



TAG & RELEASE

Volume 23, No. 1



February 2018

<http://govcup.dnr.sc.gov>



Series Reflections

Wow, 30 years... what a wonderful milestone! How many of you have been participants during this entire run? Three boats appear on the 1989 list of participants that still fish the Series today: *Petrel*, *Rookie IV*, and *Short People*. Others on the list include: *Nautica*, *Diamond Girl*, and *At the Office*, which had owners who continue to fish, but have different vessels, now known respectively as *Big Sky*, *Full Pull*, and *Mirage*. In 1990, *Micabe* and *Major Motion* entered the mix. Many boats have come and gone, but it's amazing how many of the people or their descendants still fish with us today. Only one member of the various committees originally appointed by Governor Campbell to guide the Series remains: Stan Hurteau, our current Tournament Committee Chairman. All I can say is thank you all for your contributions to science and billfish conservation, and here's to the next 30!

As we begin a new year, I want to once again thank all of our 2017 sponsors, whose names and ads are scattered throughout this newsletter, but especially our Corporate Sponsors, Superior Diesel/Volvo Penta and Prospec Electronics/Harman/JBL. I also want to thank our Benefactor Sponsors: Apex Automotive Group, HMY Yachts, The Island House at Ross Marine, Sea Hunt Boats, Simrad, Southern Lumber and Sportsman Boats. Without the support of all of these individuals and companies, none of what we do would be possible. With that said, we officially kick-off fundraising for 2018. We promise to make this a year to remember, and look forward to your continued support.

On another note, as you know, the Highway 41 Bridge was sunk as the third structure in the 4x6 mile Charleston Deep Reef MPA as a part of the SC Memorial Reef project last fall. Shortly afterward, we received a report from the National Marine Fisheries Service regarding their summer 2017 ROV visit to the two previously deployed structures. They have been doing annual visits and evaluations since those barges were dropped in 2014. On the 2016 survey, they saw that densities of imperiled deep water grouper

30th Annual SC Governor's Cup Billfishing Series 2018 Tournament Schedule

May 9 - 12 Bohicket Marina Invitational Billfish Tournament

Contact: Suyin Schenck-George
1880 Andell Bluff Boulevard
Johns Island, SC 29455
(843) 786-1280
suyin@Bohicket.com

May 23 - 26 51st Annual Georgetown Blue Marlin Tournament

Contact: Ed Keelin
P.O. Box 1704
Georgetown, SC 29442
(843) 546-1776, Fax (843) 546-7832
ed@georgetownlandingmarina.com

June 20 - 23 Carolina Billfish Classic

Contact: Deidre Menefee
20 Patriots Point Road
Mount Pleasant, SC 29464
(843) 345-0369
dm@fishcbc.com

July 11 - 14 Megadock Billfishing Tournament

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

July 18 - 21 Edisto Invitational Billfishing 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
DukesA@dnr.sc.gov • <http://govcup.dnr.sc.gov/> • (843) 953-9365
PO Box 12559 • Charleston, SC 29422

species like misty grouper, warsaw grouper, snowy grouper, and speckled hind to name a few, were higher than they had ever observed on many natural reefs and in MPA's. Unfortunately, during their 2017 visit, they saw a much different picture, with far fewer fish and bottom fishing gear hung virtually everywhere on the structures. It was so dense, they had a hard time piloting the ROV and keeping it from becoming entangled in fishing gear. Be reminded that being a Type II MPA, trolling in the area is permitted, but bottom fishing is prohibited. This discovery is very disheartening, and demonstrates that some individuals out there have no intention of playing by the rules, and are illegally bottom fishing on these structures. If you have the numbers for

the structures, we ask you to please keep them to yourselves, especially the location of the Highway 41 Bridge, to help keep this structure from suffering a similar fate. Finally, if you are in the area and observe someone bottom fishing anywhere inside this MPA, please report them to Federal Law Enforcement by calling (800) 853-1964. All calls will be catalogued, and will be helpful in quantifying the magnitude and types of vessels engaged in this illegal practice. These reports could lead to changes in federal management of the snapper-grouper complex. The good news is that there are still concentrations of bait and pelagic species being attracted to the structures, so it should not adversely impact those who are legally trolling in

the area, and we're still getting reports of billfish releases in the area! We look forward to a productive season, and cannot wait until May to get going! Who knows, maybe there will be another epic day at Bohicket?! This year my HMS Advisory Panel meeting will be in March, so I plan to be there each day at every event this summer. See you on the docks, and tell Cubby we'll see him in July!

-Wally Jenkins



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Looking forward to seeing everyone on the docks for the 2018 Governor's Cup Series



IS YOUR BOAT READY TO FISH?

It's that time again, and we thought we would provide everyone with a list of some of the permits, licenses and documentation that you will/may need to have in your possession so that the boat owners, captains and crew are ready for a successful fishing season. ***Please Double Check Your Expiration Dates!!***

1) Current vessel documentation or state

registration - All vessels must possess current and valid state registration or US Coast Guard documentation in addition to being titled in the owner's name.

2) Atlantic HMS Angling Permit (Recreational) or Charter/Headboat Permit

– All owners/operators of vessels fishing recreationally, or owners/operators of Charter/Headboat vessels fishing for and/or retaining regulated Atlantic Highly Migratory Species (Atlantic tunas, sharks, swordfish and billfish) in the Atlantic Ocean, including the Gulf of Mexico and Caribbean Sea, must obtain an Atlantic Highly Migratory Species (HMS) permit. 2018 Atlantic HMS permits cost \$20.00, and will be valid from the date of issuance through December 31, 2018. Visit the NMFS website at <https://hmspermits.noaa.gov/> to apply.

2) SC Saltwater Fishing License – All anglers (age 16 and older) must obtain a SCDNR Saltwater Recreational Fishing License, and each angler **must have their licenses in their possession while participating in the Series**. These can be purchased at <https://dnrlicensing.sc.gov/DNRLicensingSales/SalesCategories.aspx> or call 1-866-714-3611. Be reminded that SC Saltwater Recreational Fishing Licenses are issued on a 365 day basis, and will

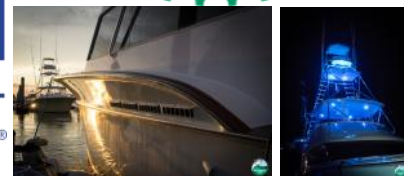
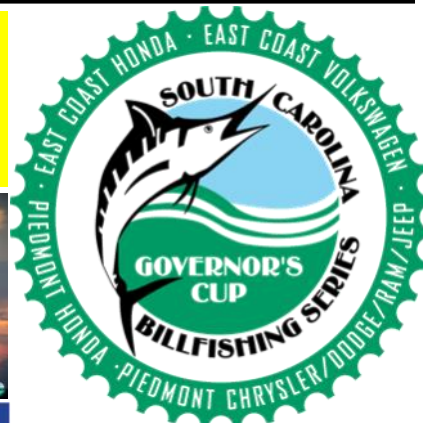
expire one year from the issue date.

**** All Series participating vessels and recreational fishermen will at minimum need the two above mentioned permits/licenses. If you are operating a Charter/Headboat vessel, then the vessel must possess a current SCDNR Charter/Headboat license. These vessels are exempt from having anglers purchase individual saltwater fishing licenses, as long as the fishing trip is documented in accordance to SC law under the vessel's charter license. The vessel can only have six anglers, captain and crew on board. In addition, the owners/operators of these vessels must also possess the following two permits/licenses: ****

3) Dolphin Wahoo Permit – All owners/operators of **Charter/Headboat vessels**, are required to obtain an Atlantic Charter/Headboat Permit for Dolphin/Wahoo. The permit is \$25.00, and will be valid for one calendar year. Visit the NOAA Southeast Regional Office website (http://sero.nmfs.noaa.gov/operations_management_information_services/constituency_services_branch/permits/permit_apps/index.html). Application #1 to apply.

4) Operator Card– All owners/operators or a crewmember of **Charter/Headboat vessels** are required to obtain an operator card when fishing for Dolphin and/or Wahoo. The Operator Card fee is \$50.00, and is valid for 3 years. Visit the NOAA Southeast Regional Office website (http://sero.nmfs.noaa.gov/operations_management_information_services/constituency_services_branch/permits/permit_apps/index.html). Application #2 to apply.

Remember...your vessel may be boarded by Law Enforcement during Series events, so make sure you have everything you need beforehand to ensure your awesome catches will qualify!



SOUTH CAROLINA GOVERNOR'S CUP BILLFISHING SERIES SPONSOR DONOR FORM

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☐ \$ 50

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☐ \$500 (Donor)

☐ \$10,000 (Corporate Sponsor)

Please visit www.govcup.dnr.sc.gov for more information on the benefits associated with each donor level.

SCGCBS, in partnership with Harry Hampton, is a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt organization.

After receiving your pledge, an invoice will be sent to you for payment. When payment has been received, we will forward the appropriate promotional items for the donor level you have chosen and request an electronic copy of your business logo for use in the Governor's Cup Newsletter, website sponsor list, and other publications as appropriate.

THANK YOU TO OUR 2017 SPONSORS!

As we approach our 30th year and look back on everything the Series has accomplished, we must first and foremost thank our wonderful sponsors! Without their support, we would not be able to have such success and great events. All expenses for the Series operation are funded through private donations, and we appreciate all of the support we've received. Each level of sponsorship comes with associated benefits (see bottom left of this page). All you need to do to join the team is fill out the Sponsor Donor Form to the left and send it to us!

SC Governor's Cup Billfishing Series
SCDNR
P.O. Box 12559
Charleston, SC 29412



Anyone who donates a minimum of \$100 gets an invitation to the Annual Awards Reception. Those donating \$500 also get mentioned on our website and in the Awards Reception program.



Newsletter Sponsor: \$1,000

- Logo in every newsletter, in addition to the benefits mentioned above

Patron Sponsor: \$2,000

- Also included in all Series advertising
- Allowed the use of Governor's Cup logo in their own advertising
- Given the opportunity to include their company brochures in boat registration packets for all tournaments
- Receive recognition of appreciation at the Awards Reception

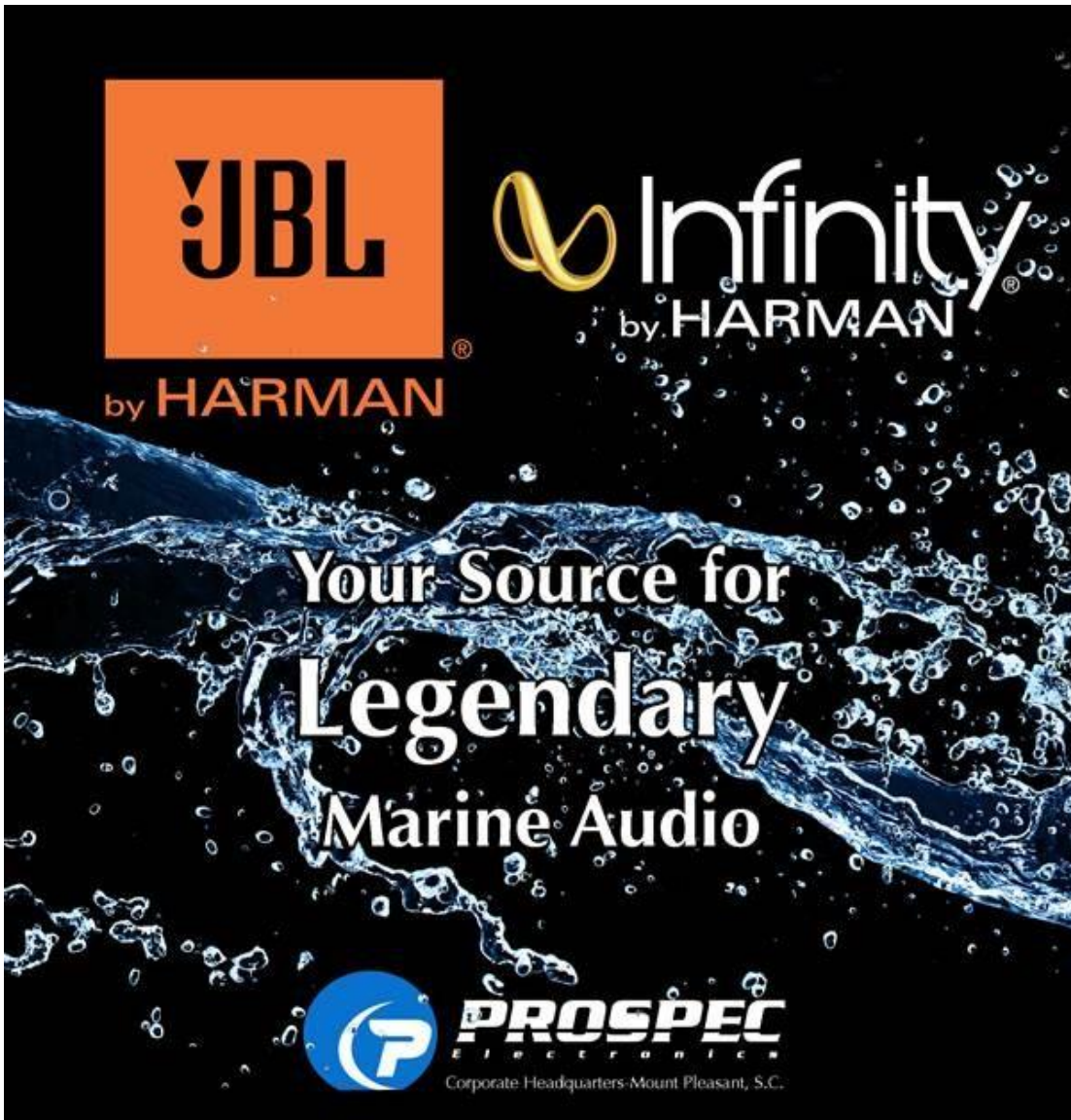
Benefactor Sponsor: \$5,000

- All of the above mentioned benefits
- A place to put an advertisement banner at each tournament
- 2 passes to all tournament and Series events they choose to attend

Corporate Sponsor: \$10,000

- In addition to above mentioned Series advertising, your company will also be eligible for a 50% discount on a single boat registration for all 5 Series tournaments or 6 tickets to all Series events you choose to attend but do not register a boat
- Booth space at each tournament
- Will be included in individual tournament brochures and advertising as a Corporate Sponsor of the Series





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What's that?!

Elizabeth Miller, SCDNR

Those are the ear bones (otoliths) from an over 400 pound blue marlin! These ear bones sit behind the brain and help fish hear and keep their balance...just like in humans! Each year, a fish lays down a "growth ring" on these bones and biologists cut (or in the case of marlins' tiny otoliths, polish) through them to count the rings under a microscope and determine its age and growth rate...similar to counting the rings of a tree trunk. Different fish species have different sized and shaped otoliths, and isn't it fascinating how such a large fish would have ones about the size of sesame seeds?! Each blue marlin that is landed at a Series event is inspected by SCDNR biologists, and lots of data and samples are taken so we can learn as much about these magnificent creatures as we can! These otoliths are one of three sets taken from the three blues landed at the Bohicket Marina Invitational this year. Additionally, weight, length and sex data are taken from every meatfish (tuna, dolphin, wahoo, etc.) we can get our hands on during these events, along with a detailed interview with each captain to further gather catch and effort data. SCDNR biologists want to thank all the participating boats for graciously allowing us to collect this vitally important data from your fishing trips!

Check out this in-water release accomplished by the Gov Cup team! Much cooler shots than the *illegal* picture of the fish out of the water! PSA: look out for sharks!



Thank you Release Marine for providing the fun fighting chairs for the SCDNR Open House! Pull-off competitions were non-stop throughout the day!



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W.W. Williams
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The South Carolina Memorial Reef

We now have three structures in the Charleston Deep Reef MPA! They are doing their job of creating critical habitat for deepwater species, and we are seeing the fruits of our efforts in many billfish releases in the area! We are so happy to have been able to accomplish such a tremendous project, and have our sights set on the next undertaking! Again, we thank all those involved and who have donated to the cause. To learn more about it, visit <https://scmemorialreef.com/> and see the info to the right on how you can donate today!

Make checks payable to:

Harry Hampton Fund - The SC Memorial Reef, C/O
Amy Dukes, PO Box 12559, Charleston, SC 29422

Or:

Donate online:

- <https://scmemorialreef.com/> - Blue Donate button on top right and fill out the form.
- <http://www.hamptonwildlifefund.org/> - Click the "DONATE NOW" button (via PayPal) on the left side of the page. After specifying donation amount, please write "SC Memorial Reef" in the instructions box to make sure it is accredited to the appropriate project. A tax-deductible receipt will be provided for your records for both online sources.



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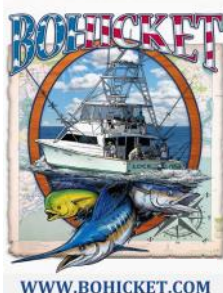
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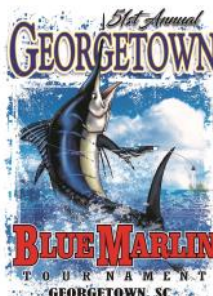
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2018 TOURNAMENTS



MAY 9 - 12



MAY 23 - 26



JUNE 20 - 23



JULY 11 - 14



JULY 18 - 21

This newsletter is brought to you by:



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.