



Tag & Release

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



Series Reflections:

**June 2026
Vol. 31 No. 3**

The 2026 Series has kicked off, and we had a fantastic bite for the first three tournaments! So far 80 boats have released a total of 260 billfish — 70 blue marlin, 11 white marlin, and 179 sailfish.

During the Charleston Billfish Invitational, *Redemption* took home the first place award for Outstanding Billfish Boat after releasing two blue marlin and four sailfish. At the 58th Annual Georgetown Blue Marlin Tournament, *Rascal* took the win, releasing two blue marlin and eight sailfish. *Game On* took home first place at the HMY Lowcountry Cup, releasing five blue marlin and two sailfish.

The excitement continues with the next two highly anticipated events in the series. The Carolina Billfish Classic is in a couple weeks, so get your gear ready and your crew fired up! After Fourth of July celebrations and a little break, we'll finish off the season down south for the Edisto Invitational Billfish Tournament.

We're all hoping for calm seas, clear skies, and plenty of billfish in the spread! Whether you're fishing or following from shore, stay tuned for daily updates, weigh-ins, and leaderboard action. To track our tournaments, follow SC Governor's Cup on Facebook and Instagram. You can also follow our live updates on Reel Time Apps, which you can find [here](#).

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38th Annual SC Governor's Cup Billfishing Series 2026 Tournament Schedule

May 6 - 9, 2026

Charleston Billfish Invitational

[Charleston Billfish Invitational](#)

Contact: Katie Harriss and Claudia Holcombe
49 Immigration Street Charleston, SC 29403
(843) 790-4001
billfish@seabreezemarina.com



May 20 - 23, 2026

58th Annual Georgetown Blue Marlin Tournament

[58th Annual Georgetown Blue Marlin Tournament](#)

Contact: David Black
P. O. Box 1704 Georgetown, SC 29442
(843) 546-1776
dblack@georgetownlandingmarina.com



May 27 - 30, 2026

HMY Lowcountry Cup

[HMY Lowcountry Cup](#)

Contact: Desiree Freeman
7 Lockwood Drive, SC 29401
(561) 972-0564
LCC@HMY.com



June 17 - 20, 2026

Carolina Billfish Classic

[Carolina Billfish Classic](#)

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



July 15 - 18, 2026

Edisto Invitational Billfish Tournament

[Edisto Invitational Billfish Tournament](#)

Contact: Charles Yeomans
P. O. Box 598 Edisto Beach, SC 29464
(843) 631-5055
themarinaeb@gmail.com



For more information, please visit:

GovCup@dnr.sc.gov • govcup.dnr.sc.gov

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The Charleston Billfish Invitational

May 6-9, 2026

Outstanding Billfish Boat - 1st Place

Boat: *Redemption*

Owner: Wes McAfee & Lee Ravenel

Captain: Wes McAfee

2 blue marlin and 4 sailfish released

Points: 2,000



Outstanding Billfish Boat - 2nd Place

Boat: *Fullabull*

Owner: Jay Cobb

Captain: Mark Lacovara

3 sailfish released

Points: 600



Outstanding Billfish Boat - 3rd Place

Boat: *Game On*

Owner & Captain: Bubba Roof

3 sailfish released

Points: 600



The Charleston Billfish Invitational

May 6-9, 2026

Outstanding Dolphin

Boat: *Rare Breed*

Owner & Captain: Bubba Simmons

Angler: EJ Nettles

24.2 pounds



Outstanding Female Angler - 1st Place

Josie Mitchell

Boat: *Reel Wheels II*

Owner: Rick Hendrick

Captain: Dave Doll

17.4-pound dolphin



The Charleston Billfish Invitational

May 6-9, 2026

Outstanding Youth Angler - 1st Place

Julia Gressette, 16

Boat: *Man Cave*

Owner: MCF Family Holdings LLC

Captain: Chase Merriman

2 sailfish released

Points: 400



Outstanding Youth Angler - 2nd Place

Lucas Sauls, 13

Boat: *Reel Wheels II*

Owner: Rick Hendrick

Captain: Dave Doll

23.1-pound dolphin

Outstanding Youth Angler - 3rd Place

June Gressette, 9

Boat: *Man Cave*

Owner: MCF Family Holdings LLC

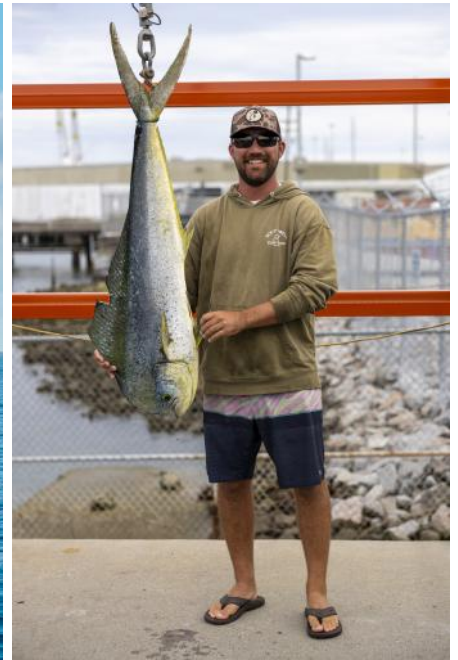
Captain: Chase Merriman

16-pound dolphin



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58th Annual Georgetown Blue Marlin Tournament

May 20-23, 2026

Outstanding Billfish Boat - 1st Place

Boat: *Rascal*

Owner: Foster McKissick

Captain: Mark Rogers

2 blue marlin and 8 sailfish released

Points: 2,800



Outstanding Billfish Boat - 2nd Place

Boat: *Star Fish*

Owner: Star Fish Marine LLC

Captain: Randy Estes

2 blue marlin and 6 sailfish released

Points: 2,400



Outstanding Billfish Boat - 3rd Place

Boat: *Claytime*

Owner: Jon Clay

Captain: Phillip Fender

**1 blue marlin, 1 white marlin
and 7 sailfish released**

Points: 2,200



58th Annual Georgetown Blue Marlin Tournament

May 20-23, 2026

Outstanding Dolphin

Boat: *Home Run*

Owner: Steve Mungo

Captain: Grant Bentley

Angler: Jake Flemming

40.2 pounds



Outstanding Tuna

Boat: *Glazed*

Owner: Miles Herring

Captain: Ben Polk

Angler: Wilson Springs

18.9-pound blackfin

Outstanding Wahoo

Boat: *On The Hook*

Owner & Captain: James Bass

Angler: Stratton Pollitzer

58.3 pounds



58th Annual Georgetown Blue Marlin Tournament

May 20-23, 2026

Outstanding Female Angler - 1st Place

Kirsten Jennings

Boat: *Micabe*

Owner: Michael Larrow

Captain: Chris Jennings

1 white marlin and 3 sailfish released

Points: 800



Outstanding Female Angler - 2nd Place

Avery Price

Boat: *Saltdust*

Owner: Aaron Price

Captain: Avery Price

34.4-pound dolphin



Outstanding Female Angler - 3rd Place

Maddie Smith

Boat: *The Huntress*

Owner: Georgetown 1 LLC

Captain: Thomas Morgan

22.9-pound wahoo



58th Annual Georgetown Blue Marlin Tournament

May 20-23, 2026

Outstanding Youth Angler - 1st Place

Ford Schlicksup, 12

Boat: *Undue Risk*

Owner & Captain: Michael Schlicksup

3 sailfish released

Points: 600



Outstanding Youth Angler - 2nd Place

Julia Gressette, 16

Boat: *Man Cave*

Owner: MCF Family Holdings LLC

Captain: Chase Merriman

1 sailfish released

Points: 200



Outstanding Youth Angler - 3rd Place

Charlie Nettles, 12

Boat: *Retainage*

Owner & Captain: Mendal Nettles

21.2-pound dolphin





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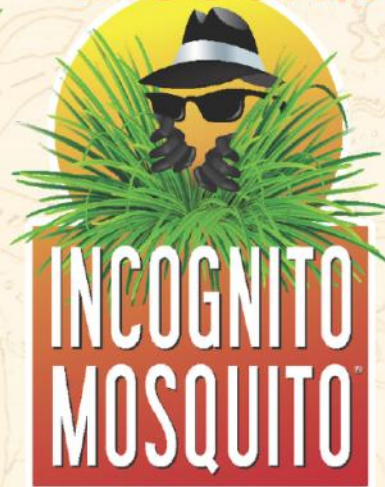


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HMY Lowcountry Cup

May 27-30, 2026

Outstanding Billfish Boat - 1st Place

Boat: *Game On*

Owner & Captain: Bubba Roof

5 blue marlin and 2 sailfish released

Points: 3,400



Outstanding Billfish Boat - 2nd Place

Boat: *Claytime*

Owner: Jon Clay

Captain: Phillip Fender

4 blue marlin and 3 sailfish released

Points: 3,000

Outstanding Billfish Boat - 3rd Place

Boat: *Rascal*

Owner: Foster McKissick

Captain: Mark Rogers

2 blue marlin, 1 white marlin

and 7 sailfish released

Points: 2,800



HMY Lowcountry Cup

May 27-30, 2026

Outstanding Dolphin

Boat: *Sportin' Life*

Owner: Graham Eubank

Captain: Mike Glaesner

Angler: Stevie Leasure

53.3 pounds



Outstanding Tuna

Boat: *Maizey Blue*

Owner & Captain: Zack Lynam

Angler: Jackson Larson

18.6-pound blackfin

Outstanding Wahoo

Boat: *Higher Limits*

Owner & Captain: Mark Parrish

Angler: Kyle Weiland

41.3 pounds



HMY Lowcountry Cup

May 27-30, 2026

Outstanding Female Angler - 1st Place

Cynthia Starosta

Boat: *Star Fish*

Owner: Star Fish Marine LLC

Captain: Randy Estes

1 blue marlin and 4 sailfish released

Points: 1,400



Outstanding Female Angler - 2nd Place

Holly McAlhany

Boat: *Sweet Spot*

Owner: Sweet Spot Marine

Captain: Chris Kubick

1 blue marlin and 1 sailfish released

Points: 800



Outstanding Female Angler - 3rd Place

Carson Smith

Boat: *Lady-S*

Owner & Captain: Mark Smith

1 blue marlin released

Points: 600



HMY Lowcountry Cup

May 27-30, 2026

Outstanding Youth Angler - 1st Place

Reef Simmons, 15

Boat: *Rare Breed*

Owner & Captain: Bubba Simmons

1 blue marlin released

Points: 600



Outstanding Youth Angler - 2nd Place

June Gressette, 9

Boat: *Man Cave*

Owner: MCF Family Holdings LLC

Captain: Chase Merriman

2 sailfish released

Points: 400

Outstanding Youth Angler - 3rd Place

Aimar Hernandez, 14

Boat: *Remix Main Stage*

Captain: JC Cleare

1 sailfish released

Points: 200





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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.