

## Find More Stories About

Titusville  
Fish  
Ben  
Crevalle

# Young Angler Reeling Them In

January 11, 2004 | By Don Wilson, Sentinel Columnist

TITUSVILLE -- Standing on the bow of a flats boat, Ben Turse leaned backward, his back bent in an arc and his muscles straining.

His spinning rod was curved almost U-shaped in the opposite direction.

Hooked to the end of the line was the most stubborn redfish in the Mosquito Lagoon.

For more than 45 minutes, the fish used every escape trick it knew.

Ben Turse, 13, was tougher, calmer and knew his business.

The 5-foot-6, 100-pound, Indiatlantic youth had the poise and demeanor of a 40-year-old flats guide with 20 years' experience.

His guide, Troy Perez, poled the flats boat in pursuit of the fish, wondering aloud, "Won't this fish ever give up?"

His father, Dr. John Turse, offered to help his son.

"I said 'Ben, want me to hold the pole for a while?' -- he said 'No way!' " John Turse said.

Finally, after more than 45 minutes, Ben had the fish alongside, unhooked it, weighed it and cradled it for a quick photo. Then he gently lowered it into the water and watched it swim away.

The fish weighed 26 pounds, two less than one he'd caught earlier in only 15 minutes. That was the biggest fish of the day.

Ben took the whole thing in stride.

Even later, recalling the catch and his other fishing feats, he spoke matter-of-factly.

"The 26-pound fish made six long runs, and I thought it would tire. It didn't, but I stayed with it," Ben said. "The next morning, my arms hurt a little."

An eighth-grade student at Hoover Junior High School in Indiatlantic, Ben said none of his best friends fish, so he doesn't even bother telling them about his latest achievements.

To his father, a gastroenterologist, Ben is something of a marvel.

"He once fought a 35-pound jack crevalle for an hour and twenty minutes -- he willed that fish to the boat," Turse said.

A jack crevalle, pound for pound, is one of the feistiest fish in the ocean. Catching one that size reduces grown men to Jello.

"His biggest fish was a 45-pound tarpon that took him nearly an hour to boat on 20-pound-test tackle," his father said. "Ben is tenacious when he's fighting a fish, and he must have gotten it from his mom, Sara, because I'd have given up long before that."

But the greatest appreciation for Ben's skills probably came from Mike Leech, president of the International Game Fish Association. The Dania-based organization certifies world-record catches.

Told of Ben's achievements, Leech said, "the ability to fight a fish that long and not lose his cool is exceptional for someone that age."

Leech said he has received videos of other young anglers fighting large fish for long periods of time and boating them.

"I think these young kids are so successful because their minds are like sponges, and everything they're taught is absorbed," he said. "They don't have the preconceived notions we adults do and don't make the mistakes we did."

Much of Ben's abilities must be genetic, as well.

His grandmother Anne Elizabeth Turse was a fixture at Anglin's Pier at Fort Lauderdale and earned the nickname "Mackerel Annie."

When she died, at 76, in October 2001, South Florida Sun-Sentinel outdoors writer Steve Waters described her as one of the top anglers at Anglin's Pier and an ambassador for the Lauderdale-by-the-Sea fishing pier, where she taught generations of young anglers the secrets of pier fishing.

When the Spanish mackerel were running, locals said, she would be on the pier five or six days a week, Waters wrote.

Anne Turse also spent hours tutoring her grandson, according to his mother, Sara.

"They'd be out back, on the dock, trying to untangle a mess in the line on a fishing reel, having a great time together," she said.

His uncle, Alex Serge, was a flats guide in the Keys before becoming an airline pilot and was the one who taught Ben to cast.

"He's a great kid to be around. I'm never skunked when I fish with him," Serge said. "When I had the guide service, he did a lot of fishing with me."

MORE:

[Lottery results for Powerball, Florida Lotto](#)

[Lottery results for Powerball, Florida Lotto](#)

[Do your homework before painting or sealing cool deck](#)

[Puerto Rico birth certificates: How to get a new one](#)

[Lottery results for Powerball, Florida Lotto](#)

[Lottery results for Powerball, Florida Lotto](#)

**Orlando Sentinel**

[Index by Keyword](#) | [Index by Date](#) | [Privacy Policy](#) | [Terms of Service](#)

Please note the green-lined linked article text has been applied commercially without any involvement from our newsroom editors, reporters or any other editorial staff.