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Pending IGFA World Record Cobia

74-Pounds

Women's 20lb Line Class World Record

Dr. Julie Ball, Virginia Beach

Sight casters are catching some nice cobia in the lower Chesapeake Bay right now. My buddy Rudy happens to be a good angler, but his forte is sight casting for cobia.

When Rudy called me at work and mentioned cobia fishing, I was there! I joined Jason Legg and Captain Rudy Lavasseur at Bubba's Marina in Virginia Beach. We departed from Lynnhaven Inlet in Rudy's 24-foot Triton, and made our way across the Bay. No one had seen a fish yet, but it was still early. I was anxious to try out my new Costa sunglasses with the new 580 lenses, which are supposed to be the bomb for spotting fish. I must have made a good choice, since Rudy and I had the exact same pair of glasses!

We had searched for barely 30-minutes, when I decided I was thirsty. As I dug for my iced tea, I knew something was up when Rudy and Jason suddenly quit talking. I looked up just in time to see a huge cobia sunning on the surface about 20 yards away. I heard Rudy yell, "Julie, this one is your record!" Wow! The Costa glasses really do work; the fish just seemed to "pop" out at me!

I had my rod spooled with IGFA rated line and ready to go. I had no trouble keeping the fish in sight as Rudy maneuvered the boat to sneak up on the fish. "Please eat, please eat"...I said to myself as I felt the cobia inspect my bait. I hoped I had waited long enough as I raised my rod. Yes! Hooked up!

The fight began with one peeved cobia peeling line, heading for the bridge! Rudy quickly chased her down, and we turned her the other way. At first we thought I could make quick work of the fish since it was staying on the surface. But I became nervous as it decided to thrash and jump! I had the fish close to the boat a few times, and Rudy and Jason were making plans to take a gaff shot at my very green cobia. But that all changed when the fish decided to sound. Not good, now it is a waiting game.

During the relentless up and down tug-o-war, my crew's discussion became heated as they estimated the weight of the fish. At one point, they had the weight up to 90-pounds, and then sinking all the way down to 50-pounds. "Would you quit guessing? You're gonna jinx me!" Of course, they didn't stop, and they settled at around 75-pounds. Both of them were very patient as they cheered me on, and Rudy steadily worked the boat every minute.

After an hour and forty minutes, I finally worked the fish back to the top, and could see it had tired. Ok guys, you're on! Rudy and Jason were great. Rudy smoothly gaffed the fish right alongside the boat, and held it as Jason helped him carefully lift it into the boat. The cobia

stayed calm while we took photos and packed it in the fish box. It was a nice fish!

Rudy and Jason decided we were going in then to weigh the fish. I think they were more excited than I was. At Long Bay Pointe Bait and Tackle, the fish hit 74-pounds, which is over 3.5-pounds bigger than the existing record. Captain Rudy and Hell Bent Sportfishing will now go into the record books, and Virginia gains another IGFA record!

Please request hi-res photos

Julie



