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Series Reflections

Well, in the blink of an eye, another fishing season has passed. The oppressive heat during July was hard on us old folks but we survived. On the final day of Megadock I logged 19,513 steps for an estimated distance of 9.4 miles. Now I am starting to realize why my predecessor, Tom Dupre, called it quits back in 2007. I am told that sea conditions during the last two Series events were more like fishing on a hot pond as opposed to the rough and tumble conditions encountered at that tournament to our north in mid-June. While the seas may have been calm, the billfish bite was electric at both Megadock and Edisto. The 71 sailfish released at Megadock resulted in a whopping 2.63 sailfish per boat catch rate which eclipsed the previous high from 2009 which had a 1.86 sailfish per boat catch rate. The tournament's winning boat, *Hammer Time* owned by Steve Mozeley and captained by Austin Eubank, released a total of 10 sailfish, with 8 occurring in one day. There were also many reports of hooked and lost fish, with one captain telling me they had 9 hookups but were only able to get 2 billfish to the boat for a successful release. It was good to see the sailfish back in large numbers for the first time in several years. The story at Edisto was equally encouraging, with 27 boats releasing 16 blue marlin, an almost unprecedented number for this species, given how late in the season it was, and with water temperatures in the upper 80's. Of equal importance was that many of these fish were estimated to be in the 400 lb + size category. Perhaps the best news we received all summer was that the NOAA ship *Pisces* deployed their ROV at the Memorial Reef barges that were deployed two years ago and scientist Stacey Harter reported, "The most exciting news I have to share is regarding the two barges in the artificial reef. We dove on them two years ago right after they had been sunk and they essentially had no fish on them at the time, except for a school of amberjack. On barge 1, the shallower one, we observed several scamp, a large red snapper, a small yellowedge grouper, and numerous lionfish. On Barge 2, the deeper one, we observed

28th Annual SC Governor's Cup Billfishing Series 2016 Tournament Schedule...

May 11 - 14

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

Carolina Billfish Classic

May 25 - 28 49th Annual Georgetown Blue Marlin Tournament

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

June 1 - 4 Bohicket Marina Invitational Billfish Tournament

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

June 29 - July 2

MEGADOCK Billfishing Tournament

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

July 20 - July 23

Edisto Invitational Billfish Tournament

Contact: Brian Bell
3702 Docksite Road
Edisto Beach, SC, 29438
(843) 631-5055, FAX (843) 631-5065
Bkbell1@bellsouth.net

For more information, contact:

Amy Dukes
SC Governor's Cup Tournament Coordinator
843-953-9365
dukesa@dnr.sc.gov <http://govcup.dnr.sc.gov/>
PO Box 12559
Charleston, SC 29422

lionfish, several scamp, numerous large and juvenile snowy grouper, several warsaw grouper (the most we've ever seen in one area), a couple of small yellowedge grouper, and a small misty grouper. I have been analyzing ROV dives for about 14 years and this was the first misty grouper I have observed. I was ecstatic to say the least."

The importance of this observation cannot be overstated, as it has the potential to greatly affect the direction of the movement to close natural live bottom areas to fishing by designating them as Marine Protected Areas. In addition, at Edisto, I learned from several captains that the Memorial Reef was also the area where most of the billfish that were released during the tournament were captured. So it appears that the reefs are doing exactly what they were intended to do: providing habitat, and serving as spawning areas for imperiled deep water groupers, while attracting bait and pelagic species including billfish, much to the delight of SC anglers. The many volunteers that initiated the efforts to fund, build and deploy the SC Memorial Reef, and businesses like Stevens Towing, who were so crucial to the completion of this project, are to be commended.

And last but certainly not least, owners Graham and Manly Eubank, Captain Bobby Garmany and the crew of the *Sportin' Life* are to be congratulated for finishing as the top boat with 3,875 points. While they did not win any of the individual tournaments this summer, they were competitive at each event, and were able to edge out the second place boat *Electric Bill*, owned by Chad Sanders and captained by Phillip Fender, based on release time. Third place went to *Rascal*, the 2015 Series winner, owned by Norman Pulliam and Foster McKissick and captained by Mark Rogers, with 3,675 points. Here comes The Judge!

Please follow us on our Facebook page, South Carolina Governor's Cup Billfishing Series, on our website <https://www.govcup.sc.dnr.gov/>, and our Instagram account <https://www.instagram.com/scgovernorscup/>. Also, to whom it applies, make sure to send us your RSVP to the annual awards ceremony at The Island House at Ross Marine on Friday, September 30th. We can't wait to see you there for another great send-off of another successful Series!

Wallace Jenkins



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Awards Summary: Megadock - Edisto

AWARD	MEGADOCK	EDISTO
Outstanding Billfish Boat 1st Place	<i>Hammer Time</i> Owner: Steve Mozeley Captain: Austin Eubank 10 sailfish released 2000 points	<i>Syked Out</i> Owner: David Sykes Captain: Dan Woody 2 blue marlin and 6 sailfish released 2400 points
Outstanding Billfish Boat 2nd Place	<i>Electric Bill</i> Owner: Chad Sanders Captain: Phillip Fender 1 blue marlin and 3 sailfish released 1200 points	<i>Rascal</i> Owner: Norman Pulliam and Foster McKissick Captain: Mark Rogers 1 blue marlin and 5 sailfish released 1600 points
Outstanding Billfish Boat 3rd Place	<i>Take Five</i> Owner: Van Narron Captain: Teak Bell 6 sailfish released 1200 points	<i>Electric Bill</i> Owner: Chad Sanders Captain: Phillip Fender 2 blue marlin and 2 sailfish released 1600 points
Outstanding Billfish (landed)	N/A	N/A
Outstanding Billfish Conservationist	<i>Hammer Time</i> Owner: Steve Mozeley Captain: Austin Eubank 10 sailfish released 2000 points	<i>Syked Out</i> Owner: David Sykes Captain: Dan Woody 2 blue marlin and 6 sailfish released 2400 points



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Bohicket 2003 and 2016. Fontaine Bergen, "Am I getting bigger or are the fish getting smaller?"

Billfish Release Numbers					
Tournament Name	Number of Boats	Blue Marlin	White Marlin	Sailfish	Total Released
CBC	24	3	1	4	8
Georgetown	38	8*	4	15	25
Bohicket	19	0	2	19	21
Megadock	28	6	1	71	78
Edisto	27	16	0	33	49
*2 of these were landed					156



PHOTO CREDIT: FRED BERGEN

PHOTO CREDIT: MISTER PETE

Awards Summary: Megadock - Edisto

AWARD	MEGADOCK	EDISTO
Outstanding Dolphin	<i>Houdini</i> Owner: Jim Shannon Captain: Wren Fogle Angler: Jeffrey Frohock 54.0 pounds	<i>Sea Tiger</i> Owner: Jerry Smith Captain: Jerry Smith Angler: Jerry Smith 32.6 pounds
Outstanding Tuna	<i>Miss Wy</i> Owner: Ed Holder Captain: Matt Wilkinson Angler: Robert Rodelsperger 24.3 pound blackfin	<i>Frayed Knot</i> Owner: Rusty Corbin Captain: Dustin Corbin Angler: James Pederson 14.5 pound blackfin
Outstanding Wahoo	<i>Coverage</i> Owner: Jim Holmes Captain: Hunter Blount Angler: Jim Carr 25.9 pounds	<i>Bad Becky</i> Owner: Claude Burnss Captain: Chase Merriman Angler: Robert Gill 64.9 pounds
Outstanding Female Angler 1st Place	<i>Artemis</i> Owner: John Darby Captain: Legare Smith Anglers: Susannah Nelson 3 sailfish released 600 points	<i>Dough Boy</i> Owner: Ben Dantzler Captain: Ben Dantzler Angler: Kasey Dantzler 1 blue marlin and 1 sailfish released 800 points
Outstanding Female Angler 2nd Place	<i>El Tejano</i> Owner: John Hill Captain: David Redd Anglers: Alana Redd 1 sailfish released 200 points	<i>Syked Out</i> Owner: David Sykes Captain: Dan Woody Angler: Holly McAlhany 1 blue marlin and 1 sailfish released 800 points
Outstanding Female Angler 3rd Place	<i>Sea Tiger</i> Owner: Jerry Smith Captain: Jerry Smith Angler: Hanna Sharpe 1 sailfish released 200 points	<i>Game On</i> Owner: Bubba Roof Captain: Trey "Cricket" McMillan Angler: Kelli Ann Roof 4 sailfish released 800 points
Outstanding Youth Angler 1st Place	<i>Gryphon</i> Owner: Colby Griffin Captain: Chucky Moore Angler: Chandler Griffin, age 14 4 sailfish released 800 points	<i>Micabe</i> Owner: Mike Larrow and Chris Jennings Captain: Emerson Read Angler: Rance Jennings, age 12 3 sailfish released 600 points
Outstanding Youth Angler 2nd Place	<i>Micabe</i> Owner: Mike Larrow and Chris Jennings Captain: Emerson Read Angler: Rance Jennings, age 12 3 sailfish released 600 points	<i>Salty Maintenance</i> Owner: Brad Truluck Captain: Brad Truluck Angler: Mackenzi Truluck, age 14 1 blue marlin released 600 points
Outstanding Youth Angler 3rd Place	<i>Rascal</i> Owner: Norman Pulliam and Foster McKissick Captain: Mark Rogers Angler: Graham Rogers, age 13 1 sailfish released 200 points	<i>Captain's Choice</i> Owner: Dan Horton Captain: Trey Sires Angler: Wyatt Judy, age 13 2 sailfish released 400 points



PHOTO CREDIT: ROOKIE IV



PHOTO CREDIT: FLYBUOY



WANTED • WANTED • WANTED • WANTED • WANTED • WANTED • WANTED • WANTED

Attention SC Billfish Anglers! Please report released billfish caught in SC waters throughout the 2016 fishing season. It's never too late to report a fish caught earlier this year! To report billfish releases or request billfish release cards, Please contact Amy Dukes at 843-953-9365, or email dukesa@dnr.sc.gov. The winning boat will receive a special award to be presented at the end of the 2015 fishing season. *Good Fishing!*



Top Series Boats	Points
Sportin' Life	3875
Electric Bill	3875
Rascal	3675
Syked Out	3075
Game On	2528
Micabe	2075
Hammer Time	2025
Mister Pete	1675
Rookie IV	1675
Anticipation	1475



PHOTO CREDIT TAKE FIVE



Billfish Per Boat	
CBC	0.33
Georgetown	0.71
Bohicket	1.11
Megadock	2.89
Edisto	1.81



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on

September 30, 2016!



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2016 Tournaments



May 11 - 14



June 1 - 4



July 20 - 23

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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.

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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