




*In the November 2006 issue of Marlin, Dave Ferrell shows us great circle hook ballyhoo rigs. Here we give you step-by-step instructions for the "X on the Head Rig" and the "Wire Loop Rig." For more background information and tips on how to fish these great rigs, pick up a copy of **Marlin** magazine.*

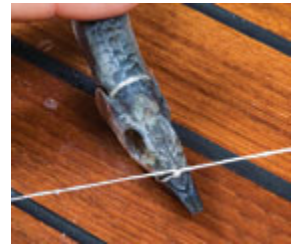
### **The X on the Head Rig**

This is probably the most widely used of the three rigs we will showcase for four reasons: It's easy to tie, it allows you to store the bait without the hook and leader attached, it's relatively durable, and you can add a chin weight to make it swim more than skip. (It works just as well as a skip bait if you leave off the weight.) This rig was developed in Costa Rica and is by far the most popular rig in that country.

#### **Instructions:**

<p><b>1.</b> Start by cutting a 2-foot section of waxed rigging floss. Double it over and slide on a 1/8-ounce or larger egg sinker that matches the size of your bait. (You can check by jamming the weight up into the bait's throat before you start.)</p>	
<p><b>2.</b> Pass the resulting loop over the bait's head and flare out the bait's gills. Pass the floss loop behind both gill plates.</p>	
<p><b>3.</b> Slide the weight up the floss until it starts to tighten the lasso around the bait's head. Pull it down tight, and then tuck the sinker up into the bait's throat, making sure to keep the lead in the center.</p>	

**4.** Bring the two tag ends up and over the mouth of the ballyhoo and tie off, leaving the tag ends attached.



**5.** Pass each tag end through the eye sockets, one from each side, crossing in the middle.



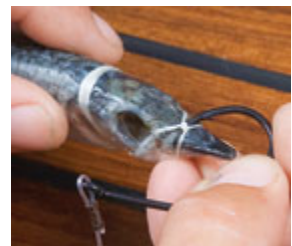
**6.** Take each end and wrap it twice around the ballyhoo's head, just behind the gill plates.



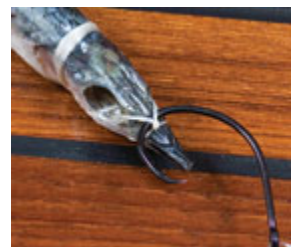
**7.** Turn the bait upside down and tie the two tag ends together, cinching them down tight to secure the rig.



**8.** When you're ready to fish the bait, pull it out of the cooler and slide your hook under the small X you have made on the bridge of the bait's nose, making sure you come in from the side and not from front to back.



**9.** The finished bait with the hook out front swims rather well.



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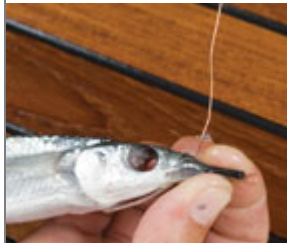
## The Wire Loop Rig

I first came across this rig at one of our Marlin U sessions down in Costa Rica. It's by far the easiest of the three to tie, since there's no floss involved and the whole rig is built from a single 18-inch piece of copper wire. This rig also enjoys the advantage of being very bait-box friendly, since you don't attach the hook and leader until you're ready to use it. This allows you to make several dozen of the baits ahead of time without having to worry about keeping all the leaders from tangling in the cooler.

In pictures 4, 5 and 6 below, we show an optional way to make the rig that closes the throat area a little better by running the wire through the bait's eyes. (The original version that I first saw didn't do this, but it worked just fine.)

The only downside I could see to using this rig is that it might be a little fragile on the bite - especially if you're not using the best bait.

### Instructions:

<p><b>1.</b> Start with an 18-inch section of copper rigging wire and a circle hook that matches the size of your bait. (We used an Eagle Claw L2004ELF 9/0 for all the medium ballyhoo you see in these photos.)</p>	
<p><b>2.</b> Make a small loop in the wire around the shank of the hook, sizing the loop so you have just enough space in the loop to clear the barb. Twist the wire with a mini haywire to finish the loop.</p>	
<p><b>3.</b> Clip off the ballyhoo's bill, leaving about a quarter of an inch. Position the loop underneath the remaining stub so that the loop just peaks out from under the bill. Pass the other end of the wire up through the ballyhoo's throat and out through the crease in its upper lip.</p>	

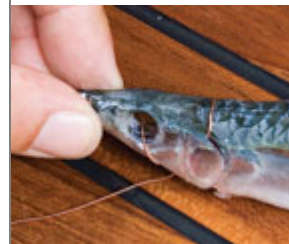
**4.** If you want to close the ballyhoo's throat a bit better, run the wire back around the bill, and after coming up from the underside, pass the wire through the eye socket.



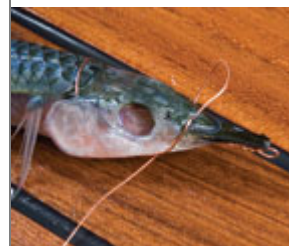
**5.** Again, pass the wire back underneath the bait's body and lift the gill plate with your thumb. Pass the wire behind the gill and pull it up tight under the throat area with a little tug.



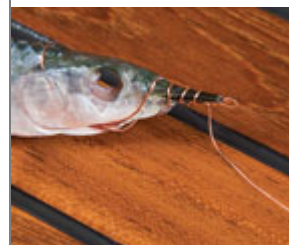
**6.** Run the wire over the top of the ballyhoo's head and pass it behind the gill plate on that side. Snug up the wire by pulling it toward the front.



**7.** Once you've got the wire tight, bend it over and pass the tag end back down through the ballyhoo's lip, using the same hole you came up through in step 3. Pull the wire down tight to secure the mouth.



**8.** Coming from underneath, start wrapping the wire down the bill just like closing up a traditional pin rig.



**9.** Finish with a couple of tight wraps at the end of the beak to keep everything tight.



**10.** When you're ready to fish the bait, simply slide the hook — already attached to your leader with a crimped loop or snell — through the tiny wire loop.

