



DALE SANDERS

**Wreckage provides a respite from the current and hiding places from predators. It also attracts growth such as algae, which in turn attracts the small fish that bring the attention of game fish.**

**Shallow waters bordering the eastern side of the Great Bahama Bank offer hundreds of square miles of hunting grounds for wreck seekers.**

vessels sink due to hitting obstructions such as reefs, shallow bars or other wreckage. Note the prevailing current in the area and search up-current from the wreck, and you may discover other wrecks in the vicinity. In addition, if you theorize that a wreck sank due to an obstruction that you can locate (which often is noted on your chart), sometimes by searching in a line from the obstruction to the known wreck and beyond, you'll find more wrecks.

Of course, vessels sink for reasons other than smashing into a reef, such as foundering in high seas (especially hurricanes), loss of steering, leakage, fire, etc. Therefore, sometimes finding wrecks is best accomplished by obtaining records that reveal a main port of departure and then running a line to main

destinations. Chances are much higher that you might find a wreck along or near this course rather than far off the beaten path. These out-of-the-way wrecks usually turn out to be virgin or near-virgin, which usually produce memorable fishing experiences.

On an extremely flat crossing several years ago from Bimini to the Berry Islands, I sat straddling the bow pulpit on a friend's boat while scanning the depths for ledges or fish scurrying from the boat. I noticed an odd, somewhat orange-colored rectangle off to the side. "Wreck!" I yelled, and we came off plane and circled back. In less than 15 feet of water sat an encrusted airplane, still upright and intact. Large, gray shapes moved in and out from under one of the wings as we tossed over our offerings, and almost simultaneously we hooked up two huge mutton snapper. One came aboard, the other one made it back to the safety of the plane, and the line parted.

Although just about anywhere in the Bahamas can be fruitful for finding wrecks, I've done especially well from Cay Sal Bank on the other side of the Gulf Stream off the Florida Keys to the Great Bahama Bank west of Andros Island and stretching past Bimini. Cross the Gulf Stream from the southeastern coast of Florida and head east; when you hit shallow water, start the search for wrecks. I usually base out of Bimini and work north or northeast. It's rare when I don't discover at least one or two wrecks each day, and sometimes several more.

### View From the Crow's Nest

In order to spot wrecks in areas where you can see the bottom — and that can be depths up to 100 feet or more in most of the gin-clear

