



Tag & Release

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



Series Reflections:

July 2025
Vol. 30 No. 4

The 2025 Series has come to an end, and we had a fantastic bite at all five tournaments! In the last two legs, participating boats released a total of 247 billfish — 30 blue marlin, one white marlin, and 216 sailfish.

During the Carolina Billfish Classic, *Man Cave* took home the first place award for Outstanding Billfish Boat after releasing eight sailfish. *Daymaker* won first place at the Edisto Invitational Billfish Tournament, releasing three blue marlin and seven sailfish.

The tournaments may be over, but there is still exciting news and one last event coming up! Mark your calendars for the 2025 SC Governor's Cup Awards Reception on Friday, September 26. We will be celebrating our top teams and anglers from across all five tournaments for their hard work, dedication, and outstanding catches and releases. Stay tuned for the final series scores and winners pending official Board approval. To track our series highlights, follow SC Governor's Cup on Facebook and Instagram.

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37th Annual SC Governor's Cup Billfishing Series 2025 Tournament Schedule

May 7 - 10

Charleston Billfish Invitational

48 Billfish Released

17 Blue Marlin

29 Sailfish

2 White Marlin



May 21 - 24

57th Annual Georgetown Blue Marlin Tournament

86 Billfish Released

22 Blue Marlin

64 Sailfish



May 28 - 31

HMY Lowcountry Cup

120 Billfish Released

29 Blue Marlin

90 Sailfish

1 White Marlin



June 18 - 21

Carolina Billfish Classic

125 Billfish Released

13 Blue Marlin

111 Sailfish

1 White Marlin



July 16 - 19

Edisto Invitational Billfish Tournament

121 Billfish Released

17 Blue Marlin

104 Sailfish



For more information, please visit:

GovCup@dnr.sc.gov • govcup.dnr.sc.gov

PO Box 12559 • Charleston, SC 29422

Carolina Billfish Classic

June 18-21, 2025

Outstanding Billfish Boat - 1st Place

Boat: *Man Cave*

Owner: MCF Family Holdings LLC

Captain: Chase Merriman

8 sailfish released

Points: 1,600



Outstanding Billfish Boat - 2nd Place

Boat: *Legal Holiday*

Owner: Fred Bergen

Captain: Jeffrey Mitchell

1 blue marlin and 4 sailfish released

Points: 1,400

Outstanding Billfish Boat - 3rd Place

Boat: *Bull Pen*

Owner: Todd Wigfield & Matt Byrd

Captain: Cordes Lucas

1 blue marlin and 4 sailfish released

Points: 1,400



Thank you to our Top Billfish Boat Platinum Sponsor:



Thank you to our Lady Angler Platinum Sponsor:



Carolina Billfish Classic

June 18-21, 2025

Outstanding Dolphin

Boat: *Sea-Scaper*

Owner & Captain: Dennis Hensley

Angler: Dennis Hensley

51.9 pounds



Outstanding Tuna

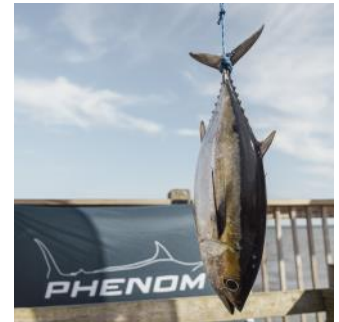
Boat: *Juben*

Owner: Billy Freeman

Captain: Wren Fogle

Angler: Jamie Hollingsworth

27.0-pound blackfin



Outstanding Wahoo

Boat: *Optimum*

Owner: Optimum Fishing Team

Captain: Brian Scanlon

Angler: Austin Harris

49.3 pounds





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Carolina Billfish Classic

June 18-21, 2025

Outstanding Female Angler - 1st Place

Holly McAlhany

Boat: *Sweet Spot*

Owner: Sweet Spot Marine

Captain: Chris Kubik

5 sailfish released

Points: 1,000



Outstanding Female Angler - 2nd Place

Makyla Wyatt

Boat: *Reloaded*

Owner: Will Sprang

Captain: Gary Wyatt

1 blue marlin released

Points: 600



Outstanding Female Angler - 3rd Place

Carson Smith

Boat: *Lady S*

Owner & Captain: Mark Smith

2 sailfish released

Points: 400



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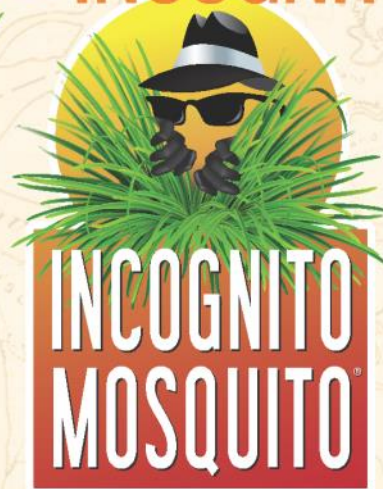


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Carolina Billfish Classic

June 18-21, 2025

Outstanding Youth Angler - 1st Place

Julia Gressette

Boat: *Man Cave*

Owner: MCF Family Holdings LLC

Captain: Chase Merriman

5 sailfish released

Points: 1,000



Outstanding Youth Angler - 2nd Place

Leila Gressette

Boat: *Man Cave*

Owner: MCF Family Holdings LLC

Captain: Chase Merriman

3 sailfish released



Outstanding Youth Angler - 3rd Place

Olivia Blount

Boat: *Peggy*

Owner: Doug Abrams

Captain: Jay Blount

1 sailfish released

Points: 200





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Edisto Invitational Billfish Tournament

July 16-19, 2025

Outstanding Billfish Boat - 1st Place

Boat: *Daymaker*

Owner & Captain: Bobby Krivolahvek

3 blue marlin and 7 sailfish released

Points: 3,200



Outstanding Billfish Boat - 2nd Place

Boat: *Showtime!*

Owner: Fred Hardwick

Captain: Jon Meade

11 sailfish released

Points: 2,200



Outstanding Billfish Boat - 3rd Place

Boat: *Claytime*

Owner: Jon Clay

Captain: Phillip Fender

1 blue marlin and 7 sailfish released

Points: 2,000





W.W. Williams

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Edisto Invitational Billfish Tournament

July 16-19, 2025

Outstanding Dolphin

Boat: *Reloaded*

Owner: Will Sprang

Captain: Gary Wyatt

Angler: Alex Sprang

14.2 pounds



Outstanding Tuna

Boat: *Last Chance*

Owner: Aaron Price

Captain: Avery Price

Angler: Cooper Araneo

22.4-pound blackfin



Outstanding Wahoo

Boat: *Sea Tiger*


Owner: Jerry Smith

Captain: Edward Bryant

Angler: George Dunlap


82.4 pounds





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Edisto Invitational Billfish Tournament

July 16-19, 2025

Outstanding Female Angler - 1st Place

Holly McAlhany

Boat: *Sweet Spot*

Owner: Sweet Spot Marine

Captain: Chris Kubik

2 blue marlin and 3 sailfish released

Points: 1,800



Outstanding Female Angler - 2nd Place

Makyla Wyatt

Boat: *Reloaded*

Owner: Will Sprang

Captain: Gary Wyatt

1 blue marlin released

Points: 600

Outstanding Female Angler - 3rd Place

Anne Hatcher White

Boat: *Summer Girl*

Owner: Mike Jackson

Captain: Steve Leasure

2 sailfish released

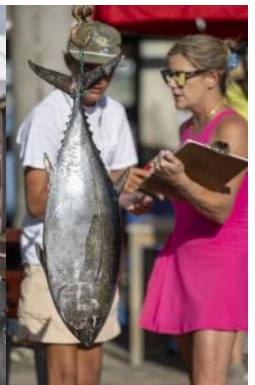
Points: 400







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The Wallace F. Pate Foundation

Edisto Invitational Billfish Tournament

July 16-19, 2025

Outstanding Youth Angler - 1st Place

Leila Gressette

Boat: *Man Cave*

Owner: MCF Family Holdings LLC

Captain: Chase Merriman

3 sailfish released

Points: 600



Outstanding Youth Angler - 2nd Place

Heath Monroe

Boat: *Changing Bills*

Owner: Be Right Back LLC

Captain: Ryan Monroe

2 sailfish released

Points: 400

Outstanding Youth Angler - 3rd Place

Ford Schlicksup

Boat: *Undue Risk*

Owner: Michael Schlicksup

Captain: Tripp Koon

1 sailfish released

Points: 200







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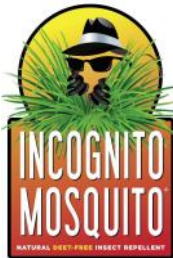
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The S.C. Department of Natural Resources' Law Enforcement Division reminds the public of Coast Watch, which was developed to better help citizens report violations of saltwater recreational and commercial fishing laws, as well as marine environmental 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.