

**By STEVE GIBSON (outdoor writer, Florida)**

Sarasota's Rick Rosenberg did build a better mousetrap.

When the housing slump began, Rosenberg, a home builder, found himself with a lot of time on his hands.

"I haven't built a home in two years," he said.

Being an avid angler and a kayak fishing fan, the University of Florida graduate knew there would be a distinct advantage of being able to stand up in his Hobie Mirage peddle kayak while fishing. It would give him the height to make sight-fishing easy. In addition, he would now be able to fish 360 degrees around the boat, something's that not possible while sitting down in a traditional sit on-top kayak.

The creative juices began flowing and the visions danced through his head like tarpon rolling in Boca Grande Pass. What he came up with was pontoon stabilizers and a leaning station that includes a tackle-box holder, drink holder and places to put pliers, landing tools and other gizmos.

Voila!

Meet Rosenberg's Stand-N-Fish, a product that just hit the market in recent months.

I first met Rosenberg at a fishing show in Sarasota last February. He had the Stand-N-Fish attached to a Hobie Mirage. I liked the appearance of the unit, but my concern was would it work with my kayaks?

"It will attach easily to any sit on-top," Rosenberg assured me. "And it's easy. It only takes a couple of minutes."

I ran into Rosenberg at a tennis tournament a couple of months later and we talked. Our plan was to get out on the water and for me to try his product. We finally managed to get out last week.

I met him on Sarasota Bay at the Whitfield Avenue launch. I would paddle his Wilderness Systems Tarpon 140 and he would be in his peddle Hobie. As he said, it only took a few minutes to attach the Stand-N-Fish to each boat. We were on the water before the sun.

Long Bar, a popular fishing spot in Sarasota Bay, is a long paddle – about three miles. But it was an easy paddle – especially since Rosenberg and I talked about fishing the entire time. Once we got there, we lowered the pontoons, stood up and began "poling."

The first thing I noticed was how stable my kayak was. I now own Native Watercraft Ultimate 14.5 hybrids, boats with more beam than the Tarpon. But I felt like I could dance a jig atop my kayak; it was that stable.

Poling is nothing more than propelling yourself with your paddle, but not in the traditional sense. You just dip a blade in the water and paddle much like you would a canoe. The idea is to move along slowly while looking for fish.

I was amazed at the ease of moving slowly along. My kayak was easily maneuverable.

While testing was on the agenda, catching fish was a priority. We paddled up to Coon Key, then turned around and head back to the south. With the sun to

the east, it was a little difficult to see in that direction. So, we decided to fish the edge of the flat until the sun got higher to make seeing easier.

Good decision.

We managed a number of nice spotted seatrout, including one over-slot fish.

That's when I noticed that casting, hooking and fighting a fish while standing up is very comfortable and easy.

Rosenberg has added a feature that he'll offer in conjunction with the unit or separately. It's an 8-foot stakeout pole that goes through a scupper hole in the tank well. If you hook a fish, you can simply reach behind you, push the stakeout pole down and anchor yourself in that spot. That's particularly important when you hit a hot spot or pole up on a school of fish. It's much like the "Power-Pole" that's very popular with skiff anglers. Same philosophy and a whole lot cheaper.

When our vision improved, we moved up on the flat and began to move along a series of potholes. That's when I spotted the first of many redfish on the morning. There were schools of redfish in several holes.

And the only reason we could see the reds was because we were standing. If we were sitting down, it would have been impossible.

The Stand-N-Fish is not for everyone. Some enjoy the serenity of sitting and paddling. But those who like to sight-fishing might want to check it out.

The pontoons are easily raised and lowered simply by pulling on lines on the port and starboard sides. Lower them when you're ready to stand. Raise them when you're ready to sit and paddle.

If you're into sight-fishing and love to stand while you're fishing or battling a fish, you'll find Rick Rosenberg's Stand-N-Fish a welcome addition.

Check the product out and [www.standnfish.com](http://www.standnfish.com).