

Jon Gnagy – America's Art Teacher

Here's the Story of How The World's Toughest Spinning Tackle Had its Trial Underwater

by Jon Gnagy

First Test: Nine days of underwater fishing in the torrid heat and salty water of the Midriff, located in the Mexican Gulf of Lower California.



Skin diving and spear fishing are no longer the newest underwater sports, at least not since spin fishing underwater became a fact in 1957.

Spin fishing under water may never become as popular as spin fishing from a boat or from the shore, but the tackle that had its trial by salt water is already the most popular with men and women who know quality.

Reports of my first experiments in taking the Larchmont reel and Airex rod under water to catch the fish of my choice brought surprise from many skeptics. The first question asked was, "How can you do it without ruining your reel?" The only people who were

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not surprised were the Airex engineers.

Proof of their confidence in the product they produce comes with every reel, in the form of a written guarantee. When they say the gears are guaranteed for life, they mean it.



The first experiment in taking my rod and reel underwater happened on a trip where the Bass run big and live in rocky holes around the islands of the Midriff. The experienced fishermen I went with were well-equipped to pump the pinto bass out of their lairs with heavy tackle, 80 pound test line, and wire

leaders, but I had only my light spinning outfit with 15 pound test monofilament. When a ten-to-twenty pound Pinto takes your light line and locks himself into his rocky fortress, you've just lost another lure unless you can horse him out. After losing several favorite lures, I decided to put on my face plate, snorkel, and flippers to see how these tricky rock dwellers wedged themselves in. I soon found that I could reel my way down to study the angle and pull these fighters out of their dens. For the next eight days, I took to the water and fished using this newly discovered technique. The results were terrific. My Airex spinning tackle took as many big fish as the equipment of the heavy harness boys and with never a failure.

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Second Test: Eight weeks of underwater fishing in the Pacific reefs and kelp beds of Southern California at La Jolla.

Returning to California from the gulf, I continued the underwater fishing for eight more weeks before heading East.



The rock reef and tangled kelp beds yielded many more fish to my smooth working Airex tackle. When I had a chance to try the new salt-water Master Reel it was an added thrill. This remarkable reel was engineered on the same revolutionary principles as the Larchmont but designed for heavier duty and greater line capacity, plus being completely anodized against corrosion.

Day after day the new fishing technique proved to be the most exciting sport I have ever enjoyed. Especially with the reels that don't growl and chatter underwater where sounds are greatly amplified.

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Third Test: Conclusive demonstrations at Montauk, Long Island of the World's Toughest Spinning Tackle.

The occasion on which the final tests were made of the new saltwater Master Reel was a demonstration for sports writers. The group of men who write outdoor columns in the Metropolitan New York City papers and

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fishing magazines, sailed aboard the sport-fishing boat, *The CMB*. The purpose of the demonstration was to give the final new model of the Master Reel its conclusive test before going into production.

From daybreak until noon, the new reel was pressed into use constantly taking many bluefish and striped bass. Every man aboard the boat gave the salt-water Master Reel and Airex heavy duty rod a thorough workout. Every man expressed enthusiasm for the revolutionary new spinning reel and its unique features. The exclusive quadrant brake that can be pre-set for any line test and the change of tension that comes easily with the flick of the finger. They all approved the greater line capacity and admired its eye appealing styling, as well as the muffled tune of the perfectly meshed gears.

Then came the toughest proof. Its ability to operate under cold salt water without stiffening in action while playing a 35 pound fish.



The underwater method of fishing is this: Equipped with the usual skin divers mask, fins, and snorkel, plus a small rubber float tied to the rod butt with 5 feet of light strong cord. The float insures against loss of the tackle in deep water.

When the fisherman sees the fish of his choice, he raised his arms and rod above the surface and casts, then ducks under to watch the fish take the lure.

As one sports writer summed up the demonstration: “Whatever our artist friend wanted to prove, he did so in spades for our money.”

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Final Report: In my opinion, the new Airex rods and reels are the finest and the toughest spinning tackle in the world. The engineering and the attractive designing is unsurpassed. — Jon Gnagy.

Gnagy with his Airex
saltwater MasterReel
and #276 Airex Rod

