

A SHORT FISHING TRIP

One Christmas day, my brothers and I decided to take my cousin Mike grouper fishing in Tampa Bay. Like a bunch of dummies, we did not check the weather for that day. On the way there we were all excited and bragging about the fish we haven't caught yet. When we arrived at the boat ramp, it was dead calm; the fog was as thick as soup. We were thinking that this will be a good day of fishing after the fog lifts.

We launched the boat and started motoring our way slowly through the fog to the main channel of Tampa Bay, where we planned on fishing. When we arrived at our fishing spot, we could not see anything around us. A slight breeze picked up and the fog started to lift. Then we all looked up at the same time; we were under the Skyway Bridge and it was a beautiful sight to see. We started to break out the fishing gear - we were very excited to get started. Then the wind started to pick up a little bit more and started blowing harder and harder. Within 10 minutes, the wind was blowing about 20 mph. That was when we realized it wasn't going to be a good day for a fishing trip.

We started our way back to the boat ramp, when it started to rain and the wind started blowing harder. By now the wind was blowing 30 to 40 MPH. The rain was coming down in buckets. It took all I had to keep the bow of the boat into the wind. It felt like someone was throwing 5 gallon buckets of water on us; the driving rain was stinging our faces and arms. The bow of the boat was dipping in and out of the waves and the water was coming into the boat. We couldn't see through the rain.

After 30 minutes of this, the rain and wind slowed down enough where we could see the marker we needed to get back to the boat ramp. We started our way back once again, with our tails between our legs like a bunch of whipped puppies. It was a quiet ride back to the ramp. We were all looking at each other and shaking our heads with an occasional smile, asking ourselves what the hell just happened. The moral of the story is to never go fishing without checking the weather.

Ron S.