



TAG & RELEASE

Volume 9, No. 5 September 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!

2004 SERIES WRAP- UP (THANKS FROM TOM AND WAYNE)

Tom likes to tell me that he usually gets the blame when things go wrong and I get the credit when things go right. My usual response to that observation is: "And your point is?"

The 2004 series had something for everyone. There was lots of fun, a little controversy and it was an exciting Series right up until the final event. This was the first year that we made tagging optional and tried to mix up some of the tournament dates and it will continue to be our goal to make this Series an event that we can all be proud of, we can all have fun with and at the same time we can promote conservation of our offshore blue water resources for the next generation to enjoy.

As with any event of this magnitude we had a lot of help. To the Director of the SCDNR, Mr. John Frampton; the chairman of our Natural Resources Board, Mr. Mike McShane; the Deputy Director of Marine Resources, Mr. Robert Boyles; and the chairman of the Harry Hampton Memorial Wildlife Fund, Mr. Sam Hiott. Tom and I thank you for your help and support this year.

I'd also like to acknowledge our tournament directors for the great jobs they did putting on each event: Edisto, Buddy Smith and Deidre Menefee; Bohicket, Damian Zanetti and Bryan Richardson; Charleston Harbor, Deidre Menefee; Georgetown; Ricky Ferdon; and MegaDock, Emily Arthur and Robbie Freeman.

We also had some wonderful people and organizations sponsor the Series this year. Our major sponsors for 2004 were: Wachovia Wealth Management, Cummins Atlantic and Cummins Mercruiser. Also sponsoring the Series this year were our old friends W.W. Williams and HMY Yacht Sales. We have about 700 people on our mailing list to receive the

Tag and Release newsletter. Our newsletter sponsors this year were Palmetto Props, Michael Brown of HMY, Albury Brothers Boats, SCCCA, Jarrett Bay, Henry J. Lee Distributors, The Yahanis Co, Cullum Mechanical Construction, IMIC Hotels, and Hanckel Marine.

Thanks to our Board of Directors, Tournament Committee, and all the volunteers who helped throughout the 2004 series. We offer our apologies to those we have left out. Until 2005, we wish everyone the best.

THE 16TH ANNUAL GOVERNOR'S CUP AWARDS CEREMONY AND HARRY HAMPTON MARINE BANQUET

Preparation for the Awards Banquet and Harry Hampton Benefit and Auction actually began in June and involved a core group of about 15 people. The site (Port's Authority Passenger Terminal) was secured, caterer firmed up, DJ secured, sound system rented and date set (14 August 2004). Each member of the core group had a job to do: decorations, set up, secure auction items, ticket sales, Governor's Cup Awards and invitations (this was where Tom and I came in), etc etc. In addition to "the group" we needed volunteers to help with each aspect especially set up and cleanup. It was Thursday, August 12, and hurricane Charlie was beginning to hit the gulf coast of Florida. There was a huge degree of uncertainty and anticipation regarding its impact on SC. Friday morning, August 13, the decision was made to postpone the event. As everyone was breathing a sigh of relief, it now became imperative to let everyone know about the cancellation. We frantically called and e-mailed the Governor's Cup winners to let them know. Postponement notices went out on the radio and news. Charlie breezed by us on Saturday morning with rain and wind and minor damage and we were back in action on Monday with a new date set for August 28, same place, same time.

It was now Friday morning, August 27. There were bands of rain coming in from a low depression area that had been sitting offshore for a few days that no



Kate Freeman, 1st place youth angler from "Triple Play"

one was too concerned about. We were going to get into the Passenger terminal early to begin set up. Between showers, truck loads of decorations began to appear along with items to be raffled and auctioned. The rental company began setting up tables, chairs, a dance floor. Volunteers began putting table settings and floral arrangements together and the hall began its transformation. The finishing touches were added Saturday morning as the caterer began to set up their stations. Around noon we first began to hear about tropical storm warnings along the coast and of a storm named Gaston.

The doors opened a six pm and with overcast skies, intermittent showers and light breezes the crowd began to appear. I can only guess that there were at least 400



Niels Layman of Cummins Atlantic and Jonathan Jones of Cummins Mercruiser



Chris Morris (R) of "Golden Lady" and his "Top Billfish Conservationist" award



2004 Lady Anglers (L to R) Kathy Stuart, Hope Hanckel, and Margaret Hood Mevers



Some of the 2004 Shootout Team (L to R), The "Billistic" Boys with owner Hutch Hulseberg, Capt. Wayne Skinner "Houdini", and "Golden Lady" captain and owner Chris Morris

people in attendance, standing room only. The awards went off without a hitch, the food was served and the raffle and auctions began. Everyone had a thoroughly good time. There were some bargains to be had and the food catered by Mike Altine and the Variety Store restaurant crew was exceptional.

As we packed up and headed home at around midnight we heard Gaston was headed our way and might even develop into a hurricane. We awoke Saturday morning to heavy rains and wind pounding the house. With the help of a huge number of volunteers we had gotten it done just under the wire. No one had expected Gaston to hit when it did and as hard as it did. We want to congratulate all the participants and winners of the 2004 series. It turned out to be a great event.

TAKE A KID FISHING (A SURREEL STORY)

After two years of promising my son (lets call him "Alex" to protect him from embarrassment) that I would arrange to take him offshore fishing on one of the big boats in the Governor's Cup, I was finally able to convince Captain Mike Larrow (MICABE) of the wonderful opportunity he was missing by not having me and a youth angler (age 14) accompany him offshore during the MegaDock Tournament. The MICABE is a new 55' Jarrett Bay boat that runs a top speed of 30 kts. Mike keeps the boat in pristine condition. I wished my house was that clean. We would definitely be riding in a Cadillac boat. Mike's rules were simple: Rule 1) Do not p/o the Captain - Doable; Rule 2) Do not loose any fish - Attainable; Rule 3) Take off your shoes before you go into the cabin - No problem here; Rule 4) No smoking - Again, no problem; Rule 5) No alcoholic consumption until the boat is tied back up at the dock - Problem, I didn't like this rule. Experience had taught me that a fish will not bite until you sit down in the boat, relax, and open an ice cold can of beer. This was definitely going to be a handicap for me.

So, it was agreed we would be on the boat at 4:30 am, Friday, ready to fish. Not knowing what the weather would bring, I made sure we took our first Dramamine before bedtime. I set the alarm for 3:00

am and as is always the case when you have an exciting day planned, I tossed and turned all night fearing I would not hear the alarm go off. At 3:00 am, I was amazed that it only took two tries to get "Alex" up. This is a kid who sometimes lays in bed comatose until 12 noon.

We arrived at the "MICABE" at 4:15 am. There were about 40 other boats preparing to leave. There were donuts and coffee and everyone was quietly making way to their boats and getting excited. We finally got underway at 5:00 am. Mike had invited several other people to fish with us, so we all introduced ourselves and made small talk as we cruised out of the harbor. For those of you that have never been offshore, once you leave the harbor and get out of the sight of land, there is really nothing much to do on the 2 hr trip out. So, we all found a spot on a sofa or floor of the salon, laid down and closed our eyes. Mike's crew began getting the outriggers and rods in place so we could begin fishing at exactly 7:30. We were at a place known as the 380 Hole, with about 12-15 other boats that were circling in the distance. The sea was almost flat calm. Flying fish were gliding here and there as we began trolling, and trolling, and trolling. As Mike would explain to me later, billfishing can either be the most exciting or most boring type of fishing you may ever do. You never know what you will catch or when it will happen. As we watched a pod of bottlenose dolphin swim along the wake of the boat, we got our first knock-down. Probably a wahoo from the look of the recovered bait. Mike had the radio turned on and every now and then he would say "Boat X" just released a sailfish. They are right over there as he pointed toward the horizon. As "Alex" and I waited for the fish, I pointed out a shearwater, a common oceanic bird, seen skimming over the waves and only visits land during the breeding season. One or two more knock-downs convinced the crew that our combo baits were too big. They put on smaller ones and just after noon we began getting into the dolphin. "Alex" was somewhat tentative at first, wanting to watch and see how it was done before grabbing a rod.

Finally his chance came. He pulled in a 10 lb. dolphin, which Mike successfully tagged and released. We ended up with 5 dolphin total. Mine was the last to be hauled in. As the fish struck, I released the drag and let more line out to ensure a hook up and then proceeded to create the biggest rat's nest the crew had seen in some time. Despite, my embarrassment and the cussing from the crew, I managed to get a 10 pounder which was also tagged and released. As we were preparing to leave, Mike yelled out, "It's a sunfish". We all looked in the direction he was pointing to see what looked like the dorsal fin of a shark. Sunfish or *Mola mola* are giant oceanic fish with almost no caudal or tail fin. When they are at the surface they swim by sculling, using their large dorsal and anal fins as paddles. This is what we were seeing.

The trip back was pretty sloppy. The wind and seas had built and we were heading almost directly into them. We all crawled into the salon and found a place to lie down. With a little more than 30 minutes until homeport, I could tell Alex was not feeling well, so we made it to the cockpit for some fresh air. We tied back up at about 5:15 pm.

Now it was time to clean up and wash down the boat. As all good guests do, we volunteered to help with 3 other people. Out came the buckets, the special cleaning agents, the blue bristled brush, the hand rags, the special chamois cloths that were kept in the freezer to prevent mildew. I was given my cleaning instructions. You must wet the area down first, then apply the soap with the hand towel or brush, then hose down again before the soap dries and then wipe dry with the chamois. As I was on my knees getting the lower part of the gunwale, I noticed





Alex sneaking off with Mike to the fillet station to clean the dolphin. Oh well, maybe he would learn something. An hour later, as I was rubbing at a pain that was developing in my lower back, I noticed a tinkling sensation and then numbness in the back of my head. I took what was a deep, calming breath and the feeling left as quickly as it had developed. To the untrained eye it may have appeared I had just had a mild heat stroke. In reality I had just experienced an epiphany. At that very moment it all became very clear. I suddenly realized why Mike's boat was so clean, I promised myself never to compare it to my house again and I concluded my house was just fine the way it was.

We said our goodbyes and thanked everyone and headed down the dock towards the truck. I was ready to get home and have a nice shower. Alex on the other hand wanted to go to the weigh station and see what had been caught and no doubt bask in the glory of his

first successful fishing trip. I reluctantly agreed. While he was basking, I managed to find that ice cold beer that had eluded me all day and hampered my fishing success. Maybe this wasn't such a bad idea after all.

We finally returned home. I headed for the shower and "Alex" headed straight to the computer and got on his AOL Instant messenger to check in with all his buds and relay the events of the day. As I was

heading to bed I asked "Alex" how he had enjoyed the day and if he wanted to go again. Without even looking up from the computer he answered in a low monotone voice, "Yeah I'll go again, it was alright". Now the average parent may have been disappointed in this reply, however in the brief recorded history of my family's past, "It's alright" has been documented as the highest form of praise, thanks, and/or compliment that can be bestowed by a male member of the family. This highest of all complements is extended in responded to a wonderful Thanksgiving meal, an expensive Christmas gift, and even a day of fishing. It is synonymous with adjectives such as "fantastic", "incredible" and phrases such as "It was the greatest day of my life".

I had achieved success. I flopped into my bed and with eyes shut and head still



rocking from side to side as an after effect of the trip recapped the day's events. It had been a good day. I had fulfilled a two-year promise. "Alex" had gone offshore fishing and caught his first dolphin without getting sick. He had seen new things like flying fish, sunfish and shearwaters. He had made some new friends and had a story to tell. I concluded the father-son bond was tighter than ever. I was still the alpha male, the big dog in this pack and the hero in my son's eyes. As I began drifting into slumber, I wondered about other adventures that "Alex" and I could pursue before I lost him to cars and girls. With the help of Capt. Mike, we had created a memory that would last a lifetime. Thanks Capt. Mike, "It was alright".



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SC GOVERNOR'S CUP BILLFISHING SERIES 2004 WINNERS

Outstanding Billfish Boat

Points: 2 Blues, (1 released, 1 landed at 412 lbs.: 2 sails released), 987 pts

Boat: *Game On*

Owner: Sea Hunt Boats

Captain: Richard Brackett

Outstanding Billfish Conservationist

Points: 2 Blues, 1 Sail released, 775 pts

Boat: *Golden Lady*

Owner: Chris Morris

Captain: Chris Morris

Blue Water Conservation

Points: 1 Tuna, 101 Dolphin and 1 wahoo (tagged), 5300 pts

Boat: *Summer Girl*

Owner: Smith, Leasure, & Kelly

Captain: Charles Aimar

Outstanding Billfish

Weight: Blue marlin, 507 lbs

Boat: *Done Diggin'*

Owner: Jim Brewer

Angler: Brad Brewer

Outstanding Dolphin

Weight: 40.7 lbs

Boat: *Rapid Pace*

Owner: SHSR Enterprises

Angler: Teddy Thornhill

Outstanding Yellowfin Tuna

Weight: 70.9 lbs

Boat: *Top Billing*

Owner: Top Billing Enterprises

Angler: Rob Montgomery

Outstanding Wahoo

Weight: 57.6 lbs

Boat: *Triple Play*

Owner: Art, Jimmy & Bubba
Hightower

Angler: Kate Freeman

Outstanding Youth Angler

Fish: Wahoo

Boat: *Triple Play*

Owner: Art, Jimmy & Bubba
Hightower

Angler: Kate Freeman

Outstanding Lady Angler

Fish: 1 Blue released

Boat: *Paradox*

Owner: John Hood

Angler: Margaret Hood Mevers

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WALLACE F. PATE MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP

The SC Governor's Cup Board of Director's is pleased to announce the establishment of the new Wallace F. Pate scholarship, which will be administered through the Harry Hampton Memorial Wildlife Fund. To be eligible for this one time \$1,500 scholarship you must be a full time SC resident,

a senior in a public or private high school in SC and plan on attending an institution of higher learning in SC, pursuing a major in the Natural Resources arena. The deadline for applications is December 31, 2004. For more details and application information, visit www.hamptonwildlifefund.org

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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.

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