



Celebrating 37 years of billfishing!

1989 – 2025

A message from the former SC governor:

On behalf of the people of the Palmetto State, I am pleased to welcome you to the Governor's Cup Billfishing Series. Our state is blessed by an abundance of natural beauty and resources, and we are committed to conserving them for future generations. The Series was established, in part, to address the dwindling Atlantic billfish population, and it has been a huge success over the years. We are not only proud of our over 90% release rate, but also in knowing that neighboring state have joined in this effort. Michael and I are glad to have you participate in the Governor's Cup Billfishing Series and hope everyone hooks a trophy fish to tag and release!

My very best,
Former Governor Nikki Haley

The program is coordinated through:
SC Department of Natural Resources PO
Box 12559
Charleston, SC 29422-2559





South Carolina Governor's Cup Billfishing Series

The SC Governor's Cup Billfishing Series occurs annually and includes multiple South Carolina billfish tournaments. Boats participating in the Series accumulate points for billfish either landed or released. Boats compete for three major awards: Outstanding Billfish (single heaviest billfish), Outstanding Billfish Boat (most accumulated points), and Billfish Conservationist (most points for released fish). The Series has contributed valuable data on these beautiful blue water species, while also encouraging conservation of our marine resources.

Goals

- Promote conservation, research, and education.
- Increase coastal tourism.
- Support the SC billfishing industry.

Major Accomplishments

- Prior to the SC Governor's Cup Billfishing Series, <10% of billfish were released.
- Now, >90% of billfish are released.
- As part of the SC Memorial Reef project, funds were raised to sink two barges, the old Highway 41 swing bridge, and a 247-ft cargo ship in the Charleston Deep Reef MPA, a Type II MPA which allows for trolling but no bottom fishing.
- Annual scholarships are awarded through the W.F. Pate Memorial Conservation Fund. To date, 18 scholarships have been awarded.
- Following satellite tagging of billfish from 2002-2007, Buble et al. (2020) published a paper evaluating sailfin habitat use and overlap with other billfish species.
- Data collected from the tournaments contributed to a paper regarding dolphinfish and their temporal changes in lengths over time in the Western North Atlantic (Rudershausen et al. 2024).
- In 1997, the Blue Water Conservation award was initiated, which recognized the boat that tagged and released the most dolphin, wahoo, or tuna.
- In 1993, the Series received the South Carolina Wildlife Federation's Outdoor Ethics Conservation Award.



2024 Series

Five tournaments were held, including one in Georgetown, three near Charleston, and one in Edisto.

2024 Series Results

Series Tournament	# Boats	# Billfish Released
Charleston Billfish Invitational	17	36
56 th Annual Georgetown Blue Marlin Tournament	72	85
Carolina Billfish Classic	40	42
HMY Lowcountry Cup	17	116
Edisto Invitational Billfish Tournament	36	144

Total Participating Boats: 106

Total Billfish Released: 423

Total Landed Billfish: 0

Billfish Release Rate: 100%

2025 Series Schedule

Charleston Billfish Invitational {formerly Bohicket Marina Billfish Tournament}	May 7-10
57 th Annual Georgetown Blue Marlin Tournament	May 21-24
HMY Lowcountry Cup	May 28-31
Carolina Billfish Classic	June 18-21
Edisto Invitational Billfish Tournament	July 16-19

2025 SC Governor's Cup Billfishing Series – Sponsor Table

All sponsor donations are tax deductible through our 501(c)3 organization.

Bronze \$2,000	Silver \$5,000	Gold \$10,000	Platinum			
			Youth Angler Sponsor* \$15,000	Lady Angler Sponsor* \$15,000	Mate of the Year Sponsor* \$15,000	Top Billfish Boat Sponsor* \$15,000
Recognition in the Series newsletter	Recognition in the Series newsletter	Recognition in the Series newsletter	Recognition in the Series newsletter	Recognition in the Series newsletter	Recognition in the Series newsletter	Recognition in the Series newsletter
Invitation to and recognition at the Awards Reception	Invitation to and recognition at the Awards Reception	Invitation to and recognition at the Awards Reception	Invitation to and recognition at the Awards Reception	Invitation to and recognition at the Awards Reception	Invitation to and recognition at the Awards Reception	Invitation to and recognition at the Awards Reception
Logo link on website	Logo link on website	Logo link on website	Logo link on website	Logo link on website	Logo link on website	Logo link on website
Logo on Series banner	Logo on Series banner	Logo on Series banner	Logo on Series banner	Logo on Series banner	Logo on Series banner	Logo on Series banner
Social media (general coverage)	Social media (general coverage, minimum of 1 dedicated post during the Series)	Social media (general coverage, minimum of 2 dedicated posts during the Series)	Social media (general coverage, minimum of 2 dedicated posts during the Series)	Social media (general coverage, minimum of 2 dedicated posts during the Series)	Social media (general coverage, minimum of 2 dedicated posts during the Series)	Social media (general coverage, minimum of 2 dedicated posts during the Series)
Appreciation award presented at Awards Reception	Appreciation award presented at Awards Reception	Appreciation award presented at Awards Reception	Appreciation award presented at Awards Reception	Appreciation award presented at Awards Reception	Appreciation award presented at Awards Reception	Appreciation award presented at Awards Reception
Literature distributed in Series boat bags	Literature distributed in Series boat bags	Literature distributed in Series boat bags	Literature distributed in Series boat bags	Literature distributed in Series boat bags	Literature distributed in Series boat bags	Literature distributed in Series boat bags
Logo revolving on front page of website	Logo revolving on front page of website	Logo revolving on front page of website	Logo revolving on front page of website	Logo revolving on front page of website	Logo revolving on front page of website	Logo revolving on front page of website
Ability to use our logo in advertising	Ability to use our logo in advertising	Ability to use our logo in advertising	Ability to use our logo in advertising	Ability to use our logo in advertising	Ability to use our logo in advertising	Ability to use our logo in advertising
	Newsletter ad (½ page)	Newsletter ad (½ page)	Newsletter ad (½ page)	Newsletter ad (½ page)	Newsletter ad (½ page)	Newsletter ad (½ page)
	Banner displayed at all tournaments	Banner displayed at all tournaments	Banner displayed at all tournaments	Banner displayed at all tournaments	Banner displayed at all tournaments	Banner displayed at all tournaments
	VIP passes to all tournament events (2 passes)	VIP passes to all tournament events (6 passes) OR \$1000 off tournament entry fee	VIP passes to all tournament events (6 passes) OR \$1000 off tournament entry fee	VIP passes to all tournament events (6 passes) OR \$1000 off tournament entry fee	VIP passes to all tournament events (6 passes) OR \$1000 off tournament entry fee	VIP passes to all tournament events (6 passes) OR \$1000 off tournament entry fee
	Large GCBS flag	Large GCBS flag	Large GCBS flag	Large GCBS flag	Large GCBS flag	Large GCBS flag
		Recognized by each tournament	Recognized by each tournament	Recognized by each tournament	Recognized by each tournament	Recognized by each tournament
		Display (where space is available) at all tournaments	Display (where space is available) at all tournaments	Display (where space is available) at all tournaments	Display (where space is available) at all tournaments	Display (where space is available) at all tournaments
		Ex-officio member on the Advisory Board of Directors	Ex-officio member on the Advisory Board of Directors	Ex-officio member on the Advisory Board of Directors	Ex-officio member on the Advisory Board of Directors	Ex-officio member on the Advisory Board of Directors
			First option for subsequent year sponsorship	First option for subsequent year sponsorship	First option for subsequent year sponsorship	First option for subsequent year sponsorship
			Highlighted as Youth Angler sponsor on all recognition posts	Highlighted as Lady Angler sponsor on all recognition posts	Highlighted as Mate of the Year sponsor on all recognition posts	Highlighted as Top Billfish Boat sponsor on all recognition posts

If none of these sponsorship levels fit your needs as an organization or individual, please contact us for further discussion on customizing a sponsorship. All social media coverage is at staff's discretion

*Category preference is first come, first served, and only one sponsor per \$15,000 level.