

STORY NUMBER 11 - **MY FISH STORY** - GULF STREAM OFF MIAMI, FLORIDA  
As told by William J. (Bill) Kuhrt, 1990

A number of people have asked me to tell about my fishing experience while we were in Miami vacationing. Dorothy and I went down to the docks one day, talked to one of the captains of a small fishing boat, and he told us what he could do. Another couple from North Dakota on their honeymoon were interested in going out into the Gulf Stream to do a little fishing also. So we made arrangements with this captain to take us out on a certain day and do some fishing in the Gulf Stream. The deal was a day long proposition from nine o'clock to four in the afternoon, and we had to pay a dollar apiece for a sandwich lunch (which wasn't too bad). But the cost of the boat was only \$40.00. We split that between the other couple and ourselves. So we went out.

It was a beautiful day and we very shortly ran into a school of king mackerel and were hauling in these fish. They weighed about four pounds apiece. We stopped fishing for awhile and had some lunch, then we fished some more, caught some more mackerel, and then I also caught a small tuna that weighed about 15 pounds.

We came back in and thought we'd had a pretty nice day, but that gave us an appetite for going out again. So we made arrangements for about a week or ten days later to go out again. This time the captain suggested that I might try to catch a sailfish. Well, they weighed about 125 pounds, and the fishing for them was altogether different. We used about a thousand feet of line, maybe twelve hundred, and a great big reel with a handle to hold.

So the others were fishing for mackerel and so forth, but I was fishing for sailfish. The bait was the white underbelly of another kind of bait fish, and we just put the hook through the one end of it and let it just waggle through the water. We fished on the surface. Well, I had a number of strikes but couldn't seem to get the bait out fast enough, because a sailfish comes up and kills his prey with its fins that are on top of his back. Then they turn over lazily and grab the bait from underneath. If the bait isn't there, why they just swim off. Since the boat was moving, my job was to get the bait back to where it was when he hit it with his fins.

I had missed two or three that way and was just getting the hang of it when suddenly I got a strike. And this was a strike. The line started going out from the reel which had at least a foot in diameter of line on it and a great big brake handle. It just kept zinging out. And it kept going and going and going and kept going down. I sat there holding the pole with one hand and the brake with the other, and I couldn't stop the downward motion. Well, we got within less than a hundred feet of line and I began to realize that we probably couldn't land this fish.

While I was just wondering what to do the skipper reached around me with a sharp knife and cut the line. And I said, "What the hell'd you do that for?" He said, "Why, you didn't have a chance in the world of landing that fish." I said, "Why not?" He said, "You hooked a twelve-hundred pound hammerhead shark. That fish is big enough and capable enough to even tow this boat. We couldn't possibly land it! We don't have the equipment, and I cut the line so I wouldn't lose all of my tackle, the reel and the rest of the line, and you too. It would have yanked you overboard." I said, "Thanks a lot." So we just let it go at that.

After all the excitement I noticed we'd had quite a wind and the waves were beginning to roll pretty heavy. I said to the skipper, "Well, you know, I'm hungry. How about lunch?" Well, I heard groans from all over. I found out Dorothy and everybody on the boat was sick except the skipper and myself. So I said, "Well, under the circumstances it's getting pretty rough anyway, so let's go on in."

Of course we had plenty of fish to take home anyway, but that's my fish story. I can say I hooked about the biggest fish most any of my friends ever did, but I didn't land him. Anyway, that's my story. Thank you very much. Quid erat zu erzhalen.