

# The Serious Tackle Box

With Chris Gonzales

## The Serious Ling Rig With A Twist

**Get ready for spring ling** with this mono rig that can be used for all short strikers without teeth. While it works with various-length squid, baitfish, or strip baits, I'll primarily cover it as a squid/ling rig. I know that, at times when reading an article about virtually any subject I have some knowledge about, I won't give a close enough look. Details make the difference, don't skip through this piece and miss an important point.

I designed a similar rig about 20 years ago that's the genesis for this one; its fine-tuning continues. The latest major difference is the lead hook type and its modification, the optional mono tie to the main hook, and the more rearward main hook placement. The "Twist" in this rig is the mono's spirals around the nose hook's shank. These twists let the nose hook be moved along the mono, giving adjustability to the distance between the nose and the main hook. This adjustability allows for the use of various-length squid baits. The mono bends through the nose hook's eye and the single or double wrap around the hook's shank holds it in position to maintain the distance between the hooks giving a normal-looking, straight, not a bent or kinked shape that causes the squid to twist on the retrieve or when sitting still in the current. It's simple to rig up and all of the pieces needed are readily available. What do you need to make up a squid rig for ling/cobia fishing? The lead for mine is a Spro, 230 lb. Power Swivel®, about 4 ft. of Suffix® 80 lb. mono, a Mustad® 39948NP-BN Circle Hook size 3/0 and a Mustad 10827NP-BN size 9/0 "J" hook. Modifications to the various pieces would be camo green to the swivel, my "Poor Man's Fluorocarbon" treatment to the mono, camo ivory to the circle, and "J" hooks. Email me at [chris@serioustackle.com](mailto:chris@serioustackle.com) for spray paint names & numbers and the Poor Man's Fluorocarbon procedure. Other key modifications to the hooks are first, carefully with pliers, reduce the hook point to shank gap to about half its original on the circle hook. The closing of the gap on the small circle hook lets it do its job as the nose hook holding the squid's body in a swimming

position while reducing its hookup possibility to almost zero, exactly what you want. The offset "J" hook greatly increases your hookup possibilities, also exactly what you want.

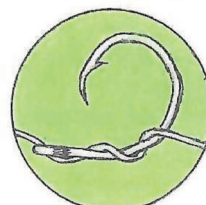
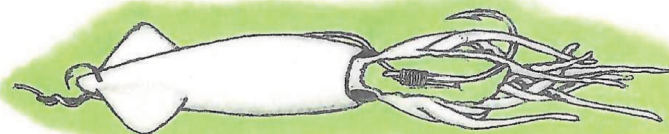
To build one of these rigs, start by snell knotting the 9/0 "J" hook to a 4 ft. length of 80 lb. Suffix mono. Next, pass the mono through the circle hook's eye from the bottom side. Now tie the mono to the swivel. The total length from swivel to "J" hook should be a little over 3 ft. To rig up with a 7" or so whole natural squid, first pass the "J" hook through one of the squid's eyes and out of the head through the center of its tentacles. With the "J" hook's eye at the squid's eye, make two wraps of the mono around the circle hook's shank. These shank wraps must be against the hook's eye from its bend side, not its gap side; see the illustration's closeup view of the shank wraps. Next position the circle by sliding on the mono so that when passed through the end of the squid's body, the mono to the hook has a little slack in it. This slack allows the squid to lay straight while still giving freedom of flex movement. See the illustration again for a clear look at the completely rigged squid. A rigging option would be to place two small circle hooks on the mono using



### The Serious Ling Rig With A Twist

NOSE HOOK  
MUSTAD 39948NP-BN  
3/0 CIRCLE HOOK  
WITH REDUCED GAP

MAIN HOOK  
MUSTAD 10827NP-BN  
9/0, "J" HOOK WITH  
SNELL KNOTTED MONO.



HOOK IS SHOWING "GAP SIDE"  
OF HOOK EYE. ONE-TWO WRAPS OF  
MONO MUST BE STARTED FROM  
OPPOSITE SIDE AS SHOWN. OTHERWISE,  
CUTOFFS MIGHT OCCUR AT THE EYE GAP  
WHEN LINE COMES TIGHT.



the one close to the "J" hook as has already been described. Position the other one farther up the mono to attach a second nose-hooked squid with about a 3" gap between the two squids. This "squid train" has added scent and visual appeal which could help generate a strike by an otherwise wary ling. Give this option a serious thought. The camo spray can painting of the nose and "J" hook, along with the Poor Man's Fluorocarbon treatment give a natural-looking, blending-in factor to the whole presentation.

The reason I always use a "J" hook for the main hook as opposed to a circle is that when fishing near the boat for shallow swimming ling, a "J" hook has greater hookup properties. With a circle hook, it takes an aggressive biter, turning and swimming away on a tight line to get a hook set. A hookup, when using a "J" hook, even with a short striker/mouther, your rod sweep hook setting motion from multiple possible directions greatly ups your chance of a hookup. What this means is; a quick right, left, up or even down rod tip sweep before your ling has the option to spit the bait/squid.

Should you have reason to rig up with a circle hook as the main, my recommendation is to use either a Daiichi® D842 size 7/0 or a Mustad 39948NP-BN, size 10/0. If using cable with "J"

or "C" hooks, 90 lb. 7x7, camo brown by AFW will do the job. Yes, you can smell a hook with this cable or it can be crimped on both ends. The 7x7 cable also holds well at the small circles' shank wraps and eye bend.

While this effective rigging method of mine was born around something like 20 years ago; the latest modifications are a major improvement. The small circle hook lead and the offset "J" hook with its more rearward placement in the squid's tentacles make the "Ling Rig with a Twist" a squid-mouthing, short striking ling's worst nightmare. Tie and twist some up for yourself and you might soon get your next ling to stop playing with its food, come to the table, and join the feast, so to speak.

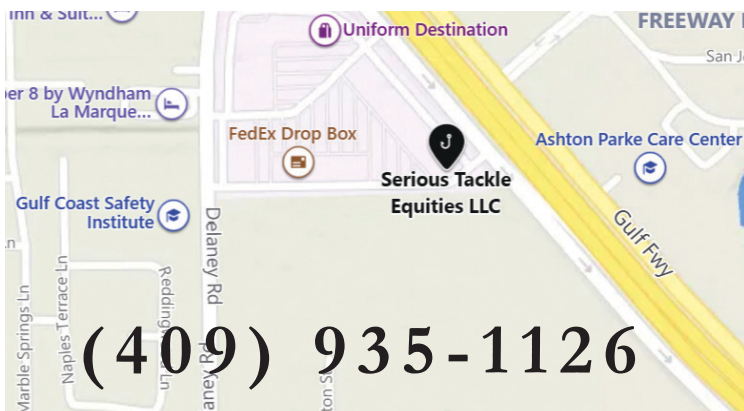
If you have any questions, stop by Serious Tackle or email me at

[chris@serioustackle.com](mailto:chris@serioustackle.com)

Chris Gonzales  
Owner - Serious Tackle



14065 Delany Rd.  
LaMarque, Texas 77568  
(In the Gulfway Plaza)



(409) 935-1126

## Pro Fishing Gear & Tackle

- Baits/Lures
- Custom Rods
- In-House Rod/ Reel Repair
- Reel Parts
- Rod Components
- Inshore/Offshore Tackle
- Custom Rigging
- Custom Splicing

