Junior T&R angler category.

I would highly recommend the Junior Team for any juniors who would like to give it a go. The people I met were very friendly and welcoming and I didn't feel left out as the only girl in the group. I was able to spend the weekend doing something I love to do, with other juniors who are as passionate about it as I am. The only thing I would change would be how many times we listened to "Pretty Fly for a White Guy" on the music list.

Grahame and Harry provided everything for the weekend and offered great advice with regards to our fishing techniques. I am very grateful to have been chosen to fish with the Junior Team and would like to thank Grahame Williams, Harry, Snappy and NSWGFA for their time and support during the weekend.

Kaitlyn Schofield.