

The Serious Tackle Box

With Chris Gonzales

Stealth Bomber & Parachute Squids

What is meant by "Stealth Bomber & Parachute squids"?

It's my saltwater equivalent of the B-2, where the "Bomber" is a flat black Diamond jig, the punch it supplies is in the trailing, treble-hooked parachute squids. The B-2 is flat black in color for a contributing "hide" feature during its nighttime use. So is the ultra-flat black finish on the chrome Diamond jig; it's the only effective hide it has. The trailing parachute squids are 4-1/2" soft plastic squid skirts rigged backwards. They open into a sort of parachute shape on the retrieve to resemble a small school of prey items, silvery to clear 1 1/2" long minnows. The attempt to mimic a school of small minnows comes from the observations over the years of yellowfin and blackfin tuna having many small minnows in their stomach contents.

That "on to the next thing" can have us forgetting some of the things that worked for years. At times, the rebirth of any old rigging technique will lead to other uses. Such was the case recently when a Serious Tackle customer had great success using one of my squid-skirted Chrome Diamond jigs while fishing for yellowfin and blackfin tuna on the party boat Capt. John. About 20 years or so ago, this was a common practice, placing these 4-1/2" soft plastic squid skirts on a Diamond jig's treble hook; one of those techniques sort of lost over the years. Needless to say, I've dug out my old squid-skirted Diamond jigs. Stop by and check them out.

About a week before writing up my notes for this piece, a flash came to me about squid skirts and Diamond jigs. Why not rig multiple, stacked squid skirts backwards, behind a Diamond jig about a foot or so, giving that bait school look I'd thought about in the past? That evolved into the "Stealth Bomber & Parachute Squids". The Diamond jig provided added casting weight, and when retrieved/jigged in a darting around motion, it passes on that motion to the trailing parachute squid skirts.

The ultra flat black used on the 2 oz. chromed Diamond jig is by Rust-O-Leum™ #246875 High Heat BBQ Black. This is important in that it isolates the Diamond jig from being a predator's target because of a flash of reflected light. Naturally, when viewed from below, it will appear in silhouette, but the parachuted squid skirts should draw attention since they mimic the bait school. The squid skirts in the illustration are glow with silver and black sparkles and are by Boone™. Their light color with small silver flakes gives a look

that's pretty close to a school of small baitfish. The glow is an added attraction near the surface or at depth. Squid skirts with some sparkle, such as blue/silver/glitter, purple/silver/glitter, or blue/silver, also work. My Diamond jigs have about a 12", 150# mono leader that's had my "Poor Man's Fluorocarbon treatment" to reduce light reflection off its surface. The trailing parachute squids' mono connection to the Diamond jig is also 150# mono with the same dulling treatment and is about 12" in length. I've crimped all my mono connections; you can also tie them up using knots of your choice.

Use three squid skirts for the best "baitfish school look". After cutting off a small portion of the pointed end, insert the squid skirts into each other after moistening them for ease of stacking. The weight used for each stacked trio is an egg weight or a finesse weight that's commonly used in bass fishing. The purpose of the finesse weight, which is really just an elongated slipsinker, is to get the "pull point" of the squid skirt stack out ahead of it for best skirt flaring. The finesse weight should also have a snug fit in the squid skirt's cavity; those I use are 3/4 ounce, 1-1/4 inch long, and 5/16" diameter.

Once you have your skirts stacked and the finesse weight in the cavity,

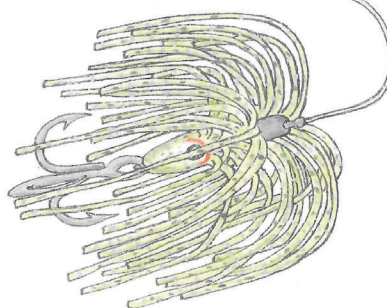
Stealth Bomber & Parachute Squids



**STEALTH BOMBER,
2 OZ. DIAMOND JIG
ULTRA FLAT BLACK**

**MONO TRAILER
TO NOSE WEIGHT
12", 150# MONO WITH
PMFC TREATMENT**

**MONO LEADER 12", 150#
MONO WITH PMFC**



**REVERSE RIGGED AND
PARACHUTED SOFT PLASTIC
SQUID SKIRT STACK WITH STOP
CRIMP ABOVE PROTRUDING
FINESSE WEIGHT. TRAILING
TREBLE PROVIDES THE
BITE FOR THIS, THE
PARACHUTE SQUIDS-SCHOOL
OF SMALL BAITFISH**



it's time to either crimp or tie up. Cut the 150# mono at an angle for easier insertion through the weight and squid skirts; push it through the stack and attach the treble hook to the mono. The treble hook used is an Owner™ ST-66TN, HD5666, 4X strong, in size 2/0. The 2/0 is deceiving, as this treble is about 1-1/16" between each point. After attaching the hook to the mono, moisten for safer, easier entry, and carefully pull the crimp or knot at the hook up into the first squid skirt.

Now, run a single barrel crimp down the mono till it stops at the finesse weight and snugly crimp onto the mono. This stop crimp prevents the weight and squid skirt stack from possibly sliding out of position. Before tightening the stop crimp, make sure it has about 1/16" gap between it and the weight for a bit of free movement. Next, crimp or tie the mono to the flat black Diamond jig at the proper length, and do the same with the mono leader and swivel.

When fished in the near surface area in the lights of a production platform or the boat's, the Diamond jig and its trailing baitfish school will draw strikes if the tuna are feeding on small baitfish. Tuna, when looking from below, will see the ultra flat black Diamond jig in silhouette, but the sighting of the parachuted squid skirts (the baitfish school) should draw attention. When near a well-lit platform, cast far and work back at about 5 ft. depth. If possible, work your presentation up and down the side of the boat "in the lights", again at depths of about 5 ft. or so. The Diamond jig's vibrations on the sink or retrieve can be picked up by a tuna's lateral line sensors and will next home in on the parachuted squid skirts.

I haven't fished these parachute squid rigs yet, but their effectiveness is without question. While all this is a bit unorthodox, I am extremely confident that when tuna are feeding on small baitfish schools, they will hit this presentation.

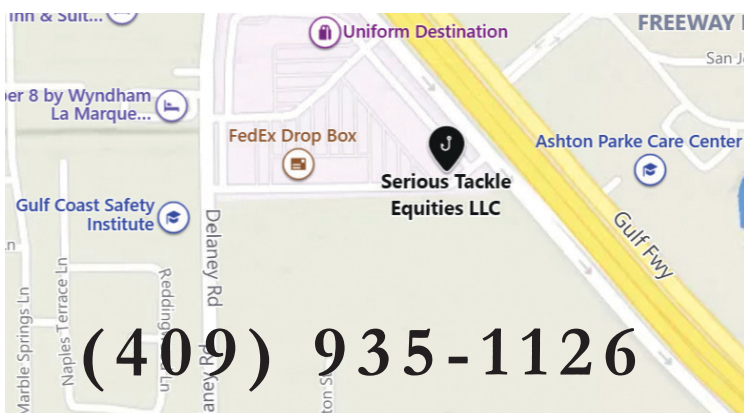
While the Stealth Bomber & Parachute Squids rig is a niche item, it is an important one that has many use options when tuna fishing shallow, deep, with or without the ultra-flat black Diamond jig. This winter, build 'em and use 'em, and if you have any questions or comments, shoot me an email at chris@serioustackle.com. The bottom line is: "Tunas, beware of the Stealth Bomber & Parachute Squids ... they bite back".

If you have any questions, stop by Serious Tackle or email me at chris@serioustackle.com

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