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DNR

Volume 16, No. 4 September 2011

Atlantic
Game & Tackle



23rd Annual SC Governor's Cup Billfishing Series 2011 Tournament Schedule...

May 11-14 Bohicket Marina Invitational Billfish Tournament

Contact: Bryan Richardson
1880 Andell Bluff Blvd
Johns Island, SC 29455
(843) 768-1280, FAX 768-3481
Dockmaster@Bohicket.com

May 25-28 44th Annual Georgetown Blue Marlin Tournament

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

June 22-25

Contact: Deidre Menefee
1625 Savannah Highway
Charleston, SC 29407
(843) 345-0369, FAX 888-758-3950
dm@fishcbc.com

Carolina Billfish Classic

July 6-9

Contact: McKenzie Hutaff
P. O. Box 759
Charleston, SC, 29402
(843) 278-4920, FAX 577-7704
mhutaff@megadock.us

MEGADOCK Billfishing Tournament

July 27-30

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

Edisto Marina Billfish Tournament

For more information, contact:

Amy Dukes
SC Governor's Cup Tournament Coordinator
843-953-9365
dukesa@dnr.sc.gov <http://govcup.dnr.sc.gov/>

Series Reflections

To quote Charles Dickens from *A Tale of Two Cities*, "it was the best of times, it was the worst of times". Our 23rd season started with record numbers of billfish being caught per boat, and that trend pretty much continued throughout the season with the overall Series winner, *Reel Passion*, finishing with 6,000 release points. To put this in perspective, for the 5 year period between 2000 and 2004, the top Series boat averaged only 1,251 points. This year, 13 boats would have bested that total. While points awarded for release have changed several times during that period, the actual number of releases per boat were the highest ever at 1.5/boat. No other year even approaches that total. In summary, this was the best year yet for billfish catches during this prestigious Series.

For those of you familiar with the rest of that quote, our times are not that dissimilar from those described in the book. While we had perhaps the best catch rate ever, we also saw a decrease in participation on the order of 25% in the last year alone, and a loss of 37% of participants since 2008. This year, 152 boats participated in the Series, which when compared to what is perhaps our best year on record of 306 (during the summer of 2001, before 9-11) will give you some idea of the destruction that has been wrought on our nation's economy over the last 10 years. This continued decline in participation might lead some, including me, to question the sustainability of billfish tournaments. Particularly in areas like South Carolina, where long runs are necessary to reach the fishing grounds. Certainly, if things do not change in the near future, the entities that produce these events will have to take a long hard look at their business models. Not to be totally pessimistic, we did see 13 new boats in Series events this summer, and two of them, *Sadie Beth* and *Rodeo*, did rather well. If we can keep these new boats and get some of our former participants back, it would be really sweet.

As you can imagine as the point person for the Series, I receive lots of feedback from organizers, participants, those who have stopped participating and even those who have never participated, on ways that the Series can be improved. But at the end of the day, most of these suggestions will only make minor course

corrections and not substantially change people's behavior. Perhaps what needs to be considered is that these events offer a unique opportunity for those of like mind and similar interest to come together for a few days and do something they love. As a suggestion, perhaps the TWT should not be the focus of those who enter. Time has proven that the

odds of winning and regularly covering expenses are perhaps worse than in Las Vegas. This may be a radical suggestion, but perhaps if attitudes changed I would not hear from people that they can no longer afford "to go across the board" in a tournament or have the tournament take a percentage off the top even when there is no winner in the category. While it is hard for me to believe

anyone could ever afford "to go across the board", isn't there some intrinsic value in just entering at the base level and having fun for 4 days? Granted, I know the entry fee is just the beginning of the expense, but isn't a change of mindset worth considering in order to preserve the tradition of conservation and camaraderie? Just a thought.

Wallace Jenkins

3RD ROUND RESULTS 2011 SC GOVERNOR'S CUP BILLFISHING SERIES — CAROLINA BILLFISH CLASSIC



Caramba accepts 1st Place Billfish Boat award

The third tournament in the 23rd season of the Series, the Carolina Billfish Classic, took place June 22-25 at Toler's Cove Marina in Mt. Pleasant and Georgetown Landing Marina in Georgetown. A total of 31 boats participated in the tournament with 56 billfish releases, including 6 blue marlin, 6 white marlin and 44 sailfish. No billfish were landed. Wallace Jenkins, Series Program Director for SCDNR, added "based on the pictures I saw, there were some very large blue marlin released and the catch rate was phenomenal with an average of 1.8 billfish released per boat. That's a good days fishing just about anywhere in the country this time of year".



Ready to fish at Toler's Cove



1st place Lady Angler, Amy Bennett



1st Place Wahoo award goes to Matt Key



Tournament coordinator Deidre Menefee and Top Angler Douglas Miller

2011 Top Series Boats

| | |
|---------------|------|
| Reel Passion | 6075 |
| Sportin' Life | 4175 |
| Daymaker | 3775 |
| Sadie Beth | 3575 |
| Rascal | 3575 |
| Caramba | 2375 |
| Frenzy | 1650 |
| Emily Bliss | 1575 |
| Full Pull | 1575 |
| Rodeo | 1475 |

Billfish Release Numbers

| Tournament Name | Number of Boats | Blue Marlin | White Marlin | Sailfish | Total Released |
|-----------------|-----------------|-------------|--------------|----------|----------------|
| Bohicket | 21 | 3 | 8 | 1 | 12 |
| Georgetown | 33 | 6 | 30 | 9 | 45 |
| CBC | 31 | 6 | 6 | 44 | 56 |
| MEGADOCK | 48 | 0 | 2 | 56 | 58 |
| Edisto | 20 | 1 | 0 | 53 | 54 |
| Total | 78 | 16 | 46 | 163 | 225 |

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2011 Winners — Carolina Billfish Classic • Megadock • Edisto — Awards Summary

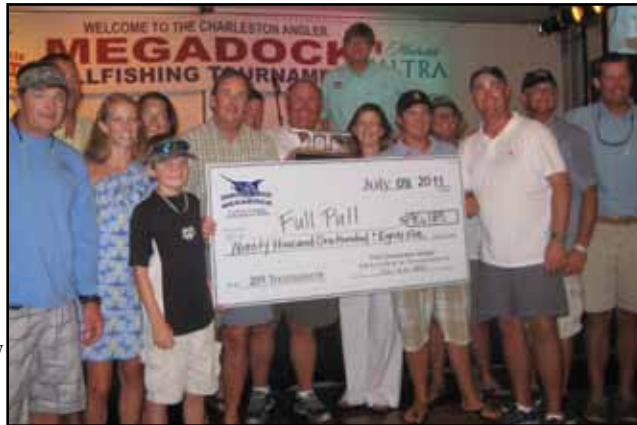
| AWARD | Carolina Billfish Classic | Megadock | Edisto |
|---|--|--|--|
| Outstanding Billfish Boat 1st Place | Caramba Owner: Robert Faith Captain: Dale Lackey 1 Blue Marlin and 6 Sailfish released 1800 pts. | Full Pull Owner: John Floyd Captain: Charles Moore 1 White Marlin and 4 Sailfish released 1100 pts. | Reel Passion Owner: William Ingram Captain: Gary Richardson 9 Sailfish released 1800 pts. |
| Outstanding Billfish Boat 2nd Place | Sportin' Life Owner: Manly and Graham Eubank Captain: Mike Glaesner 1 Blue Marlin, 1 White Marlin, and 3 Sailfish released 1500pts. | Cacique Owner: Paul Coury and Larry Edwards Captain: Harvey Shiflet 5 Sailfish released 1000 pts. | Sadie Beth Owner: Gage Blue Captain: Howard Moseley 8 Sailfish released 1600 pts. |
| Outstanding Billfish Boat 3rd Place | Rascal Owner: Norman Pulliam Captain: Mark Rogers 1 Blue Marlin and 4 Sailfish released 1400 pts. | Jabez Owner: Carl Ulm Captain: Ben Polk 4 Sailfish released 800 pts. | Lil Bit Owner: Peter Loy Captain: Peter Loy 5 Sailfish released 1000 pts. |
| Outstanding Billfish Conservationist | Caramba Owner: Robert Faith Captain: Dale Lackey 1 Blue Marlin and 6 Sailfish released 1800 pts. | Full Pull Owner: John Floyd Captain: Charles Moore 1 White Marlin and 4 Sailfish released 1100 pts. | Reel Passion Owner: William Ingram Captain: Gary Richardson 9 Sailfish released 1800 pts. |
| Outstanding Billfish (landed) | None Landed | None Landed | None Landed |
| Outstanding Dolphin | Full Pull Owner: John Floyd Captain: Charles Moore Angler: Lenny Cannon 52.2 pounds | Blue Sky Owner: Greg Smith Captain: Steve Crammer Angler: Hew King 39.6 pounds | Frayed Knot Owner: RB Corbin Captain: Rusty Corbin Angler: Todd Savage 30.0 pounds |
| Outstanding Tuna | Syked Out Owner: David Sykes Captain: Dan Woody Angler: Jeff Jones 12.8 pound Blackfin | Rodeo Owner: Michael Bennett Captain: John McNamara Angler: Amy Bennett 21.4 pound Blackfin | Trick'em Owner: Whitaker Farms, LLC Captain: Kevin Stafford Angler: Peyton Stilp 19.8 pound Blackfin |
| Outstanding Wahoo | El Tejano Owner: John Hill Captain: David Redd Angler: Matt Key 27.8 pounds | El Tejano Owner: John Hill Captain: David Redd Angler: Charlie Lewis 42.4 pounds | Laff-A-Lot Owner: Frank Thornhill Captain: Frank Thornhill Angler: Cam Wernitz 41.4 pounds |
| Blue Water Conservation | Caramba Owner: Robert Faith Captain: Dale Lackey Tag and Release of 32 Dolphin 1600 pts. | Reel Patience Owner: Jamie Zachrich Captain: Stefan Patrick Tag and Release of 4 Dolphin 200 pts. | None |
| Outstanding Youth Angler 1st Place | Petrel Owner: Harry Johnson Captain: Thomas Wynne Angler: Cordes Johnson, Age 6 3.8 pound Dolphin | Billfishin' - Hunt for Life Owner: Bill Turbeville Captain: Thomas Rivers Angler: Karly Boggus, Age 13 6.0 pound Dolphin | Miss Beth III Owner: John van Haastreht Captain: John van Haastreht Angler: Chance van Haastreht, Age 14 16.4 pound Blackfin |
| Outstanding Youth Angler 2nd Place | None | None | Lil Bit Owner: Pete Loy Captain: Pete Loy Angler: Harry Bissell, Age 14 9.6 pound Blackfin |
| Outstanding Youth Angler 3rd Place | None | None | Billfishin' - Hunt for Life Owner: Bill Turbeville Captain: Thomas Rivers Angler: Karlie Boggus, Age 13 5.0 pound Dolphin |
| Outstanding Female Angler 1st Place | Rodeo Owner: Michael Bennett Captain: John McNamara Angler: Amy Bennett 1 White Marlin released | Crystal Blue Owner: Sam Hankins Captain: Greg Mixson Angler: Jessica Mitchell 25.4 pound Wahoo | Sea Trace Owner: AJ Kennedy Captain: AJ Kennedy Angler: Keegan Kennedy 17.6 pound Blackfin |
| Outstanding Female Angler 2nd Place | El Tejano Owner: John Hill Captain: David Redd Angler: Cissy Bonifay 19.8 pound Dolphin | Rodeo Owner: Mike Bennett Captain: John McNamara Angler: Amy Bennett 21.4 pound Blackfin | Billfishin' - Hunt for Life Owner: Bill Turbeville Captain: Thomas Rivers Angler: Brittany Boggus 11.0 pound Skipjack |
| Outstanding Female Angler 3rd Place | None | Chunda II Owner: John Hopkinson Captain: Anthony Priest Angler: Jodie Mindala 11.0 pound Dolphin | Crystal Blue Owner: Sam Hankins Captain: Will Austin Angler: Sue Cushman 5.0 pound Blackfin |

4TH ROUND RESULTS 2011 SC GOVERNOR'S CUP BILLFISHING SERIES — THE CHARLESTON ANGLER MEGADOCK BILLFISHING TOURNAMENT

The fourth tournament in the 23rd season of the Series, The Charleston Angler MEGADOCK Billfishing Tournament, took place July 6-9 at The City Marina in Charleston. A total of 48 boats participated in the tournament with 58 billfish releases, including 2 white marlin and 56 sailfish.

No blue marlin were released or landed during the tournament. A small craft advisory posted Saturday morning restricted 37 boats from fishing their allotted second day of fishing. Wallace Jenkins, Series Program Director for SCDNR, noted "while many regretted not being able to fish on Saturday, overall most were

grateful not to have to go out and get beat up all day in 7 foot seas."



Full Pull accepts 1st Place Billfish Boat award



Blue Water Conservation winner, Reel Patience



Charlie Lewis accepts 1st Place Wahoo award



Boats lined up on the MEGADOCK



1st place Lady Angler, Jessica Mitchell

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5TH ROUND RESULTS 2011 SC GOVERNOR'S CUP BILLFISHING SERIES — EDISTO MARINA BILLFISH TOURNAMENT



Governor Haley says a few words at the Edisto Tournament

The final chapter of 23rd Series was completed at Edisto Beach, July 27-30. The weather for this year's event was excellent, with three beautiful days of fishing. While participation was down somewhat from the previous year, good things come in small packages, and what resulted was a very intimate fun-filled event. Evening social events were held at the newly constructed waterfront park adjacent to the marina on Big Bay Creek, and local and state government dignitaries made an appearance, including the town Mayor Burley Lyons, several SCDNR Board members and SC Governor Nikki Haley with her family. "It was especially rewarding to have the Governor attend her first event and get some perspective on what the Series is about. In addition, the first gentleman, Michael Haley got the opportunity to go offshore fishing aboard *Rascal*", said SCDNR biologist and Program Coordinator Wallace Jenkins.

A total of 20 boats participated in the tournament, and 54 billfish were caught and released, including 53 Sailfish and 1 Blue Marlin. "Fishing was excellent, with billfish release numbers up 35% over the previous year even though the number of participating boats declined by 30%", said SCDNR biologist Amy Dukes.



2nd Place Boat Sadie Beth returns from fishing with flags flying



1st Place Youth Angler, Chance van Haastrect



Reel Passion accepts 1st Place Billfish Boat award



Tournament coordinator Becca Jones hams it up with kids at the weigh station

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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.



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