

# NOTES FROM THE COCKPIT

By [redacted]

Welcome back to [redacted], folks—there's some big, big news this month from the world of fishing in the Mid-Atlantic region. First off, the IGFA all-tackle record for tarpon (286 pounds) was smashed this July, when I caught my 328 pounder just inside Cape Charles. Then a week later, [redacted] publisher [redacted] caught the first documented lionfish in Maryland waters when it free-jumped into the cockpit of her sailboat, as she was competing in the Bugatti BreezeMaster 5000 Annapolis-to-Antigua sailboat race. And in early August, our art director and kayak fishing sharpie [redacted] [redacted] launched his kayak from Virginia Beach, hooked into a 443 pound thresher shark, and was towed 153 miles north before dragging it ashore by the tail in Bethany Beach, DE—over 26 hours later.

I'd tell you to go to YouTube and check out the videos of all this action, but in case you hadn't guessed yet, there are no videos because the above paragraph is a monstrous load of BS.

Unfortunately, in today's media landscape there's an awful lot of BS. It's often hidden from view, cloaked by bits and pieces of reality intertwined with innuendo, unsubstantiated claims, and at times, stealth advertising. Ads are one thing—obviously, we love to see ads on our pages—but hiding part of the truth in articles or reports is another matter entirely. Call it advertorial, call it content marketing, call it whatever the

heck you like, modern marketing tactics have caused some magazines to look like product catalogs, and others to lose the trust of their readers.

We want to be 1000-percent sure that doesn't happen with [redacted] and someone recently reminded me that we hadn't ever printed a specific policy when it comes to how we craft our words and images—particularly when advertis-

ers go into the magazine and up on the website. We'll never sign a contract giving anyone else that ability.

In any type of review, as well as bringing out an item's strong points, we will point out any down-sides or room for improvements that we spot—whether there's an advertiser involved or not.

Will we shy away from including an advertiser's offerings in our editorial content, just

because they advertise? Heck no! Might we give them preferential treatment in a toss-up situation, when filling out the pages of sections like Hot New Gear or Hot New Fishboats? Of course! Without our advertisers we can't exist, and after going for about a decade with no Mid-Atlantic oriented fishing magazine, we all know what that's like. Thank goodness we have boat dealers, tackle shops, and product manufacturers who

want to step up and play a role in making sure our fishing community is properly served. And as readers, we bet you want to know who they are. We also believe that by being completely up-front about where we stand, anglers will know that they can trust what they read on these pages.

And, by the way, I really did catch a 328 pound tarpon this July—the proof is right on this page, in this picture.



ers or even potential advertisers' products are relevant to articles. And in order for us to maintain trust with our readership, we certainly should spell out exactly where we stand. So, here's a [redacted] Manifesto:

Truth and accuracy take priority over everything and anything, at all times, period.

We'll never "hide" paid advertising in any article, section, or column in the magazine or on our website. If an advertiser wants to sponsor a particular article or section, it'll be marked—in big bold letters that don't require a microscope to read—that they've done so.

We [redacted] will maintain the final say on anything and everything that