



# TAG & RELEASE

Volume 9, No. 2 May 2004

## 16TH ANNUAL SOUTH CAROLINA GOVERNOR'S CUP TOURNAMENT SCHEDULE...

- April 28-  
May 1**      ***Edisto Marina Billfish Tournament***  
*Contact:* Deidre Menefee  
19 Forde Row  
Charleston SC 29412  
843-345-0369 FAX 843-406-4813
- May 5-8**      ***Bohicket Marina Invitational Billfish Tournament***  
*Contact:* Bryan Richardson/Damien Zanetti  
1880 Andell Bluff Blvd.  
Johns Island SC 29455  
843-768-1280 FAX 843-768-3481
- May 16-22**      ***Charleston Harbor HMY Viking Billfish Tournament***  
*Contact:* Deidre Menefee  
19 Forde Row  
Charleston SC 29412  
843-345-0369 FAX 843-406-4813
- June 2-5**      ***37th Annual Georgetown Landing Marina Tournament***  
*Contact:* Ricky Ferdon  
P.O. Box 1704  
Georgetown SC 29442  
843-546-1776 FAX 843-546-7832
- June 24-26**      ***MegaDock Tournament***  
*Contact:* Emily S. Arthur  
P.O. Box 759  
Charleston SC 29402  
843-577-7705
- For more information contact:  
***Tom DuPre'***  
***Office of Fisheries Management***  
843-953-9365  
*email:* dupret@mrd.dnr.state.sc.us  
<http://www.dnr.state.sc.us/etc/govcup/govcup.html>

***A RELEASE TODAY IS A FISH TOMORROW!***  
***Fish Responsibly!***

### ***"LOCK N' LOAD" WINS BOHICKET TOURNAMENT IN GOVERNOR'S CUP SERIES***

During May 6-8, the 16<sup>th</sup> Annual South Carolina Governor's Cup Billfishing Series wrapped up the second out of five tournaments, the Bohicket Marina Invitational Billfish Tournament.

"The weather was beautiful, and Damien Zanetti and all of the marina staff did an excellent job coordinating the tournament," said Tom DuPré of the S.C. Department of Natural Resources, who coordinates the tournament series. "The food, which was catered by Marvin's Meats, was delicious and there was a different band every night so the crowd had a great time."

One billfish, a blue marlin, was released during the tournament. All of the 22 boats that participated in the tournament fished two out of the three days.

Points for Governor's Cup tournaments are awarded as follows: 300 points for a tagged or released blue marlin, 200 points for a tagged or released white marlin, and 150 points for a tagged or released sailfish.

The Governor's Cup Board of Directors took an unprecedented step this year by making "tagging" an optional part of the tournament series. Now points can be accumulated for properly catching and releasing billfish, so tagging is no longer required to receive release points. Anglers are still encouraged to tag tuna, dolphin and wahoo as part of the bluewater conservation endeavor, and to help support on-going studies of these species.

"Lock N' Load," owned by Skipper Jellison of Seabrook Island captured the Best Billfish Boat award. Angler Vince Boyer of Hollywood, SC released the only blue marlin of the tournament to earn "Lock N' Load" 300 points.

There were no second or third place boats because only one billfish was caught during the tournament.

The largest wahoo of the Bohicket Marina Invitational Billfish Tournament was caught by the angler who is the first place youth angler. The 45.0-pound wahoo caught aboard "Petrel," owned by Harry Johnson of Charleston, earning 13-year-old angler Rob Johnson of Mount Pleasant the Biggest Wahoo Award and the Outstanding Youth Angler Award.

The Biggest Tuna Award went to Robbie Renkin of Charleston who reeled in a 49.5-pound yellowfin tuna aboard "Second Love III," owned by Swygart Shipyards of Johns Island.

As for the Biggest Dolphin Award, angler John Destefano of Charleston caught a 30.4-pound dolphin aboard "Petrel," owned by Harry Johnson of Charleston.

The Outstanding Female Angler Award went to Ann Brady Moore of Spartanburg, who reeled in a 20.7-pound dolphin. Moore hooked the fish aboard "Rascal," owned by Norman Pulliam, also of Spartanburg.

Funds from each tournament are also used to support a broad range of marine fisheries research and conservation efforts each year.

The top five boats from the South Carolina and North Carolina Governor's Cup Series will be showcased in a prestigious, all-tag-and-release event called The Carolinas Shootout. The Shootout for the 2004 Governor's Cup Series will be held during May 16-22 in conjunction with the Charleston Harbor HMY Viking Billfish Tournament.

For more information on the South Carolina Governor's Cup Billfishing Series contact Tom DuPré of the S.C. Department of Natural Resources by e-mail at [dupret@mrd.dnr.state.sc.us](mailto:dupret@mrd.dnr.state.sc.us), by phone at (843) 953-9365.

Visit the Web site at <http://www.dnr.state.sc.us/etc/govcup/govcup.html> to learn more about the South Carolina Governor's Cup Billfishing Series, and to keep up with the standings.

Written by Jennie R. Davis

## INSIDE EDISTO 2004

The first event of the five tournament Governor's Cup Billfishing Series (Edisto Marina Billfish Tournament) saw both excitement and controversy. Most of the 39 participating boats took to the waters on Thursday with light winds and seas in store. The fish *du jour* was dolphin. "Rapid Pace's" Teddy Thornhill landed the biggest of the day at 40.7 lbs. Lady angler Eugenie Barrow of "Legal Holiday" had the biggest yellowfin of the day at 25.8 lbs. The youth angler of the day, Austin Wyatt of the "Laid Back" brought in a 22.6 lb. Yellowfin tuna. The most exciting and unfortunately controversial catch of the day was a 113 in., 506 lb. blue marlin brought in by the "Lady S". After much discussion by both the tournament committee and Governor's Cup staff the fish had to be disqualified. The fish had been hit by some portion of the boat as the crew were trying to get it into the boat and had a large gash on it's right side just below the pectoral fin. IGFA rules are explicit when it comes to situations such as this saying "The following situations will disqualify a catch: 2. Mutilation to the fish prior to landing or boating the catch. . . . . that removes or penetrates the flesh." The tournament committee and the Governor's Cup had no choice but to disqualify the fish. Our heartfelt condolences go out the crew of

the "Lady S" for what would have been an excellent catch had it not been for an unfortunate mishap.

Friday saw the weather turn from good to marginal, smaller boats had a rough outing. Again, the dolphin were there but none topping "Rapid Pace's" entry from the previous day. "Ricochet" took over the wahoo category with a 47.4 pounder. A new lady angler, Joanie Macindzak of the "Size Matters", brought in a 28.7 lb. wahoo. After day 2, a new competition began to emerge to see who could tag and release the most dolphin in quest of the Blue Water Conservation Award. Six boats, "Caramba", "Summer Girl", "Micabe", "Houdini" "Laid Back" and



Bob Faith Sr. and Jr. from "Caramba" at Edisto



Joanie Macindzak, Edisto's Lady Angler



BIG Wahoo at Edisto

“Compromise IV” accounted for a total of 49-tagged dolphin in the first 2 days.

The final fishing day saw scattered thunderstorms and frequent showers. Seas offshore were rough and got progressively worse throughout the day. Several boats ended up turning around and heading back. Those that toughed it out reported seas up to 10 ft and frequent lighting. The “Pipe Layer” caught and released a small white in the morning and “Houdini” did the same in the afternoon capturing first and second place in the Tournament. All in all it was an exciting kickoff event. Two white marlin were successfully caught and released, and a total of 7 boats tagged and released 59 dolphin, 1 yellowfin tuna and 1 bonito.

Congratulations to Buddy Smith, Deidre Menefee and all the staff at Edisto for an exciting and memorable event.

and just happened to be that last boat in and the last boat to weigh in fish. The only wahoo caught that day was tagged by the “Summer Girl”. In addition, “Summer Girl” tagged and released 17 dolphin putting them in the lead for the bluewater conservation award.

Friday, day 2, was another picture perfect day, however only 5 boats elected to fish that day with the rest waiting for a better bite to come on Saturday. This was fortunate for the “Legal Holiday” who managed to land a 26.9 lb. wahoo to take the lead in that unfilled slot.

The final fishing day, Saturday, produced the only billfish of the event. “Lock N’ Load” caught and released a 250 lb. Blue marlin in the morning to capture the win. “Petrel’s” youth angler,

13 year old Rob Johnson, landed a 45 lb. wahoo to take the lead in the youth and wahoo category. “Petrel” also hung on to the dolphin category, with Thursday’s 30.4-lb. catch. “Second Love III’s” 49.5 lb. yellowfin tuna also held up as did “Rascals” lead in the female angling category, Ms Ann Brady Moore’s 20.7 lb dolphin. “Summer Girl” ended up tagging a total of 29 dolphin and 1 wahoo, while “Petrel” tagged five dolphin. Congratulations to “Lock N’ Load”, they are our new series leader.

The food and music were great. Thanks to Damien Zanetti, Brian Richardson, Julian Clark, and when he wasn’t fishing, Josh Kennedy, and all the staff at Bohicket for hosting a wonderful event.

## INSIDE BOHICKET 2004

With the full moon beginning to wane, winds W/SW at 10kts, and seas 2 to 4 feet, the Bohicket Marina’s Annual Billfishing Tournament began its 22<sup>nd</sup> event. With fair weather predicted for the entire 3-day period, expectations were high as the 22 participating boats began their first fishing day. The dolphin were everywhere on day one. “Petrel’s” John Destefano took the lead with a 30.4 lb. fish. Lady and youth anglers Ann Brady-Moore of the “Rascal” and 9 year old Bobby Faith of the “Caramba” accounted for a 20.7 lb. and 24.7 lb. dolphin each. The biggest tuna (49.5 lb.) was caught on the “Second Love III” by Robbie Renken



Lock N’ Load wins at Bohicket



Tuna caught aboard the “Micabe” owned by Mike Larrow



Tom interviews Bohicket tournament participant Louie parrot

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## SOUTH CAROLINA DOLPHIN TAGGING STUDY

The SC Dolphin Tagging Study is now entering its third year of research into the movements and migrations of dolphin-fish found off the US East Coast and in the Northern Caribbean. With over 1,700 dolphin tagged and 34 tagged-fish recovered, the project has been an overwhelming success.

This research project is unique in several respects. Even though the subject of the research, dolphin, is managed by the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council, the project receives no federal funds. It is paid for by grants from the SC Governor's Cup Billfishing Series' Pate Memorial Fund and the SC Saltwater Recreational Fishing License Fund along with donations from sportfishing clubs, individual anglers and businesses in the sportfishing industry. Another item that makes it unique is that the project relies on private fishermen along the entire eastern seaboard to serve as the primary work force to tag fish for the study.

Public support for this project that focuses on the most popular bluewater gamefish has been nothing short of phenomenal. Over 700 offshore anglers, most of them boat owners, have volunteered to tag dolphin for the program. Anglers and even sportfishing clubs from Nantucket, MA to Key West, FL have volunteered to aid the research into the dolphin's life history. For the first time, dolphin were tagged and released from Key West to Nantucket and even in the eastern Bahamas.

With a Shimano Tiagra 50 on a Star Standup Rod as incentive awards going to the individual angler, private boat and charter boat tagging the most dolphin in 2003, the tagging activity was very serious among participants. The top five individual anglers tagged over 400 fish collectively while the top five private boats were responsible for tagging more than 500 dolphin. Chester Kalb of Key West won the top private boat award having tagged 177 dolphin. Justin Brown of Pembroke Pines, FL captured the top angler award by tagging and releasing 105 fish. Fish tagged by these two individuals accounted for 33 percent of the recaptures in 2003. Top charter boat honors went to Grady Williams' boat Plumb Crazy out of Charleston for tag-

ging 29 dolphin. It was the Hightower brother's boat, Triple Play out of Charleston that was the top SC boat in tagging dolphin having marked 74 fish during the 2003 season.

The studies' recoveries have answered many questions about dolphin behavior. Three recoveries clearly show that some fish will linger in an area for at least three weeks during their spring migration northward. Five recoveries have shown that fish found off our coast do move into the Mid-Atlantic Bight traveling at least as far north as Long Island, NY. Other recoveries have confirmed that the dolphin found off Hatteras in June were the same ones found in the Florida Straits and off South Florida four to six weeks earlier. The most remarkable movement was a fish tagged in the Florida Keys and recovered 93 days later off the New Jersey shore, 995 miles to the north. This is the longest movement ever noted for a dolphin. It is particularly impressive when you learn that it started the trip as a 10-inch fork length schoolie.

Fish recaptured in 2002 averaged being free for 38 days during which time they traveled 266 miles to the north. Recoveries in 2003 were more abbreviated with the average liberty period being 25 days with the fish traveling 233 miles northward. The longest liberty period, 152 days, was a fish marked off Charleston, SC that traveled to the waters off Long Island, NY being recovered near the end of October. Speed of travel varied widely among the recoveries. The fastest traveler logged in 43.6 miles per day during a six-day sprint northward. In the opposite corner, a rather laid-back individual cruised along at only 0.6 miles per day over a three-week period.

Looking at the pool of dolphin recoveries, we see an interesting harvest pattern developing. Anglers off the Florida coast have been responsible for the recapture of 48% of the tagged-fish recoveries. The second highest recovery rate was found off North Carolina where 30% of the recaptures have come from. Only 3% of the recoveries have come from the Georgia coast while South



Carolina has accounted for 9% of the tagged-dolphin recaptured. Only 10 percent of the recoveries have been reported from the Mid-Atlantic Bight.

Tagging results in 2002 and 2003 provided much insight into the life of dolphin-fish, but the study is raising as many new questions as it is answering about this magnificent gamefish. With the support of all the volunteers, the project hopes to see a record number of dolphin tagged in 2004 with the resulting recoveries providing that so-important information that will contribute to better management of the stocks.

For more information on the South Carolina Dolphin Tagging Study visit the project's website at [www.dolphin-tagging.homestead.com](http://www.dolphin-tagging.homestead.com) or call Don Hammond at (843) 953-9847.

Written by Don Hammond

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**SC GOVERNOR'S CUP BILLFISHING  
SERIES LEADERS  
(AFTER BOHICKET, 2004)**

**Outstanding Billfish Boat**

**Points:** 1 Blue released, 325 pts  
**Boat:** *Lock N' Load*  
**Owner:** Skipper Jellison  
**Captain:** Skipper Jellison

**Outstanding Billfish  
Conservationist**

**Points:** 1 Blue released, 325 pts  
**Boat:** *Lock N' Load*  
**Owner:** Skipper Jellison  
**Captain:** Skipper Jellison

**Blue Water Conservation**

**Points:** 1 Tuna, 43 Dolphin and 1 wahoo (tagged), 2400 pts  
**Boat:** *Summer Girl*  
**Owner:** Smith, Leasure, & Kelly  
**Captain:** Charles Aimar

**Outstanding Billfish - open**

**Outstanding Dolphin**

**Weight:** 40.7 lbs.  
**Boat:** *Rapid Pace*  
**Owner:** SHSR Enterprises  
**Angler:** Teddy Thornhill

**Outstanding Yellowfin Tuna**

**Weight:** 49.5lbs  
**Boat:** *Second Love III*  
**Owner:** Swygert Shipyards  
**Angler:** Robbie Renken

**Outstanding Wahoo**

**Weight:** 47.4 lbs  
**Boat:** *Ricochet*  
**Owner:** East Bay Charters  
**Angler:** Lee Anderson

**Outstanding Youth Angler**

**Fish:** 45 lb. Wahoo  
**Boat:** *Petrel*  
**Owner:** Harry Johnson  
**Angler:** Rob Johnson

**Outstanding Lady Angler**

**Fish:** 34 lb Dolphin  
**Boat:** *Hot Rod Blue*  
**Owner:** Steve Wallace  
**Angler:** Kathie Hunter

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 S.C. Department of Natural Resources' Law Enforcement Division is responsible for enforcing coastal recreational and commercial boating/fishing regulations.



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**CONTACT INFO**

**Newsletter Editor - Wayne Waltz**

waltzw@mrd.dnr.state.sc.us

843-953-9389

**Information Specialist - Jennie Davis**

davisj@mrd.dnr.state.sc.us

843-953-9310

**Graphic Design - Karen Swanson**

swansonk@mrd.dnr.state.sc.us

843-953-9238

**Tom DuPré - S.C. Governor's Cup**

843-953-9365

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**Robert Wiggers - Tagging Program**

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