



# Tag & Release

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



November 2022 Vol. 27 No. 5



## 35<sup>th</sup> Annual SC Governor's Cup Billfishing Series 2023 Tournament Schedule

### May 10 - 13 Bohicket Marina Invitational Billfish Tournament

Contact: Beau Anderson  
1880 Andell Bluff Boulevard  
Johns Island, SC 29455  
(843) 768-1280  
[marinamanager@bohicket.com](mailto:marinamanager@bohicket.com)

### May 24 - 27 55<sup>th</sup> Annual Georgetown Blue Marlin Tournament

Contact: David Black  
P.O. Box 1704  
Georgetown SC 29442  
(843) 546-1776 Fax (843) 546-7832  
[dblack@georgetownlandingmarina.com](mailto:dblack@georgetownlandingmarina.com)

### June 21 - 24 Carolina Billfish Classic

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

### July 19 - 22 Edisto Invitational Billfish Tournament

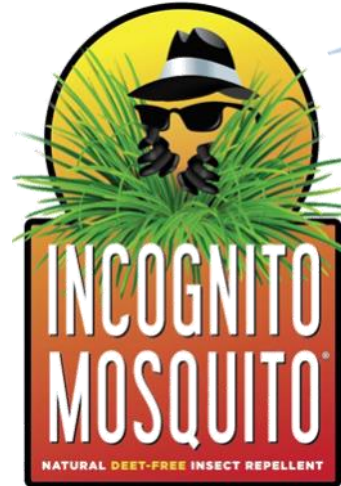
Contact: Brian Bell  
3702 Docksite Road  
Edisto Beach, SC 29438  
(843) 631-5055 Fax (843) 631-5065  
[bkbell2009@gmail.com](mailto:bkbell2009@gmail.com)

#### For more information, contact:

[GovCup@dnr.sc.gov](mailto:GovCup@dnr.sc.gov) • [govcup.dnr.sc.gov](http://govcup.dnr.sc.gov)  
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## Series Reflections:

Thanks to everyone who made the 2022 tournament series a success! Following the Hurricane Ian postponement, we held the Awards Reception at Founders Hall and had a wonderful evening celebrating our award recipients. A&P Catering and the Marina Variety Store catered dinner, and Lawler Beverage Co. provided the bar service. DJ Trevor D. and Marshall with D&M Productions kept us entertained and moving on the dance floor.

Congratulations to the *Blue Sky*, the 2022 Series champions! For those of you who missed the reception, the winners, photos from the event, and awards speeches written by Cameron Rhodes are included in this issue. We were honored to name SCDNR Chairman Pulliam the Carroll A. Campbell Award recipient. Our 2022 Mate of the Year Award went to two very deserving young men, Donnie Todd and Matt Murphy, for their impressive skills and hard work aboard the *Blue Sky*.

Additionally, a special SCDNR Award was presented to Amy Dukes for over 20 years of dedication to the Series and blue water fisheries. We are sincerely grateful for her passion and commitment.

We are excited to be returning to four tournaments next season. Be sure to mark your calendars!



AWARD	Series
Outstanding Billfish Boat 1st Place	Boat: <i>Blue Sky</i> Owner: Greg Smith Captain: Jay Weaver 5 blue marlin and 15 sailfish released 6075 points
Outstanding Billfish Boat 2nd Place	Boat: <i>Buddy Rowe</i> Owner: Todd Wigfield & Matt Byrd Captain: Cordes Lucas 2 blue marlin and 10 sailfish released 3275 points
Outstanding Billfish Boat 3rd Place	Boat: <i>Trashman</i> Owner: Ben Wall Captain: Geno Sauers 2 blue marlin and 10 sailfish released 3250 points
Outstanding Billfish Conservationist	Boat: <i>Blue Sky</i> Owner: Greg Smith Captain: Jay Weaver 5 blue marlin and 15 sailfish released 6075 points



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## Governor Carroll A. Campbell Jr. Award Chairman Norman Pulliam



The Carroll A. Campbell Award was created to honor individuals and families who have been an integral part of billfish conservation in our state and who embody Mr. Campbell's principles and passion.

This lifetime achievement award is arguably one of the most prestigious honors in South Carolina's sportfishing community. This year's recipient not only has a long history with the South Carolina Governor's Cup Billfishing Series, but also with the South Carolina Department of Natural Resources.

Mr. Norman F. Pulliam's lifelong commitment to the protection of our state's natural resources, including the pelagic species that inspire all of us, manifests most fervently through his 16 years of service as a DNR board member. The Board Chairman since 2017, Mr. Pulliam has demonstrated a keen interest in encouraging the conservation of natural resources while also ensuring access for hunters and anglers.

Mr. Pulliam graduated from Clemson University in the spring of 1964 and went on to receive his MBA from Harvard University. Following such achievements, he founded and served as president of Pulliam Investment Company. For 35 years, the company developed apartments and senior housing across the southeast. In that time, Mr. Pulliam led his team to develop over a half a billion dollars worth of property.

Mr. Pulliam has certainly had great success as a businessman. In addition, he's never hesitated to give back to his community. He's been a board member for many organizations over the years, serving as a guidepost for several charities and schools.

In 1985 Mr. Pulliam was awarded our great state's highest civilian honor, the South Carolina Order of the Palmetto, which recognizes outstanding service

to the state. He's undoubtedly dedicated much of his life in service to the state of South Carolina, its residents, and its natural resources. We're so grateful to have a man of his many outstanding accolades as an active member of our conservation community.

Mr. Pulliam is a proud sportsman, a passion that has led to a successful fishing partnership with Foster McKissick. Together, the two friends own the Rascal, a 61-ft Viking captained by Mark Rogers, Mr. Pulliam's son-in-law.

The Rascal program has done extremely well over the years, with numerous top three finishes in the Series and first place titles in 2005 and 2014. The boat has accommodated the growth of several youth anglers and mates, including Mr. Pulliam's own family members and friends. When visiting the cockpit of the boat, folks can expect Mr. Pulliam to greet them with a gentleman's handshake and a warm smile. He never shies away from an opportunity to thank staff and others for their service to his beloved state. Given his own lifetime of service, such comments are truly a compliment.

Folks familiar with South Carolina's billfish community know that you can't mention the Rascal without also highlighting one of the boat's greatest achievements. While fishing aboard the Rascal during the Carolina Billfish Classic in 2005, angler Corky Taylor landed an 881-lb blue marlin, a fish that still holds the South Carolina state record. That fish is truly legendary – much like Mr. Pulliam and his contributions to the Palmetto state's sportfishing community.

We're extremely proud to name Mr. Norman F. Pulliam the recipient of this year's Carroll A. Campbell Award.







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AWARD	SERIES
Outstanding Billfish (landed)	Boat: <i>Hydrosphere</i> Owner: Peter Lorris Captain: Matt Bierley Angler: Bryson Turner 532.1 pounds
Outstanding Dolphin	Boat: <i>High Yield</i> Owner: Bernard Linney Captain: Paul Wiseman Angler: Bernard Linney 52.1 pounds
Outstanding Tuna	Boat: <i>Anticipation</i> Owner: Paul Coury Captain: Harvey Shiflet Angler: Drew Wilkinson 24.4-pound blackfin
Outstanding Wahoo	Boat: <i>Syked Out</i> Owner: David Sykes Captain: Dan Woody Angler: Holly McAlhany 41.2 pounds



## Mate of the Year Awards: Donnie Todd and Matt Murphy

The Mate of the Year Award recognizes exceptional mates who leave a lasting impression on their peers, as well as captains, owners, and tournament staff.

The hardworking men and women we see in the cockpit are critical cornerstones in our sport fishing community. Their preparation and skills serve as the bedrock of any stellar fishing performance. Recipients of the Mate of the Year Award don't just showcase diligence, determination, and expertise.

They're also active members of the community, setting an example for up-and-coming mates still learning the ropes.

The Mate of the Year Award is a little different this year, yet another indicator of the exceptional performance we witnessed from the winning boat. As nominations were originally discussed, board members marveled at Blue Sky's incredible near sweep. It's a major accomplishment that has left a lasting impression on all of us involved in the Series. As a result, the award will go to the special duo who helped make such an achievement possible. Tonight, we'll honor two young men rather than one, as we celebrate their growth as individuals, and as a team.

Mates Donnie Todd and Matt Murphy are a formidable force in the cockpit. They've been lucky enough to fish as a team for two summer seasons aboard the Blue Sky, further solidifying a rapport that goes well beyond fishing. Having lived together on and off throughout their early twenties, the two mates are more like brothers than colleagues.

Donnie is the full-time mate aboard the Blue Sky, a job that has proven to be an excellent fit for the quiet, young man. An immeasurable amount of work goes into maintaining a competitive sport fishing program and Donnie's countless hours in the cockpit have yielded astounding results. He's worked extremely hard to get here, all while remaining gracious, kind, soft spoken, and observant. When asked about Donnie, Blue Sky's owner Greg Smith said: "I have been around plenty more mates than captains over the years and I can say that Donnie really stood out from the first day he came aboard Blue Sky. Donnie is always prepared, ready to go and

absolutely loves fishing. Sometimes he's reserved and into his own thoughts, but you know he's always thinking about catching the next fish. Donnie's parents did a great job of raising him. He's thoughtful, caring and determined. He's not only a good mate, but a great friend as well."

Matt, who fishes full-time aboard Bob Faith's Game-Changer, has joined the Blue Sky team the last two summers for the tournament season. He's a lively young man, one who has likely never met a stranger. He's the kind of mate who captivates an audience. For example, when staff handed off the Gov Cup flag to the Blue Sky's crew at the end of the Edisto tournament, a new tradition when unofficially announcing the Series winner, Matt ended up parading it around the cockpit as his teammates laughed and cheered. He brings positive energy to everything he does, along with his own outstanding work ethic and fishing expertise.

Donnie and Matt have been fishing professionally for the past six years. They've grown as individuals and as a team. In many ways, their successes are naturally tied to each other. Whether hunting, surfing, or fishing, they always push each other for the better. While they are each deserving of their own recognition, we felt that honoring them together this evening would celebrate their special brotherhood, a welcome reminder of the kinship in sport-fishing, the very glue that holds this industry together.

Congratulations to Donnie Todd and Matt Murphy, our 2022 Mates of the Year!





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## David Redd Reef

We are honored to formally announce that the M/V *Coastal Venture* site will be named after a wonderful captain who was taken from us far too soon. Next time you're trolling above the newly established site, take great pride and comfort in knowing that you're not alone. A very special man will be there in spirit to help you wrangle countless billfish.



AWARD	SERIES
Outstanding Lady Angler 1st Place	Boat: <i>Syked Out</i> Owner: David Sykes Captain: Dan Woody Angler: Holly McAlhany 1 blue marlin and 5 sailfish released
Outstanding Lady Angler 2nd Place	Boat: <i>Showtime</i> Owner: Andrew Dupps Captain: Jon Meade Angler: Kelly Kirkpatrick 1 blue marlin and 1 sailfish released
Outstanding Lady Angler 3rd Place	Boat: <i>Showtime</i> Owner: Andrew Dupps Captain: Jon Meade Angler: Natalia Frost 3 sailfish released





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## SCDNR Special Award: Amy Dukés

Few people commit themselves to their work with the same unbridled passion that Amy Dukés has shown for the Gov Cup. This year marks her 21st season with the Series since she started as a volunteer in 2002.

When Wally Jenkins was asked about his time working with Amy, he shared the following: "In the fall of 2007, shortly after the passing of my wife Nan, Robert Boyles asked if I would be willing to take on leadership of the Governor's Cup Billfishing Series. I told him I would have to think about it, as I was contemplating retiring. Several days later, after talking with my children, I told him I would do it on one condition, that Amy Dukés, a biologist with the ACE Basin Project, would come with me as my assistant. I made this request because Amy had been volunteering with the Series on her own time for several years and I needed someone with tournament experience. Plus, I didn't have a clue. But most importantly, because my wife loved her and had spoken highly of her on many occasions. In hindsight, that was one of the best decisions of my life. In the intervening 15 years we have stuck together through thick and thin, and I strongly believe the Series' focus on conservation and stewardship are more relevant today than at any time in its history. In addition, none of what has been accomplished during those intervening years would have been achieved without Amy's hard work and dedication to the program and its participants. The Series is in good hands."

Randy Ramsey of Jarrett Bay Boatworks had this to say about her, "I can't think of a more deserving person to honor than Amy Dukés. She is the heart and soul of the Governors Cup and the person we all turn to for help regardless of how large or small our problem is. She puts service and her fellow man ahead of her personal needs and I have been honored to work with her."

Amy cares about the Gov Cup and its participants with her entire soul, even through the trials of managing difficult decisions. Big Sky's Jim Johnston says fondly, "I always tell my crew 'you may think you just released a blue marlin, but until Amy says you did, it ain't happened yet!'"

Senator Chip Campsen landed a blue marlin this year and experienced Amy's passion for education and outreach firsthand, all while she held a marlin eyeball in the cup of one hand and an ovary in the other. He says, "A contagious passion for stewardship of marine resources. An unwavering commitment to educate and equip others in

this stewardship ethic. Couple those traits with an exuberant love for people, and you have Amy Dukés. She is widely beloved."

In preparation for this award, we reached out to folks to get their take on Amy's influence. We received so many comments that we couldn't include all of them in tonight's speech. We will continue to compile your notes and include them in a book for her.

With the help of the Advisory Board of Directors, we commissioned the talented Steve Goione to paint a custom piece for Amy. As many of you know, Amy's love for sportfishing creeps into almost every aspect of her life, including those involving her children. Her son, 18-year-old Jarrett Austin Dukés, is named in honor of one of the most beautiful boats in the world. The idea for the name was first suggested by Mr. Michael Larrow while chatting with a pregnant Amy in the cockpit of his Jarrett Bay, the Micabe. Amy's daughter, 14-year-old Reilly Davis Dukés, comes by her middle name as a tribute to Nan Jenkins. Nan ran the Gov Cup program for many years and served as a mentor to Amy early in her career. She had always said that Buddy Davis was her favorite boat builder. In 2007, Nan tragically passed away following a heroic battle with cancer. Amy was pregnant at the time and felt it only fitting to name her daughter Reilly Davis in honor of her dear friend.

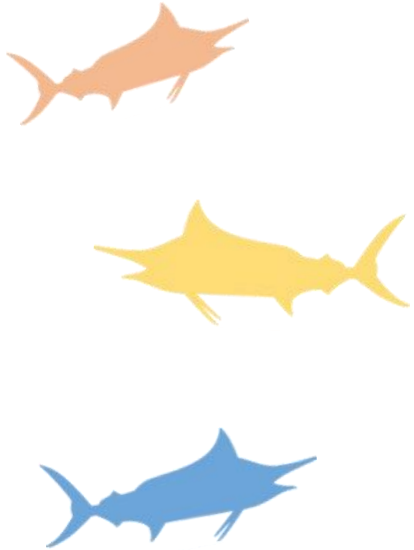
The painting Steve created showcases a Jarrett Bay and a Buddy Davis, each boat representative of the timeframe Jarrett Austin and Reilly Davis were born. Of course, the piece wouldn't feel like Amy without a reference to the Governor's Cup, so you'll also see little details that bring the series to life.



Thank you, Amy, for your decades of service to the Gov Cup. You set the tone for the rest of us and we can't wait to see where you lead us next.



AWARD	SERIES
<p>Outstanding Youth Angler 1st Place</p>	<p>Boat: <i>Sea Fix</i>            Owner: Harry and Fran Johnson            Captain: John Thomas            Angler: Sidney Thomas, age 13            1 blue marlin and 3 sailfish released</p>
<p>Outstanding Youth Angler 2nd Place</p>	<p>Boat: <i>Glazed</i>            Owner: Miles Herring            Captain: Miles Herring            Angler: Woods Herring, age 13            1 blue marlin released</p>
<p>Outstanding Youth Angler 3rd Place</p>	<p>Boat: <i>Voodoo Child</i>            Owner: Dale Daly            Captain: Zack Adams            Angler: Bull Adams, age 12            2 sailfish released</p>







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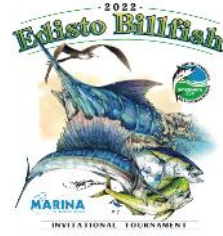


## TOP BOATS

1. Blue Sky	6075	6. Mister Pete	2357
2. Buddy Rowe	3275	7. Sportin' Life	2275
3. Trashman	3250	8. Showtime	2250
4. Reel Hook Up	2550	9. Sea Fix	2050
5. Syked Out	2475	10. Game On	1450



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