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JB LURES Dingo

When Dave Venn of JB Lures created the Dingo range in 2004, even he was startled by its immediate successes. The series has gone on to win a substantial number of tournaments and record fish and, as Matt Gross discovered, with good reason – they work!

One of the things I really enjoy about testing lures is debunking some of the myths that surround certain products. One of the greatest insults you can push at craftsmen is to accuse them of copying, irrespective of the industry. Let me state upfront, although people have thought so in the past, the JB Lures Dingo is *not* a copy of the Joe Yee Apollo. It isn't even close.

So, with that out of the way, let me tell you that this is one of the most successful marlin lures on the east coast of Australia – a claim that is being backed up in the record books and with multiple tournament wins.

The lure range was designed by Dave Venn in 2004 and it's been his biggest seller ever since. There's a very good reason for this: it works!

The first in the series was a Little Dingo that was eight inches long, with a luminous green skirt. Its first swim accounted for a 46kg yellowfin tuna within 10 minutes of hitting the water, and by the end of the day had caught eight out of the 10 yellowfin tagged and released.

The legend began.

Given the success of the smaller lure, a larger, 10-inch version was created in 2005. Christened in the Jess Sams Tournament, by 11am on the first day the lure, wearing 'Evil'-coloured skirts, had accounted for three striped marlin and given Dave goose bumps as he realised that he had indeed created something very special. Dave claims that this lure has outfished every other in the NSWGFA southern zone tournaments since 2004.

So what makes this lure so special? *BlueWater* tested the

10-inch Dingo; however, they are now made in six sizes ranging from seven to 17 inches long. The 10-inch version we received is arguably best suited to striped marlin, mid-sized black marlin, blue marlin (in the 'shotgun' position) and larger other gamefish. Interestingly, our lure had no eyes, but some very attractive paua shell inserts.

This often raises the question of whether or not eyes are important in skirted lures. I suspect from a marketing perspective that they are important, and in nature they are a significant behavioural attribute in terms of creating expression – although I doubt whether this relates to baitfish.

The end result, though, is that the resin on this lure is crystal clear and I would have no qualms in throwing this lure out the back with an expectation of it getting eaten.

The skirts were also good-quality and fitted the lure perfectly. I am not a fan of skirts that billow out from the neck of the lure and slow the lure action. These were excellent, and were glued (rather than being tied) on.

Perhaps the thing I like most about this lure is not so much its tournament- and big-fish-pedigree, but its ease of use. It was designed to operate in some of the roughest waters in Australia – and do it with a minimum of fuss.

In testing, this skirted lure proved to be incredibly easy to use, making it suitable for the novice and expert alike.

For too many years there has been scaremongering surrounding the ability of cut-faced lures to run in the rough, much of it without foundation.

My only comment surrounding this particular lure is that it operates best off an outrigger or in the 'shotgun' position. Set close, with a steep-towing angle off the transom, its action was less attractive – which is fair enough, as few lures are capable of performing ideally in every position.

The Dingo we tested was rigged on 200lb leader, with a single 10/0 stainless hook, semi-stiff-rigged. This rigging had minimal impact on the lure action, which should always be the aim.

When run from the 'rigger, the lure has a regular breathing cycle with a medium-depth, plunging action. It's far from aggressive, which is to be expected given the small face and shallow angle of the slice.

The taper of the head helps the lure to dive, creating a strong and more open bubble trail than I anticipated. The bubble trail resembled something you would expect from a much bigger lure. Upon breathing, there's a strong rooster-tail splash that spread a good 15 inches into the air.

As gamefishermen, it's sometimes too easy to want every lure in the spread to look as though it's had one too many coffees. The result is often a pattern that looks spectacular, but perhaps out of character for schools of baitfish.

For this reason, the Dingo actually does a great job of looking more like a real baitfish. Its action is best described as subtle – and subtle gets eaten, because it's easy prey.

This was the first JB Lure I had run, but it won't be the last. Watch these pages as more record fish are added to the Dingo's growing list of accomplishments. ▣

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