

Kenny Odinet
Age 15

School's Out

Cruising through the Ship Channel with my mom in Grand Isle, La., I saw what looked like a small island of white caps surrounded by smooth water. I studied the waves and ripples for a while and then noticed mullet torpedoing out of the water. A couple seconds later, I observed the waves were actually the wakes of feeding redfish. Immediately I alerted by mom, and she took a sharp left turn towards the school of fish. I climbed onto the front of our boat with a shrimp baited rod.

Instantly, as we drove into the school of redfish, I tossed my bait out and hooked a fish. The drag was screaming as the monofilament melted off my reel. Then suddenly, I lost the tension. The redfish popped my line. Without delay, we cruised over to the next visible school of redfish. I quickly grabbed another rod with plastic bait. Wasting no time, I cast out and hooked a fish immediately. Subsequently, I lost this fish as quickly as I hooked it. Disheartened, I concluded that another redfish swam into my line, cut his school mate free. We spent the next half-hour desperately cruising the Ship Channel for feeding redfish. With no signs of the fish, we decided to head to our next fishing spot.

Later that week, speeding through the Ship Channel, we again saw a large group of white caps on the glassy water in front of the boat. Taking a closer look, we saw mullet jumping, and redfish chasing in hot pursuit. Quickly we cut the engine and put down the trolling motor. I tossed by bait out. As soon as it hit the water, the cork went under. Instinctively I set the hook as hard as I could. The drag started to scream (ZZZZZZZZ). A few minutes after setting the hook, we landed a 30-pound redfish.

Again the school disappeared as quickly as it had appeared. By this time the school of redfish were nowhere to be found. With the school out of sight, we anchored to catch deeper swimming redfish on the bottom of the channel. As I was dragging my minnow across the bottom of the Ship Channel, I felt a bump. Instantly I set the hook. The fish frantically swam in front of the boat and tangled the line in the trolling motor. In the excitement of catching another big redfish, my brother lunged forward, grabbed the trolling motor, and untangled the line as fast as lightning. Together we landed the 20-pound redfish.

There is nothing better than fishing with my family when school is out ... especially when a school of redfish is out.