



Tag & Release

A newsletter following the South Carolina Governor's Cup Billfishing Series



August 2021 Vol. 26 No. 5

Series Reflections:

By: Wally Jenkins

Well now that the Series tournament season is over, I have to say it was a good way to cap off my 45-year career with DNR. Way back in 1975, I had the good fortune to be hired as a summer intern at the Marine Resources Research Institute, and up to that point, it was the best day of my life. I worked in the field with the lab director Dr. Vic Burrell, sampling each of the state's estuaries and monitoring oyster spawning along the coast. I thank Drs. Paul Sandifer and Ted Smith for giving me my first full time biologist job in 1978, working on freshwater shrimp culture. I have never left since, successively rising to a Bio II then III, then IV, and by 1994, working on a series of grant funded projects on sturgeon, striped bass, red drum, southern flounder, and cobia. I eventually became the lead biologist on the stocking research efforts for the Marine Resources Division for red drum, striped bass, and cobia. From the start, Paul and Ted gave me the opportunity to travel all over the

Reflections continued on pg. 2

33rd Annual SC Governor's Cup Billfishing Series 2021 Tournament Schedule

May 26 - 29



53rd 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 23 - 26



Carolina Billfish Classic

Contact: Loyd Weston
20 Patriots Point Road
Mt. Pleasant, SC 29464
(843) 568-5230
td@fishcbc.com

July 21 - 24



Edisto Invitational Billfish Tournament

Contact: Brian Bell
3702 Docksite Road
Edisto Beach, SC 29438
(843) 631-5055 Fax (843) 631-5065
bkbell2009@gmail.com

The Bohicket Marina and the Megadock City Marina are under construction for the summer of 2021 and will be unable to host a tournament, yet will host an event in 2022.

For more information, contact:

GovCup@dnr.sc.gov • govcup.dnr.sc.gov
PO Box 12559 • Charleston, SC 29422

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world, meeting and working with the leaders in aquaculture research, many of whom became personal friends that I still communicate with to this day. I was gone in the field, during this time, perhaps 150 days a year. Then it all came crashing down in 2006, with my wife Nan's diagnosis of pancreatic cancer, to which she succumbed in May 2007. I had some decisions to make. With two young children at home and over 30 years in the state system, I contemplated retirement.

Then Robert Boyles extended an opportunity that literally saved me when he asked if I would be willing to take over a leadership role with the SC Governor's Cup Billfishing Series and move from the Research Institute to the Office of Fisheries Management. He said that it was due to my experience and people skills accumulated during the many years of working with colleagues within the agency, the nation, and the world. I discussed it with the kids, and they told me to ask for a raise. The only other request I had was that Amy Dukes, a biologist who worked in the ACE Basin and volunteered with the Series for five years, come on as my assistant. The rest is history, and these last 14 seasons have been perhaps the most rewarding in my professional career, primarily because of you, the passionate fishermen and women, who are part of the Governor's Cup family. But also, because of what we have been able to accomplish together at the national and international level, by having a place on the



Highly Migratory Species Advisory Panel for National Marine Fisheries Service and participating in the International Convention for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas, a 50-member international group that allocates harvest of billfish, sharks and tunas in the north and south Atlantic Basin. In 2012, working at the national level with recreational anglers, the SC Governor's Cup lent support to convince

Congress to do what the SC legislature had already done in SC, which was prohibit the sale of all marlin, sailfish, and spearfish in the continental US. This effectively eliminated an estimated 30,000 billfish harvested and imported each year, primarily for pet food, from foreign countries. Here at the state level, we have also been part of a succession of projects started by Governor's Cup participants in 2008 to place material in the Charleston Deep Reef MPA, which continues to this day with the current plan to sink the 247-foot-long ship, [Coastal Venture](#), in this 4 X 6-nautical-mile permitted area, known as the [SC Memorial Reef](#). These are still, to my knowledge, the only artificial reefs deployed in over 300 feet of water for the express purpose of enhancing deep water grouper spawning and nursery habitat instead of closing additional areas of live bottom to recreational anglers, and we get the side benefit of excellent fishing for pelagic species. This work has recently been described and acknowledged to be very successful in the scientific literature. This is an accomplishment of which I am very proud and will hopefully advance future construction of deep-water artificial reef MPAs throughout the nation. We also, after a 12-year quest on my part, were able to complete the analysis of the PSAT tagging data on blue marlin, white marlin, and sailfish, facilitated by Governor's Cup participants from 2005-2007, and get this important billfish movement and habitat preference information published in 2020, thanks to the efforts of Dr. Wally Bubley. Now it is available to science in perpetuity instead of sitting in a file cabinet for no one to see. I owe him big time. Of course, none of this would have been possible without the support of all the Governor's Cup Advisory Board members with

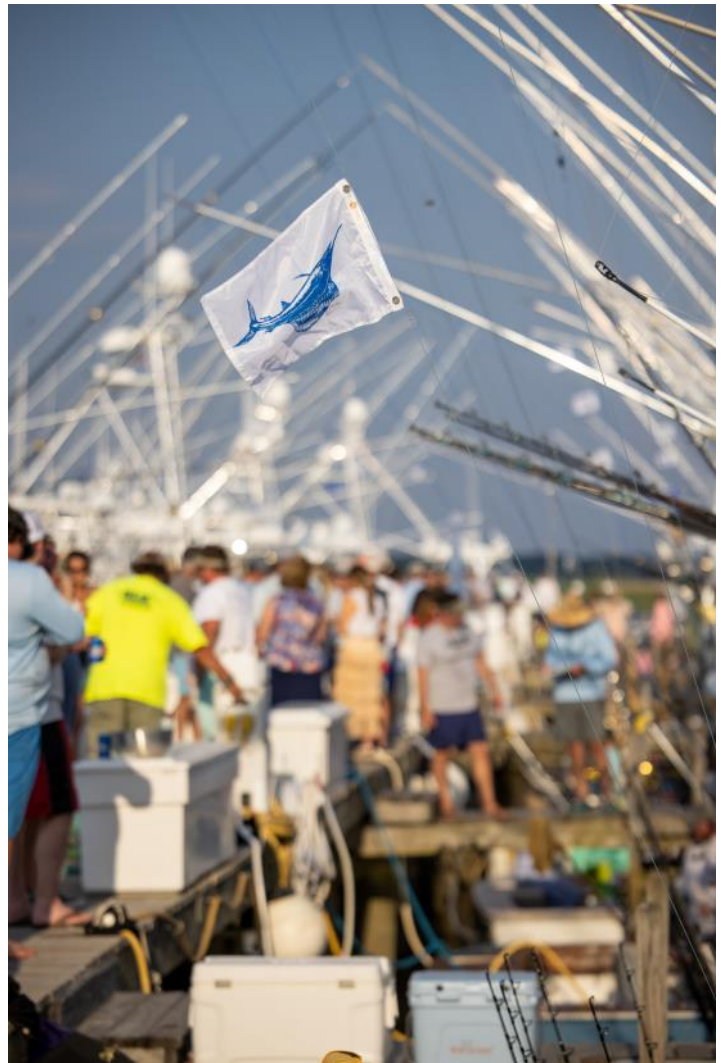
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each successive Chairman and the individuals on the Tournament Committee. In addition, we owe a huge thank you to our many faithful sponsors and donors who have provided the financial resources to operate the program but also the extra funds to undertake these massive capital-intensive projects. I especially want to thank Jim Reed with Western Branch Diesel (formerly Superior Diesel Incorporated) and Volvo Penta, who back in 2012 made a commitment to be a Corporate Sponsor for ten years, donating a total of \$100,000 to the Series. Finally, I want to thank the DNR staff who have worked hard along the way to make the Series a success, especially Amy and Officer Willie Ladue, who have been with me for my entire tenure. I will miss all of you as I move into this next phase of my life and again, I am grateful for the many friendships and the great people I have come to know. What each of you do to spread our conservation message is important to the state, nation, and world.

Amy Dukes will be taking over leadership of the program and I ask you to give her the same level of support you gave me. Who knows, the bacon wrapped scallops may lure me back to Georgetown next May? Goodbye and I hope to see you on the docks.



Thank you, Wally!



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AWARD	EDISTO
Outstanding Billfish Boat 1st Place	Boat: <i>Home Run</i> Owner: Steve Mungo Captain: Grant Bentley 2 blue marlin and 2 sailfish released 1600 points
Outstanding Billfish Boat 2nd Place	Boat: <i>Sportin' Life</i> Owner: Graham Eubank Captain: Mike Glaesner 5 sailfish released 1000 points
Outstanding Billfish Boat 3rd Place	Boat: <i>Inappropriate</i> Owner: Frank Holtham Captain: Andy Crews 5 sailfish released 1000 points
Outstanding Billfish Conservationist	Boat: <i>Home Run</i> Owner: Steve Mungo Captain: Grant Bentley 2 blue marlin and 2 sailfish released 1600 points





AWARD	EDISTO
Outstanding Billfish (landed)	Boat: <i>Glazed</i> Owner: Miles Herring Captain: Miles Herring Angler: Wilson Springs 505.0 pounds
Outstanding Dolphin	Boat: <i>Fortunate Son</i> Owner: John McAlhany Captain: John McAlhany Angler: Walt Stevens 35.9 pounds
Outstanding Tuna	Boat: <i>Cuttin' Out</i> Owner: Bax Culler and Matthew Summors Captain: Bax Culler Angler: Thomas Murray 17.3-pound blackfin
Outstanding Wahoo	Boat: <i>Hay Fever</i> Owner: Allen Butler Captain: Allen Butler Angler: Guy Griffin 56.1 pounds



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AWARD	EDISTO
Outstanding Female Angler 1st Place	Boat: <i>Lady S</i> Owner: Mark Smith Captain: Mark Smith Angler: Carson Smith 46.6-pound wahoo
Outstanding Female Angler 2nd Place	NA
Outstanding Female Angler 3rd Place	NA



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AWARD	EDISTO
Outstanding Youth Angler 1st Place	Boat: <i>Tighten Up</i> Owners: Kevin Overstreet Captain: Kevin Overstreet Angler: Riley Overstreet, age 15 1 blue marlin released 600 points
Outstanding Youth Angler 2nd Place	Boat: <i>Blackjack</i> Owner: Jane Eudy Captain: Richard Lavecchia Angler: Jake Eudy, age 15 3 sailfish released 600 points
Outstanding Youth Angler 3rd Place	Boat: <i>Rookie IV</i> Owners: Eddie Buck, Jr. Captain: Jay Champlin Angler: Edgar Buck, age 12 36.8-pound wahoo



TOTALS				
	G'TOWN	CBC	EDISTO	TOTALS
BOATS	65	40	39	
BLUES	47	9	11	67
WHITES	2	1	0	3
SPEARS	1	0	0	1
SAILS	7	19	29	55

TOP BOATS			
1. Inappropriate	3675	6. Reel Hook Up	1875
2. Home Run	3475	7. Blue Sky	1875
3. Sportin' Life	2521	8. Reel Legacy	1875
4. Glazed	2180	9. Tighten Up	1575
5. Mister Pete	2075	10. Summer Girl	1350

THE SC MEMORIAL REEF



Current Project: M/V *Coastal Venture*



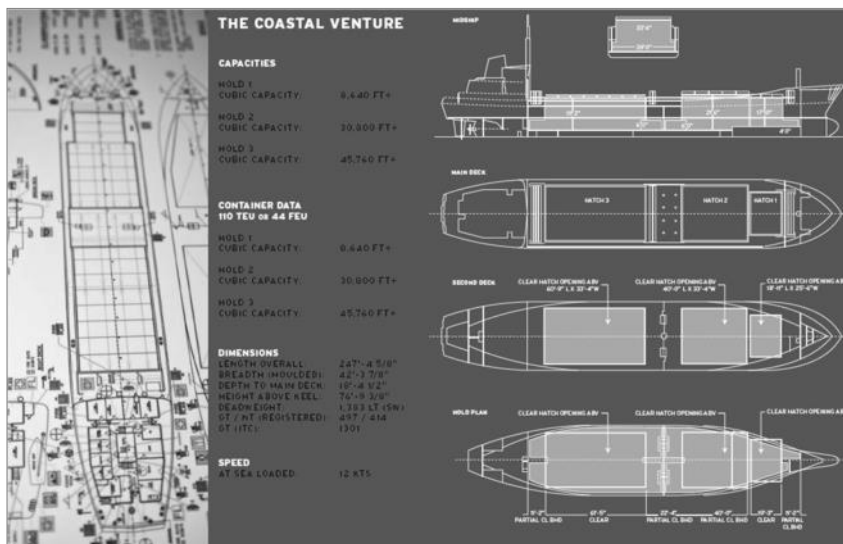
The newest SC Memorial Reef project includes plans to sink the 247-ft M/V *Coastal Venture* in the Charleston Deep Reef MPA. The vessel (70-ft keel to top of the mast) will provide habitat for a diversity of species. Its complex structure will offer refuge for finfish and other marine organisms, as well as provide areas on which invertebrates can settle and grow. Additionally, the upwelling that will result from such a large structure will release nutrients into the water column and increase the overall productivity of the area.

Fundraising goal: \$500,000

If we can raise the funds by Summer 2022, we will transport and sink the M/V *Coastal Venture*. We plan to deploy the vessel in 350 feet of water about a mile south of the sunken Highway 41 bridge.

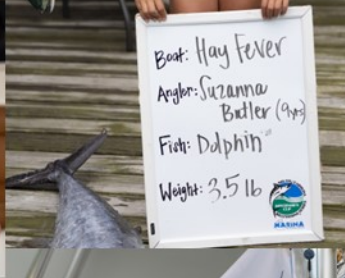
Please consider making a donation. We truly appreciate the support.

Funds raised: \$258,280



Donate now:

- * Make checks payable to: Harry Hampton Fund - The SC Memorial Reef, c/o Amy Dukes, PO Box 12559, Charleston, SC 29422
- * Donate online:
 - <https://scmemorialreef.com/> (See for additional information about the M/V *Coastal Venture* project)
 - <http://www.hamptonwildlifefund.org/> (Write "SC Memorial Reef" in the instructions box to ensure it's accredited to the appropriate project and include the name of the person being recognized and remembered, if applicable)



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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.