

Using the Mustad Flasher Rig



Feature Rig
Mustad Big Red Flasher

THOSE Japs know a thing or two about catching fish. I can't remember what year I saw my first sabiki rig, I do know that it was a very long time ago. I know we once managed to buy a whole lot of tackle cheap at auction back in the mid 1970's and it included some things I seem to recall were Mustad branded called paternoster rigs. It was a sort of flasher rig/lure combination and we had no idea what to do with them... Move on three decades and there isn't a fisherman without a flasher rig, usually half a dozen, in their tackle box. This issue the rig is already tied. The Mustad flasher rigs are top quality and thoroughly reliable. Instead we are going to look at ways of baiting and using flasher rigs in your own fishing.



by Michael Rendle



The basics 1/ – Flashers have a right way and a wrong way to be attached. When you take it out of the packet you will notice that one way the traces of the droppers hang straight down the main trace. Turn it up the other way and you will see the droppers hang outwards from the main trace. You now have it up the right way. There is a reason for this; flashers are about movement and the natural spring of the nylon is working for you when it's turned the right way.

The basics 2/ - Weight the rig appropriately for the conditions. That should include consideration of the others around you on the boat. There's

nothing worse than forever untangling a rig without sufficient weight from your own line. The standard rules apply; you need just enough weight to get the rig to the bottom comfortably and keep it in the vertical plane. Start with around six ounces and adjust up or down from there depending on depth and current.



Baiting and Using Flasher Rigs



The Basics 3/ - The rules of baiting. Rule 1, make sure the point of the hook is clear of the bait. Rule 2, see rule 1. Flashers can be baited with a cube of bait, such as skipjack (bonito, although shown here with Berkley Gulp for clarity) but will work better when a bit of care and preparation is put into the baiting exercise. Cutting the baits in to tapering triangular strips will improve the strike rate. The movement of the bait adds to the overall action and appeal. I prefer to make the strips long enough so the hook can be passed through the bait twice as you do when hooking a bait normally. Putting the hook through only once makes it easier for the fish to tear it off.

Rigging Flashers 4/ - The standard rig of sinker on the bottom, swivel at the top works fine in most circumstances, for most species, particularly in deep water. It is the only way to fish flashers for tarakihi. Flashers fished for tarakihi should be baited with either a/ small cubes of tuna, b/ sandwiches of any



combination of squid, tuna and shellfish or c/ with triangular strips of squid.

Rigging Flashers 5/ - Rather than using a sinker with the flasher, consider tying on a metal jig in its place. This increases the chances of catching other species and keeps the rig working at all times. The flash and movement from the metal jig acts as an additional attractant.

Rigging Flashers 6/ - Species such as gurnard love flashers. Another option which works rather well when drift fishing, is to have a flasher dragging along the bottom. This can be achieved a number of ways; one is to slide a sinker on to the bottom of a flasher rig and then tie a swivel. To this swivel tie a second flasher rig. Another option is to tie a flasher rig to a metal jig. Third is to run a normal two hook dropper rig and again attach the flasher via a swivel after the sinker.



Other Options – flashers can be trolled. They can also be fished with soft baits attached. Bait isn't essential although it's preferred on rigs for snapper, cod and other bottom fish. When using bait rigs, spraying the hooks with Stimulate is all that is required.

Warning – three hook flasher rigs are not IGFA legal. Be aware of this if you are fishing in a tournament that is based on IGFA rules. Removing one hook will allow it to comply.

