



TAG & RELEASE



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DNR



20th Annual South Carolina Governor's Cup Billfishing Series Tournament Schedule...

May 14-17

Edisto Marina Billfish Tournament

Contact: Becca Smith
3702 Docksite Road
Edisto Beach, SC 29438
(407) 463-2082, FAX (843) 869-3738
smithbecca@gmail.com

May 28-31

41st Annual Georgetown Blue Marlin Tournament

Contact: Ricky Ferdon
P. O. Box 1704
Georgetown, SC 29442
(843) 546-1776, FAX (843) 546-7832
glmarina@sc.rr.com www.georgetownlandingmarina.com

June 25-28

Charleston Harbor Resort & Marina Billfish Tournament

Contact: Deidre Menefee
520 Folly Road #330
Charleston, SC 29412
(843) 345-0369, FAX (843) 406-4813
dpmenefee@aol.com

July 9-12

HMY/Viking MEGADOCK Billfishing Tournament

Contact: K. C. Rennie
P. O. Box 759
Charleston, SC 29402
(843) 278-4914, FAX (843) 577-7704
kcrennie@charlestoncitymarina.com

July 23-26

Bohicket Marina Invitational Billfish Tournament

Contact: Deidre Menefee
520 Folly Road #330
Charleston, SC 29412
(843) 345-0369, FAX (843) 406-4813
dpmenefee@aol.com

For more information contact:

Amy Dukes
SC Governor's Cup Tournament Coordinator
843-935-9365
dukesa@dnr.sc.gov <http://govcup.dnr.sc.gov/>

20th Anniversary Reflections

It is hard to believe that this year marks the 20th anniversary of the Governor's Cup Billfishing Series. It seems like only yesterday that Hurricane Hugo blew through and destroyed many of the marinas that hosted events that first summer. I am usually not one to put great stock into celebrating anniversaries, preferring instead to celebrate the present and look forward to tomorrow. But in this case I think a celebration is in order. At the time, it was a great change in direction to attempt to conserve billfish populations by promoting catch and release. The Department of Natural Resources' Marine Game Fish Tagging Program, which started in 1974, had already been under way for 16 years and, while the information gathered about movements and growth of targeted fish was valuable, perhaps more important was a change in attitudes that resulted in a large portion of captured fish being released alive and thereby reducing harvest. In hindsight that was and still may be one of our most effective management tools. It was an important step for this conservation ethic to be adopted by the billfishing community. This transformation is partly responsible for the excellent fishing we have today. There was little doubt at the time that while for many, catching a billfish of any size was potentially a once in a lifetime experience, we could not continue to harvest fish before they had an opportunity to spawn, just so our friends back at the dock could admire them. Governor Carroll Campbell and others took a bold step in 1989 and although I was not involved at the time, I am sure that it was not without its share of sometimes vocal critics. Many of you were there at the beginning, others like current Advisory Board member Sam Hiott and Tournament Committee members Mike Altine and Stan Hurteau have been volunteering their time annually for the entire 20-year history of the Series. Some of the tournaments around that first year like Georgetown and Bohicket are still

part of the Series, while others like Marlin Quay, Harbourgate and Toler's Cove are only a memory. Nevertheless we owe all involved a great debt of gratitude for their foresight. At first a large number of billfish were still landed (1989 n=13; 1991 n=24) at Governor's Cup events, but over time those numbers have steadily declined to the point that last year only one billfish was brought to the dock while 184 others were released during the Series. You all deserve a pat on the back for taking this proactive step that has furthered the cause of billfish conservation in so many ways. Amy and I are honored to be a part of this great team and look forward to meeting each of you this summer. We also look forward to the Series continuing as an international leader in billfish conservation for another 20 years.

—Wallace Jenkins

Some New Faces For 2008

The S.C. Governor's Cup Billfishing Series welcomes two current S.C. Department of Natural Resources employees who will assist with the coordination and promotion of the Series. Wallace Jenkins, Program Coordinator, and Amy Dukes, Tournament Coordinator, began their efforts in mid-January. Jenkins has been a biologist at SCDNR for many years, starting as a summer intern in 1975 and working his way up to a Biologist IV position. For a number of years he has overseen red drum and striped bass stocking research for the Division. He brings a wealth of experience in fisheries research, public outreach, and grants management to the position and will be a great asset. Dukes, though a full time biologist, has volunteered her time for many years assisting former Series Coordinator Tom DuPré during past tournaments. Her experience will be a great benefit to ensure the success of the 2008 season. Dukes has been a biologist with SCDNR since 1999 and has conducted various research project associated with the ACE Basin National Estuarine Research Reserve, including fisheries and water quality research and public outreach programs.

For more information on the South Carolina Governor's Cup Billfishing Series visit the Web site at <http://govcup.dnr.sc.gov/>, or contact the S.C. Department of Natural Resources, Wallace Jenkins by e-mail at jenkinsw@dnr.sc.gov or by phone at (843) 953-9835 or Amy Dukes by e-mail at dukesa@dnr.sc.gov or by phone at (843) 953-9365.

2007 Billfish Numbers & Such

Before the Series began in 1989, virtually all billfish caught were killed and brought back to the docks. The Governor's Cup Billfishing Series was established to promote and encourage conservation of our ocean's natural resources and our state's billfishing industry. The Series continues to actively encourage the conservation of marine resources by promoting catch and release of both billfish and other game fish. The partnership between SCDNR and the Governor's Cup Billfishing Series has provided an important link to the sportfishing community and allowed for an extremely efficient and cost effective means for gathering data. During the 2007 Series, 179 billfish were released including 32 blue marlin, 7 white marlin, and 140 sailfish. In 2007, only one blue marlin was brought to the docks to be weighed during Series tournaments. The high release rate achieved will significantly contribute to the future of billfish populations. By maintaining close relationships with the sportfishing community (boat owners, captains and anglers) data are also acquired for trips conducted not only at sanctioned tournaments but from fishing trips throughout the year.

2008 Sponsorships

Sponsorships are the lifeblood of the SC Governor's Cup Billfishing Series. Without them it would not be able to operate. We greatly appreciate the generous support of our corporate sponsor Palmetto Ford Inc., and major sponsors HMY Yacht Sales, W. W. Williams, The Charleston Angler and Wachovia Wealth Management as well as contributions from the Advisory Board of Directors. We would also like to thank our Newsletter sponsors: Albury Brothers Boats, CCA of SC, Cannon Container, Haddrell's Point Tackle and Supply, Hanckel Marine, HMY/MegaDock Billfishing Tournament, Palmetto Props and Spencer Yachts Inc. Without them you would not be reading this. The funds

collected each year support the annual Series. If you or your company would like to help support the S.C. Governor's Cup Billfishing Series, please contact Wallace Jenkins for more information.

Atlantic Highly Migratory Species (HMS); U.S. Atlantic Billfish Tournament Management Measures

Effective January 1, 2008, The National Marine Fisheries Service regulations require anglers fishing from HMS permitted vessels and participating in Atlantic Billfish tournaments to use only non-offset circle hooks when deploying natural baits or natural bait/artificial lure combinations. The regulations allow the use of J-hooks (the hook-type traditionally used in this fishery) with artificial lures in tournaments and do not impose hook requirements on recreational fishermen fishing outside of Atlantic billfish tournaments.



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WANTED - Billfish Catch Reports

Attention SC Billfishing Anglers, please report released and/or boated billfish caught in SC waters throughout the 2008 fishing season. Anglers that release a billfish will receive a SCDNR Billfish Release Certificate. Who will be named this year's **"TOP CONSERVATIONIST BOAT OF THE YEAR"** by reporting the most billfish releases? Will it be you? To report billfish landings or to request billfish release cards contact Amy Dukes at 843-953-9365, or e-mail dukesa@dnr.sc.gov. The winning boat will receive a special award to be presented at the 2008 Governor's Cup Awards banquet in October. *Good Fishing!*



2007 Catch Report For Billfish Landed And/Or Released In SC Waters

Boat	Blue Marlin	White Marlin	Sailfish	Spear fish	Sword fish
Aggressor	1		1		
Anticipation			2		
Artemis	4		4		
At Ease	2		4		
Bak Bar	2	1	1		
Barrier Island Marine	1		1		
Benchmark		4	8		
Bentley's Best	1	1	7		
Big Game	2		2		
Big Kahuna	1				
Big Tease	1				
Billfisher	1		37		
Billfishin			1		
Billistic	1				
Blessed Adventure			11		
Blue Boy	1	2	10		
Blue Heaven	1		1		
Blue Sky	1		1		
Boondoggle	1		1		
Bottom Line			1		
Caramba					3
Cerveza	1		4		
Chasin	1	1	38		
Cherie Amour			3		
Cookie Monster	1				3
Costa-Lot			1		
Cowboy		1	2		
C-Time			1		
Data Point			1		
Dawg Due	1				
Daymaker	3	2	22		
Day Maker	2		7		2
Deacon Blue			1		
Dem Boys	2		3		
Desperado			1		
Done Cuttin	1				
Dough Boy	2		1		
Due Course	3		13		
Evans B		1	6		
Farside					1
Fat Boy			1		
Felic The Cat			1		
Fin-Addict	1				
Fish N Grits			2		
Fishwrapper			6		
Flybouy			1		
Frenzy			3		
Game On	4		9		
Give Em Hell	1				
Half Mine			1		
Hat Trick	1				
Hattitude			7		
Heavy Iron			10		
Heavy Weight			1		
High Cotton			1		
High Maintenance			4		

Boat	Blue Marlin	White Marlin	Sailfish	Spear fish	Sword fish
High Roller					3
Home Run		1	5		
Houdini			8		
Hot Shot			2		
Hoy Boys			1		
Juncanewt	2	2	18		
Just One More V			1		
Kat Daddy			1		
Lady M			1		
Laffalot			1		
Legal Holiday	2		9		
Lock N Load			1		
Loose Crew			1		
Mack Attack			1		
Major Motion	2		1		
Market Value	1		5		
Mary Agnes			2		
Merritt Time			4		
Micabe			3		
Miss Magnolia			1		
Miss Wy IV	1		4		
My Time Out III			1		
My Three Sons	2	2	2		
Navicula			2		
Northstar	1		4		
OKI-OO-PAI			1		
Out Of Control			1		
Overspray	1				
Pain Killer			1		
Patriot			1		
Penny Dear			1		
Petrel		3	4		4
Pisces IV			1		
Prowess	1		5		
Rapid Pace	1		8		
Rascal			9		
Reel Deal	2				
Reel Fun 2			1		
Reel Hungry	1				
Reel Jim			1		
Risky Business	1		6		
Rookie IV		1	8		9
Russellhatt	1		1		
Sea Baby			1		
Sea Fix	2	1	4		
Sea Fox	1		3	1	
Sea J's			3		
Sea Pro	1				
Shark Byte			1		
Short People		1	2		
Simple Interest			1		
Soundwaves II	1				
Special Lady			5		
Splitbill			3		
Sportin Life			2		
Sportsman			8		

Boat	Blue Marlin	White Marlin	Sailfish	Spear fish	Sword fish
Summer Girl	2	2	6		2
Summertime Blues			1		
Swamp Fox	1		1		
Sweet Harmony	1				
Syked Out	1				
Tag A Long			1		
The Last One			1		
The Office			1		
True Blue			2		
Ultra			8		

Boat	Blue Marlin	White Marlin	Sailfish	Spear fish	Sword fish
Unknown ???			1		
Viking 54	1		1		
Waters Edge	1				
Wild Cat II	1		4		
Yard Boy			1		
Yo Yo	1		1		
28' Scout			1		
TOTALS	78	26	435	1	27
OVERALL TOTAL	567				



South Carolina Governor's Cup Billfishing Series Tournament Guidelines - 2008

Please note: Changes have been made to Rules 1, 2, 6, 8, and 9.

1. Fish must be caught in accordance with all state and federal laws to qualify to earn points or award. **A fish may be struck and the rod passed, immediately, to an angler who has not reached their sixteenth (16th) birthday by April 1st of the current tournament** After the rod is passed, only the angler is allowed to touch the rod or line. Once the leader is brought within the grasp of the mate or is wound to the rod tip, then the angler may have assistance to catch and release or boat the fish. Series points will accrue toward Series awards for these fish. Vessels may provide assistance to other vessels for boating fish.

2. White marlin and sailfish are catch and release only. Tagging is optional and not required for points. The minimum size for Series points or awards consideration for landed blue marlin is 110 inches measured in a curved line along the body from the fork of the tail to the tip of the lower jaw (LJFL). **Federal regulation dictates that a boated billfish cannot be returned to the water.**

Note: 110 inches exceeds the federally mandated minimum size limit. Should the federal size limit be increased, the minimum size for blue marlin eligible for weighing in SC Governor's Cup Series tournaments will be increased automatically to exceed the new minimum size by two (2) inches if required.

3. A penalty of 600 points will be assessed against a boat for each blue marlin brought to the dock not meeting the minimum South Carolina Governor's Cup Series size requirements.
4. Boats guilty of wanton waste of fish taken in a Series event will be disqualified from earning points in that event.
5. Scoring for eligible billfish weighed-in is based solely on those points officially awarded each boat by each tournament. Boats earn one point per pound and fraction of a pound for their single heaviest billfish weighed in each tournament. No points are awarded for additional billfish weighed in any one tournament.
6. Only blue marlin, white marlin and sailfish are eligible for billfish catch and release points. Tagging is optional and not required for point. **Billfish boated for any reason will not qualify for release point.** Scoring for billfish caught and released in good condition is as follows:

Blue marlin	600 points
White marlin	300 points
Sailfish	200 points

7. To qualify for catch and release points, a billfish must be fought to the boat according to program guidelines. A billfish is considered caught when: 1) the leader is grasped by the mate or the leader is wound to the rod tip. (A leader may be no longer than 30 feet); 2) the billfish is positively identified; and 3) the fish is released in a healthy condition. Boats are encouraged to remove the hook or to cut the leader as close as possible to the hook.

8. A billfish may not be brought into the boat unless it is to be brought to the dock for weighing.
 9. Any billfish gaffed, harpooned or otherwise injured in an attempt to boat the fish will not qualify for catch and release points.
 10. For a vessel to qualify any billfish for points, every person aboard the vessel 18 years of age or older must sign an affidavit swearing that all rules and regulations were observed in reference to the described fish. Failure of any person to sign, for any reason, disqualifies that fish.
 11. Affidavits must be completed the day the catch and release or landing occurs, except when a medical emergency involving the boat's crew prohibits completion of the form or when a mechanically disabled boat cannot return within the prescribed weigh-in period. In these instances, the forms must be completed and returned within ten (10) days of the catch and release. Boats fishing out of other marinas or ports must fax or hand-deliver the completed catch and release affidavit to tournament headquarters prior to the close of the weighing scales on the day of catch with the exception as noted above.
 12. Boats will be awarded 25 participation points for each Series tournament entered up to a maximum of three events. A boat's points total will include participation points as indicated along with points for landed or caught and released billfish from all tournaments fished. Points will count toward aggregate point totals for Outstanding Billfish Boat and Outstanding Billfish Conservationist. Points cannot be transferred from one boat to another.
 13. Boats must fish a minimum of two Series tournaments to qualify for Outstanding Billfish Boat and Outstanding Billfish Conservationist. Vessels fishing only one tournament qualify for Outstanding Billfish, Lady Angler awards, Youth Angler awards, and Outstanding Dolphin/Wahoo/Tuna.
 14. In the event of a tie, the boat accumulating points the earliest shall be the winner. If a tie still remains, the boat fishing in the most Series events will be declared the winner.
 15. Tournament awards will be presented for the heaviest tuna, dolphin, and wahoo caught by boats participating in the Series and for 1st, 2nd and 3rd place outstanding female and youth (under sixteen years of age) anglers. The tournament awards for female and youth angler will be awarded for the heaviest tuna, dolphin or wahoo if no female or youth angler has landed or caught and released a legal billfish. Billfish caught by female or youth anglers will earn regular Series points for the species. Series awards for non-billfish species will be awarded for largest tuna, dolphin, and wahoo.
 16. A Blue Water Conservation Award will be presented to the boat accumulating the most points tagging dolphin (50 points), yellowfin tuna (100 points) and wahoo (150 points). All fish must be caught on legal Series tournament fishing days and tagged using official tags supplied by the Marine Resources Division's Marine Gamefish Tagging Program. Completed tagging reports will serve as official entry forms and must be submitted to Marine Resources Division personnel working the tournament or the weighmaster on the same day the fish was tagged.
 17. Creel limits for dolphin are 10 per angler per day with a limit of 60 per boat per day, with no minimum size restriction. Creel limit for yellowfin tuna is 3 per angler per day with a minimum legal size of 27 inches curved body fork length. Creel limit for wahoo is 2 per person per day.
- Note: Size or creel limits will automatically be changed in SC Governor's Cup Billfishing Series tournaments to reflect changes in federal or state laws.*
18. All awards are presented to the boat. Invitations to the annual Governor's Cup awards reception are limited to winning boat crews and to boat owners whose boats fish two or more yearly Series events.
 19. It is the intent of the S.C. Governor's Cup to encourage release of healthy billfish, therefore the use of 130 lb. class line is allowed.
 20. A boat owner may request an official ruling from the Governor's Cup Series. The request for a ruling must be submitted in writing to a member of the Tournament Committee. The Tournament Committee shall rule on the request within seven (7) days. Any ruling of the Tournament Committee may be appealed by writing to the Board of Directors within forty-eight (48) hours, excluding weekend days and holidays. The Board shall render results of an appeal, in writing, to the appellant within thirty (30) days. All decisions of the Board are final. All rulings will focus solely on compliance with Governor's Cup Series rules, not individual tournament rules.



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SAVE THE DATES...

The Harry Hampton Marine Conservation Auction and Banquet will be held at historical Fort Johnson on Friday, May 2nd from 6 – 10 p.m. Tickets are \$25 per person or \$40 per couple. For information and tickets, call (843) 953-9103 or visit www.hamptonwildlifefund.org/.

AND

The Marine Resources Center is hosting an Open House, Saturday, May 3rd from 9 a.m. – 4 p.m. The fun-filled educational day will include touch tanks, fish printing, educational cruises, research exhibits, demonstrations, seminars and food. Admission is free and parking and transportation are provided at the James Island Charter High School. Visit www.dnr.sc.gov/marine/openhouse.html for more information.

The S.C. Department of Natural Resources' Law Enforcement Division reminds the public of Coast Watch, which was developed to better help citizens report violations of saltwater recreational and commercial fishing laws, as well as marine environmental laws.

The Coast Watch hotline number (1-800-922-5431) is toll-free and available 24 hours a day.

The South Carolina Department of Natural Resources prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, disability, gender, religion or age. Direct all inquiries to the Office of Human Resources, PO Box 167, Columbia, South Carolina, 29202.

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