

BILLFISH

2015 Volume 2

The Billfish Foundation's Sportfishing Conservation Magazine

**2015
RYBOVICH
WINNERS**
Announced

TAG & RELEASE
Competition Update

**SUMMER
TOURNAMENTS**
Underway!



*Tag 'Em Today,
Catch 'Em Tomorrow!*

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OF BARS

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OUT OF
COUNTRIES



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Photo courtesy of Capt. Bryan Toney

ON THE COVER

In late February, TBF Board Member Chase Offield and brother Calen fished aboard the *Marlin Magic*, in Kailua Kona, deploying satellite tags on striped marlin and spearfish and TBF tags on blue marlin. During that trip, Calen tagged and released the blue marlin featured on the cover, photo taken by Captain Bryan Toney.

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



Dear TBF Members,

Fortunately, spring finally arrived and most of us are enjoying summer fun opportunities at tournaments, fishing and spending time with others. Some tournament friends we see only once a year at a specific event, while others we see at several events; but regardless, the bonds we form through billfishing are a testament to just one of the many positives of the sport.

To me, one of the most inspiring aspects of tournament season is watching junior anglers. Their fresh optimistic outlook on the potential outcome of an event – anyone can win – and even if they don't, they find the event fun. Their enthusiastic embrace of the tournament moment, whether on the dock or offshore feels like a summer camp. Their wonder at the beauty of a fish, the skipping over the waves by flying fish, or birds circling over baits, really excites them whether a hook-up results or not. Some of these young anglers have won their age group categories in The Billfish Foundation's (TBF) annual Tag and Release or Catch and Release competition and then moved on to college and competed as adults, where the competition becomes much tougher. The progression is inspiring.

Even in TBF's office, summertime brings college interns with fresh ideas and enthusiasm to advance their individual research project, which at the end of the semester must be reviewed by an academic panel, including professors and TBF staff member Peter Chaibongsai. Interns bring with them different skill sets and post graduation goals, though all share a common bond of wanting to make constructive contributions to billfish conservation, while advancing responsible sportfishing. Academic specialties among interns vary and have included law, marine science, marine policy, communications, education and marketing. Today you will find some former TBF interns working in the sportfishing industry, research institutions, NOAA, with non-government organizations and some are practicing law.

We hope this genuine enthusiasm and "passing of the rod" for responsible sportfishing and support of billfish conservation continues generation to generation. In fact, we view introducing a youngster to TBF's youth publications, *Spearfish* and *Sailfish*, as a responsibility we take seriously and hope you do as well. Even if a child does not go on to embrace fishing, what they learn from the publications plants seeds for responsible stewardship through basic awareness. I encourage you to sign up your junior angler to fish as a member of TBF. For those who fish, please submit their Release Cards and/or Tag Cards for their fish, noting their age clearly on each card, so they can be considered for the regional and ocean-wide competitions. (Note: TBF has two regional competitions—South Florida Sailfish Circuit and the Gulf of Mexico Marlin Tagging Competition).

Hitting the road this summer will be staff in TBF's "Mobile Office," a great van wrapped in beautiful art by famous marine artist Carey Chen. When you see the van, snap a photo and post it on your Facebook page, making sure to tag TBF; you will then receive a cool TBF Tag Flag bumper sticker for the "visual tagging."

Let's make this fishing year a great one! Thank you for your support of TBF, I look forward to seeing you on the docks.

All the best, hook 'em up!

Ellen M. Peel
President

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THE BILLFISH FOUNDATION'S

2015 RYBOVICH LIFETIME CONSERVATION AWARD WINNERS

The Billfish Foundation's most prestigious award, the Rybovich Lifetime Conservation Award, is named in honor of the late John Rybovich, a pioneer in billfish conservation and sportfishing vessel design. This year's winners include a leading captain and an individual advocate.

Randolph "Bouncer" Smith,



fishing on his *Bouncer's Dusky* 33, has been for decades and remains a voice for responsible sportfishing and billfish conservation. He is a long term member and supporter of TBF. Bouncer releases all his fish, tags most of them and is a great ambassador for responsible

sportfishing on the water and dock. He began fishing in Michigan and on family vacations to Miami learned how to catch and rig his own ballyhoo for sailfishing. He moved to South Florida in 1957. In his early days in South Florida he worked on driftboats, became a licensed captain in 1968, fished out of Islamorada for a while, then came to Fort Lauderdale, where he brought kite fishing to popular use and promoted downriggers. In 1978 he began fishing his *Dusky* and became a leader in the development of light-tackle angling. He has set world records and has been awarded and recognized by many organizations for his commitment to fish conservation and his advancing of innovative fishing techniques and good sportsmanship.

John W. Jolley, Jr.

is a long-time TBF member, who, according to published text, has fished for over 60 years. John began his career with the State of Florida as a biologist for the Florida Department of Natural Resources, Marine Research Laboratory, where, among many projects, he served as project leader on the Sunray Venus clam survey



in northwest Florida. John transitioned to the world of financial management in Palm Beach where he worked until his retirement a few years ago. He has served as a member of the Scientific and Statistical Committee for the Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council, as a science advisor to the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission and on the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council. He is a long-time member of the West Palm Beach Fishing Club, where he served as president for 30 years and today serves as the Science Advisor. John is an avid billfish angler.

PAXSON “PACKY” OFFIELD ...

let's continue his legacy

PAXSON “PACKY” OFFIELD, former chairman of The Billfish Foundation’s (TBF) board of directors, passed away Sunday June 14th at his home in Michigan. In 2011, Offield was the recipient of TBF’s most prestigious award, the Rybovich Lifetime Achievement Award.



He was a man who cared deeply for the world’s natural resources and matched that passion with support for research and conservation of billfish, bison, eagles, peregrine falcons and foxes. He also supported science to fight disease and to provide basic services, including funds for a water well in a very distant remote area in the South Pacific so the quality of life for others could be improved.

He understood the power that applied science, along with economics, have on developing credible management decisions.

While strongly committed to billfish and other sciences, Offield was no “science geek.” He was a top notch offshore angler, on his 85-foot Garlington, the *Kelsey Lee*, named in honor of his daughter, and an avid fly fisherman enjoying both lakes and rivers. He also loved sailing, playing golf, skiing, kayaking, cooking, reading, photography and writing poetry.



Giving of his time and support included an array of organizations and causes, including serving as Chairman of TBF, the Santa Catalina Island Company, the Offield Center for Billfish Studies, the Wrigley Institute for Environmental Studies at USC, the Center for the Reproduction of Endangered Species at the San Diego Zoological Society, the Catalina Seabass Fund, the Avalon Tuna Club, the Catalina Conservancy, the IGFA, Offield Family Foundation, the Peregrine Fund, the Little Traverse Conservancy, Silver Creek Fishing Club, the Avalon Planning Commission, the Catalina Island Chamber of Commerce and Catalina CHOICES, a drug and alcohol treatment program for the youth of Catalina Island.

Offield’s support of TBF made possible the organization’s commitment to remain firmly grounded in science. Through his support, our understanding of billfish stock structure, ecology and assessment science methodologies have been greatly advanced and remain crucial to billfish conservation today.

Offield’s positive footprint on the world’s natural resources, on science and individuals lucky enough to have known him is great. He will be sadly missed, but his legacy can continue if all who were touched by him continue the work he recognized as important. He is survived by his wife, Susan, daughter Kelsey, sons Chase (Jena), who is a TBF Board Member and Calen (Amber); stepson Rex, his brother James, and three grandchildren Capri, Christian and Owen.

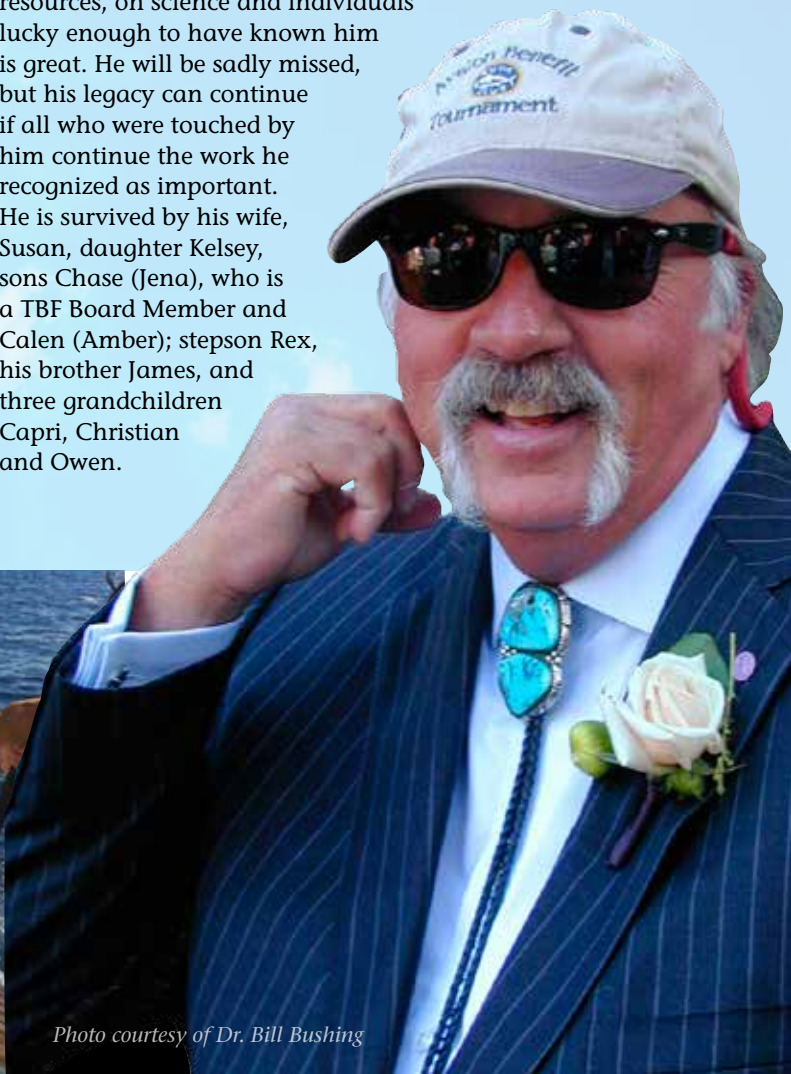


Photo courtesy of Dr. Bill Bushing

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WELCOME ABOARD



BOARD MEMBER:
Dr. William "Bill" Hixson, originally from Pensacola, Florida, resides with wife Allison and three sons in Fairhope, Alabama. He is the 2015 President of the Mobile Big Game Fishing Club, an entity with which he has taken an active role as leader in many positions including Tournament Director.

Dr. Bill, a practicing Radiation

Oncologist, is an avid angler who enjoys offshore fishing out of Orange Beach, Alabama and the rest of the northern Gulf of Mexico; he also likes fishing in Southeast Alaska. He owns a great charter vessel, *Lady D*, which is docked at the Orange Beach Marina. Bill is a strong supporter of billfish conservation and responsible fishing. TBF is pleased to welcome him to the Board of Directors as President of the MBGFC!



TBF TEAM MEMBER:
Adrienne Katz joins the TBF team as a Science and Policy Associate. Born and raised in Brooklyn, New York, Adrienne left a ten-year career in advertising to pursue her interests on and in the ocean. She worked for seven years as a SCUBA instructor and fishing guide on a variety of vessels both small and large throughout the Caribbean, Central America, and

Alaska. During her time as a deckhand on a sportfishing boat in Costa Rica, Adrienne discovered the conservation work being done by TBF and decided it was time to return to dry land. While pursuing her master's degree in Marine Affairs and Policy at the University of Miami, Adrienne began to volunteer with TBF, which led to an internship, and ultimately to the temporary position she now occupies. Adrienne will contribute to TBF's science and policy work by collaborating on sportfishing conservation research projects that includes angler participation in regions in the US and beyond.

The Billfish Foundation is proud to announce the new Winthrop P. Rockefeller Student Ocean Program Interns for summer 2015. This initiative carries on Win's vision of responsible ocean and fish stewardship by providing a valuable work experience to selected students. Please join us in welcoming the new Winthrop P. Rockefeller Student Ocean Program Interns:



Courtney Capeheart is a Master's Candidate at the University of Florida studying Natural Resources Conservation. Courtney's emphasis is on education and outreach with our sportfishing community and enhancing our Marine Discovery Guide for the Gulf of Mexico.



Nathan Bendriem recently graduated from the University of Miami, Fl with a degree in Marine Affairs and Policy. Nathan is assisting TBF with geo-spatial work on tagging as well as looking at the conservation motivation of billfish anglers in the United States.



Treva Hunter Tyson is a rising senior at Lynchburg College studying communications. Hunter is working on developing content and implementation strategies for promoting TBF's mission via digital media.

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TAG & RELEASE AWARD WINNERS!



The Billfish Foundation's (TBF) 24th annual Tag & Release Awards Ceremony was held on February 13, 2015 for the 2014 competition season (11/1/13 – 10/31/14), at Jungle Island in Miami. Bisbee's Fish & Wildlife Conservation Fund sponsored this event, highlighting the best anglers and crews globally. It is only through the support of TBF's Tag & Release program sponsors - Bisbee's Fish & Wildlife Conservation Fund, Casa Vieja Lodge, Costa Sunglasses, King Sailfish Mounts, Pelagic Gear, and Simrad – that TBF can continue advancing billfish science and conservation. King Sailfish Mounts presented exquisite trophies to all winners and Costa Sunglasses were awarded to all the winners present.

As an added bonus, Fathom Offshore provided lures and Fishtrack provided a 1-year premium membership for all of the overall winners! The general public was treated with an open bar and delicious beer donated by Sailfish Brewery and had the opportunity to win several raffles consisting of items from Alutecnos, Bluefin USA, Costa, Pelagic, Fathom Offshore, Fish Track, Wines for Humanity, and Yellowfin Unlimited.

For 2014, blue marlin tag and release reports from the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans smashed all previous years, primarily from Cape Verde, Costa Rica and the Great Barrier Reef. Significant increases in tag and release reports were also received from Western Australia and Western Africa, which

is a good sign that the industry and a responsible sportfishing ethic continue to grow worldwide.

TBF also introduced the first Gulf of Mexico regional awards. This recognizes anglers and crews in the Gulf, who tag the most marlin during the season (May 1 – Sept. 30). The competition counts tags for both blue marlin and white marlin collectively in the Gulf of Mexico (West of the 82 W Longitude) for top captains, anglers, and boat.

Thank you to all of the winners who attended the ceremony with their family and friends, as well as, all who participated in the 2014 TBF Tag & Release Competition. For a complete list of winners of the 2014 competition year please go to www.billfish.org or look in Billfish magazine, Vol. 1, 2015.

Left: Top Overall Captain and Tagging Mates Gulf of Mexico: Mike Noling, Capt. Jimmy Crochet and Jason Yelverton. Center: Top Tagging Youth Angler Ages 16-17, Nick Brackmann with CVL staff. Right: Andrew Cox, Senior Editor of Marlin Magazine, Top Overall Release Captain, Chris Van Leeuwen and TBF board member, Bill Gooch.





Left: TBF Tag & Release Program Sponsors - Bisbee's Fish & Wildlife Conservation Fund, Casa Vieja Lodge, Costa Sunglasses, King Sailfish Mounts, Simrad, and Pelagic Gear. Right: Chris Kelly and wife, Chris Whitley, David Neblett and wife and TBF volunteers. Below: Chris Sheeder from Casa Vieja Lodge with Peter Chaibongsai and Andrew Cox.



Ceremony Sponsored By



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Tag & Release Program Sponsors:



INTERNATIONAL TAG & RELEASE COMPETITION 2015

TBF's 2015 worldwide tag and release competition, which attracts members from at least 70 nations fishing the Atlantic, Pacific and/or Indian Oceans, began November 1, 2014 and ends on October 31, 2015. There are dozens of categories to win so make sure to submit your 'Tag Data Report' and 'Release Notification' cards via mail or online at www.tagbillfish.org. Ensure that you write legibly and accurately to avoid mistakes in calculating your numbers. Please retain copies of your cards. Active TBF membership is required, youth anglers must include their date of birth on each tag and/or release report card and must tag and/or release a minimum of three billfish.

REGIONAL COMPETITIONS

TBF now offers the chance to win in two regional competitions - the South Florida Sailfish Circuit and the Gulf of Mexico Marlin Tagging Competition. TBF active membership is required plus a minimum of 5 sailfish for the South Florida Circuit (U.S. Atlantic waters from Ft. Pierce to Key West) and 5 marlin tagged in the Gulf of Mexico to qualify (W of the 82W Longitude).

Keep in mind, ALL tag and release data must be received by TBF no later than November 15, 2015, for all competitions!

For complete rules for the global competition and for the regional competitions, including eligible categories, please visit www.billfish.org or call 954-938-0150 for Peter Chaibongsai (ext. 107) or Michael Kelly (ext. 102). Current Competition standings, as of June 22, 2015, are on page 16 & 18.

TBF's Tag & Release



Awards Ceremony Fun!



2015 TAG & RELEASE COMPETITION UPDATE



The 2015 competition year is half over; winners will be recognized at the annual Tag & Release Award Ceremony in February 2016.

Below are the current “Top Five” competitors in most of the competition categories. This list reflects the tag and release records processed by TBF as of June 22, 2015.

Be sure to tag, release, and report your billfish catches before the end of the competition on October 31, 2015. Best to submit your records online at www.tagbillfish.org but you can still submit them through the mail. The last date for receiving tag and release cards for this competition year is November 15, 2015.

CURRENT STANDINGS AS OF 6-22-15 * denotes a tie

OVERALL RELEASE CAPTAIN

1. Ronnie Fields
2. Dean Panos
3. Ben Horning
4. Pete Rae
5. Fin Gaddy

OVERALL TAGGING CAPTAIN

1. Ben Horning
2. Thomas Colquhoun
3. Fin Gaddy
4. Rom Whitaker
5. Ronnie Fields

OVERALL RELEASE ANGLER

1. Gray Ingram
2. Tiffany Day
3. Pat McCotter
4. Amanda Cofer
5. John Duvall

OVERALL TAGGING ANGLER

1. Chris Jessen
2. Laura Jessen
3. Gray Ingram
4. Darryl Schroeder
5. John Duvall

OVERALL RELEASE LADY ANGLER

1. Tiffany Day
2. Amanda Cofer
3. Cece Imbrie
4. Melissa Haight
5. Sharon Poulter

OVERALL TAGGING LADY ANGLER

1. Laura Jessen
2. Lori Schroeder
3. Dawn Samuels
4. Martha MacNab
5. Jo-Ann Riley

OVERALL RELEASE YOUTH ANGLER

1. Brown Gaddy
2. Charles Gaddy
3. Shawn MacMullin

OVERALL TAGGING YOUTH ANGLER

1. Charles Gaddy
2. Shawn MacMullin
3. Jack Shanklin
4. Josh Gates
5. Kyle Gates

TOP TAGGING ANGLER- ATLANTIC Blue Marlin

1. Gray Ingram
2. Gary Pirko
3. Gary Ellis
4. Alexandre Murad
5. Laurent Sahyoun

Sailfish

1. Charles Gaddy
2. Glenn Creamer
3. Dawn Samuels
4. Shawn MacMullin
5. Nuno Abohbot

Swordfish

1. Richard Gudoian

White Marlin

1. Nick Rauco

TOP RELEASE ANGLER- ATLANTIC Blue Marlin

1. Gary Pirko
2. Gray Ingram
3. Joe Capeletti

Sailfish

1. Brown Gaddy
2. Nathan Walker
3. Cody Gavalier
4. Chris Wrenn
5. Junior Baas

TOP TAGGING CAPTAIN- ATLANTIC Blue Marlin

1. Ronnie Fields
2. Max Morris
3. Tim Richardson
4. Stephane Millez
5. Terry Brennan

Sailfish

1. Fin Gaddy
2. Rom Whitaker
3. Doug Covin
4. Jon Brooks
5. Gary Cliford

White Marlin

1. Rich Barrett
2. Tim Richardson
3. Antonio Amaral

TOP RELEASE CAPTAIN- ATLANTIC Blue Marlin

1. Ronnie Fields
2. Dean Panos
3. Eric Mansur, Sr.

Sailfish

1. Dean Panos
2. Fin Gaddy
3. Rom Whitaker
4. Doug Covin
5. Jeff Scott

White Marlin

1. Tim Richardson

TOP TAGGING ANGLER- PACIFIC Blue Marlin

1. Chris Jessen

Sailfish

1. Chris Jessen
2. Laura Jessen
3. Darryl Schoeder
4. Lori Schroeder
5. Scott Kozak

Striped Marlin

1. John Duvall
2. Robert Hendricks
3. Martha MacNab
4. Nick Brackmann
5. Judy Sillis

TOP RELEASE ANGLER- PACIFIC Black Marlin

1. Mark Davis

Blue Marlin

1. Pat McCotter
2. Tiffany Day

Sailfish

1. Gray Ingram
2. Tiffany Day
3. Amanda Cofer
4. John Duvall

Striped Marlin

1. Pat McCotter
2. John Duvall

TOP TAGGING CAPTAIN- PACIFIC Black Marlin

1. Tim Richardson

Blue Marlin

1. Ben Horning
2. Skeet Warren
3. Simon Carosi

Sailfish

1. Ben Horning
2. Thomas Colquhoun
3. Chris Sheeder
4. Cliff Mountain
5. David Salazar

Striped Marlin

1. Jaime Gonzalez
2. Eddy Cesena
3. Bernie Sillis
4. Tony Araiza
5. Bernabe Ruiz

TOP RELEASE CAPTAIN- PACIFIC Black Marlin

1. Tim Dean

Blue Marlin

1. Pete Rae
2. Ben Horning
3. Skeet Warren
4. Ronnie Fields
5. Mike Day

Sailfish

1. Ronnie Fields
2. Ben Horning
3. Mike Day
4. Victor Julio Lopez Pizarro
5. Brad Philipps

Striped Marlin

1. Eduardo Cesena Burgoin
2. Pete Rae
3. Alex Collins

TOP TAGGING ANGLER - INDIAN Black Marlin

1. Jo-Ann Riley
2. Scott Macgowan
3. Riley Smith

Blue Marlin

1. Marcus Longhurst

Sailfish

1. Barry Sullivan
2. Kane Dysart
3. Jeremy Barnett
4. Henry Riggs-Miller

TOP TAGGING CAPTAIN- INDIAN Black Marlin

1. Bernard Vale
2. Ross Newton
3. Jo-Ann Riley

Blue Marlin

1. Ross Newton
2. Scott Macgowan
3. Bernard Vale

Sailfish

1. Terence Farrell
2. Perry Rosalie
3. Rolly Pierre
4. Ken Adcock

TOP RELEASE CAPTAIN- INDIAN Black Marlin

1. Ross Newton

YOUTH DIVISION (TAG)

8 and under

1. Charles Gaddy
2. Earney White

13 – 15

1. Shawn MacMullin
2. Jack Shanklin
3. Josh Gates
4. Sloane Shanklin
5. Riley Smith

16 – 17

1. Nick Brackmann

YOUTH DIVISION (RELEASE)

8 and under

1. Brown Gaddy
2. Charles Gaddy

13 – 15

1. Shawn MacMullin

SHOW 'EM WHAT THE GULF CAN DO!

Participate in the 2015 Gulf of Mexico Marlin Tagging Competition

For more info go to Billfish.org/GulfCompetition



The Billfish Foundation gives anglers a voice to fight for fishing access and opportunities, while advancing billfish research.

Join The Billfish Foundation at Billfish.org

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TBF'S SOFLO SAILFISH CIRCUIT

Competition Update as of 6/22/2015:

TOP TAGGING ANGLERS

1. Dawn Samuels
2. Shawn MacMullin
3. Randall Scarlett

TOP TAGGING CAPTAINS

1. Doug Covin
2. Bouncer Smith
3. Michael MacMullin
4. James Knox
5. Matt Alligood

*denotes a tie

TOP RELEASE ANGLERS

1. Chris Wren
2. Eric Hull
3. Parker Williams*
4. Cece Imbrie*
5. Rick Murphy*

TOP RELEASE CAPTAINS

1. Dean Panos
2. Doug Covin
3. Jeff Scott
4. Shawn Adams
5. Jim Mulcahy

Please note these standings are for eligible tag and release records for both overall and professional angler and captain categories.

Standings for professional, junior, and lady categories will be calculated at the end of the competition period.

SOFLO SAILFISH CIRCUIT

The Billfish Foundation's SOUTH FLORIDA SAILFISH REGIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP

Lots of chances to win great prizes from **COSTA SUNGLASSES** and **KING SAILFISH MOUNTS**

Compete against the best local anglers, captains and crews, open to the public

Separate award categories for tag and release: overall, professional, junior angler, lady angler and captain

Fishing boundaries include US Atlantic waters from Fort Pierce to Key West

Simply submit or report your tag/releases to be entered to win

NOV. 1 2014–OCT. 31, 2015
for complete rules, visit www.billfish.org



CAPTAIN'S TIPS & TRICKS



There are only a handful of captains who



Captain Chris Sheeder

have more than a thousand billfish releases under their belt. For an angler to come close to reaching those kind of numbers it takes a

combination of effort from the crew, great fishing conditions and a skilled captain to bring them all together. This means making the most of every

fish that comes into your spread and always being ready for the next one to show up. At Casa Vieja Lodge, Captain Chris Sheeder (2014 Top Overall Tagging Captain, Top Tagging Captain Pacific Sailfish) has released an amazing 20,000 plus billfish (with more than 5,000 caught on fly). Chris was nice enough to share with TBF some of his tips for hooking and more importantly, releasing multiple fish.

Sheeder, like most captains, will tell you “the best time to be fishing for doubles, triples or quads is when you

have one on!” Often times when a billfish shows up in your spread, it’s not alone and perhaps the best teaser you can have in your spread is another billfish. After the first fish is hooked, Sheeder then turns the boat in the direction of whatever side the fish is hooked on and brings in the other teasers. Many captains



have a preference for electric teaser reels because of the ability to preset the position of your teasers. With just a push of a button, a captain can bring in the teasers while keeping both hands free to drive and not have a tangled mess of fishing line to get snagged on. After teasers are cleared, Sheeder will pitch baits on the side the boat is circling toward, in order to avoid tangles, and try to raise a second, third or fourth fish in large circles until the fish stop biting.

Once multiple fish have been hooked up and the bite shuts off, boat-handling skills are really put to the test and a captain then must prioritize which fish to pursue first. Sheeder does

(Continued on page 20)





Piece of dental floss attached to a rubber band makes gripping easier when applying tag to tagstick.

(Captain's Tricks continued from page 19)

this by thinking of the hooked fish “as a line of fish” and chases them down one by one, “going from the closest fish to the farthest, keeping them all in a line for ease.” Of course, during a fight fish change directions and their position in relation to the boat. A hooked fish racing toward the bow can be easily managed with some quick boat maneuvering. “If one gets towards the bow as you are backing up, that one now becomes the first one in the line and is the starting fish. Always go to the closest fish first, until one happens to get towards your bow and then that becomes priority. If a second fish gets up in front of the bow, just be aggressive toward the first and then drive forward to the second while you throw a bait in the water. Driving forward to the hooked fish allows you to fish as much as possible.”



Tournament winning boats not only have the skill to turn a single bite into a double, triple or quad, but a sound game plan for making sure they release every fish they hook. Hooking multiple fish is always on the mind of anglers, but when the chaos of a triple header unfolds, a captain needs a proven plan of attack. Think of how many times during a tournament you hear a last minute double or triple come across the radio; it can come down to just that one extra fish. As Sheeder will tell you, “remember; always fish as much as you can while you have one on.”

Another Helpful Tagging Tip . . .

As an extra precaution to secure a tag on the tag applicator, most crews wrap a rubber band around the tag to keep it snug against the tag stopper. Loading a new tag on the applicator can be tricky once the rubber band gets wet as it becomes difficult to grip. The crews down at Casa Vieja Lodge have come up with the simple solution of tying a piece of dental floss around the rubber band. Simply wrap the floss around the band with a few half hitches and leave a short thread of floss that can easily be gripped to slide a new tag under the rubber band. This easy fix only takes seconds, but will save valuable time, especially when releasing multiple fish!

To contact Capt Sheeder or Casa Vieja Lodge please visit their website at casaviejalodge.com

TBF TEAMS UP WITH OFFSHORE WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP

At this year's Bonnier Offshore World Championship (OWC), The Billfish Foundation (TBF) partnered with Marina Pez Vela, the Costa Rica Tourism Board (ICT), the Presidential Challenge of Central America, Costa, King Sailfish Mounts and the Bonnier Corporation to advance tagging data collection. With the incredible volume of sailfish found off Quepos, Costa Rica during the past few seasons, coupled with many of the world's best offshore anglers fishing the OWC, the opportunity to tag billfish and collect data to improve conservation was a natural fit.

Three hundred and fifty free tags and some tag sticks were given to anglers pre-fishing the OWC to tag billfish and submit data to the Marina Pez Vela. The tagging contributions made by the OWC anglers will soon be showcased via TBF's website and social media outlets.



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RADAR

for Marlin

by George Poveromo

Successfully searching for marlin requires specific knowledge. This includes an understanding of historic migratory patterns for specific areas, and how water surface temperature breaks and ocean circulation features can dictate where and if billfish will appear along traditional fishing zones. The interaction of prominent underwater structures – canyons, sea mounts, tightly compressed fathom curves, etc.– with any current flow or an eddy is also important, since they form potent combinations that can ignite nutrient- and baitfish-rich upwellings, and major feeding blitzes.

Radar is another crucial component in locating billfish. A critical safety aid for navigating in the dark, fog and rain, radar has the advantage of locating birds at impressive distances – and working birds often unveil feeding-game fish – including marlin.

For example, with my radar, we continuously look for birds offshore. In one instance, after we dialed in a few, we picked up our trolling baits, and sped off from proven deep-water structure that had produced blue marlin for us in the past. Sure enough, six miles further offshore – in wide open water and over flat bottom– those birds were over a school of dolphin. Some 30-minutes into the troll, we hooked a blue marlin!

The point is – the radar revealed birds, which led us to a school of dolphin far from proven bottom structure for marlin. Without that type of knowledge, we not only would have missed those open-water dolphin, but the blue marlin stalking them.

Radar is undoubtedly a plus for uncovering feeding dolphin, blackfins, bonitos and even yellowfin tuna – when you track the birds following

them. In those cases, your chances of hooking a blue marlin go up since there is excellent chance of blue marlin being near its food source. So, pay attention to birds, even if they're not over heralded marlin spots.

Radar is often misunderstood, as a fishing aid. One misconception is that a closed dome antenna can spot birds as well as an open array antenna. To accurately read birds at distances well beyond the human eye – even with binoculars – it comes down to radar power and the size of the open array antenna.

For example, a 6kW through 25kW open array antenna – ranging from four feet to ten feet, respectively, will provide enough power to broadcast and receive signals and mark birds over impressive distances. As a general rule, the narrower the antenna beam width, the farther the signal will broadcast and the greater target discrimination it will yield. A six-foot open array antenna will emit a narrower beam width and reach greater distances than a four-foot open array antenna. The markings from the six-foot antenna will also be much sharper and easier to discern.

On my 28 center console, I have the Simrad MO24-T, a 24-inch widescreen multi-touch unit, and a NSS9 evo2, a 9-inch touch screen unit. Both have radar with a four-foot open array, 6kW antenna. For birds, we set the radar's outer limit at either four or six miles and fine tune the readings from there. My antenna is mounted on a T-top, not high on a bridge or tower. As a result, our distances are not as great as those from higher antenna mounts, but we'll have plenty to get the job done – often in great fashion.

Adjusting the gain on the Simrad Radar to dial in the birds.





Carl Grassi looking at Simrad MO24-T (Touch Screen) watching for birds.

We can read birds out to around eight miles, while larger sportfishing vessels with more powerful radar systems and higher antenna mounts can easily pick up birds up to 24 miles and beyond.

Another misconception among some who purchase a top-notch radar system is that their screens will simply scream birds when they're offshore. Unless it's a large gathering of birds, this is simply a fairy tale. It's all about precision tuning and knowing exactly what to look for. As mentioned earlier, a four- or six-mile range is set on my radar. We'll turn off the anti-sea surface and rain clutter controls, and advance the gain until the screen fills with noise. Next, the gain is slowly reduced until the screen noise just barely fades away. With a sensitive and clean screen, we watch for any "specs" to appear,

which could indicate a single bird – such as a frigate, or a pair of birds. To the inexperienced, that "spec" might pass for noise, but we intensely study any "spec" on the screen, noting its position each time it fades and reappears during the antenna sweeps. By the third or fourth rotation of the antenna – and providing that "spec" remains in the same spot – we know it's a bird(s) working over fish. We'll then race off for it (note: activating the bearing to waypoint provides an easy line to follow). If the "spec" moves with each antenna sweep, we know it is a bird in motion, searching like we are. We don't give chase in those cases.

The larger the gathering of birds, the more pronounced and intense the markings will be on the screen. These are easy to distinguish, but often, it's the singles and pairs of birds – most

notably frigates off South Florida, the Keys and throughout the Bahamas, which offer the best big-game potential.

To become proficient at dialing in a radar, choose a calm day and run several miles offshore. Start with closer ranges and learn how your unit interprets birds. Fine tune the radar to distinguish a single bird and its movements, paying close attention to the gain setting and the sharpest readings. From there, extend the range. You can also experiment with background colors, to determine which offers the best contrast for revealing subtle markings. In short time, you'll become a master at picking off birds – and billfish.



Left to right, blue marlin released by George Poveromo. Keith Brack and George Poveromo celebrating the release of Keith's second blue marlin off Bimini.





DISCOVER

Sportfishing in Samoa

By Captain Chris Donato

The ancient Polynesians have been fishing the coastal waters of Samoa for many centuries. Traditionally out of homemade canoes with bone hooks and hand lines. Yet it is only in recent years that sportfishing has started in Samoa, and I have come to find out that it is most certainly an unspoiled blue marlin hot spot worthy of attention.

Independent Samoa is located in the Southwestern Pacific and is one of the largest islands in the Polynesian chain. It's located about 600 miles north east of Fiji, and is made up of 2 main islands, Savaii and Upolu. Our 37' Merritt is based out of Salani Surf and Fishing lodge on Upolu's south side, where we run charters mainly focusing on blue marlin.

I have been fishing professionally here in Samoa for 8 years, the first few years were spent logging bite locations, current directions, water temperatures and fish size trends. This logging was the only way to figure out the bite and the seasons in Samoa. Not having any previous recorded research to go off of made for many trials and errors during this time. It was basically all pioneer days out here for the blue marlin fishery. However, over time trends and seasons began to materialise in my logs.



You can catch blue marlin here all year round, but from what I have gathered the best time to catch the marlin in Samoa is during the wet season (November –April). I believe the big blues are here spawning then. However do not let the names fool you as our wet season is similar in weather to the dry season anywhere else. In those months, we can average 5-6 bites a day, sometimes even up to 10! Most fish range in size from 300-600 pounds, however, last November a 1025 pound blue marlin was caught and released, proving there is a grander class in the Samoan waters.

Here at the Salani Surf and Fishing lodge, we continuously promote and execute catch and release techniques. We encourage our guests and the locals to do the same, explaining the importance of catch and release, not only to the local community and ecotourism on the island, but to the worldwide healthy stocks of species, for future generations of anglers. I feel that as a charter boat captain you can set an example so they too may go home and do the same thing and that could snowball into more people and more fish being released.



The edge or drop off is located 2 miles offshore where she abruptly drops off to 1500 feet, another 2 miles and you are on the 6000 foot ledge, where underwater ledges and horseshoe like contours make up fantastic edges to funnel in bait fish and tuna. Most our fishing is done very similar to the Kona style, pulling five lures on heavy tackle.

Contact Capt Chris Donato for more information and to book a stay and billfishing excursion at the Salani Resort in Samoa. Also, lookout for your chance to bid on and win a fishing excursion with Capt. Donato at the silent auction during TBF's 2015 Annual Gala, Hemingway's Havana Nights, Nov. 6th during the Fort Lauderdale Boat Show. www.grandermarlin.com

The local boats have had countless encounters with these big blues although most are lost due to lack of tackle. These locals do not pull heavy tackle as their primary target is mahi mahi, tuna and wahoo. On Leilani, our 37' Merritt, we are looking for these bigger fish and only pull 130's, unless were pitch baiting light tackle. I believe Samoa has the potential to produce several shots a year at grander class blues for serious anglers willing to put in the time on the water. Samoa is most definitely a heavy tackle fishery just waiting to be exposed to the masses.

In this area of the pacific, releasing any fish seemed like a waste of good food to the locals. I have to admit that when I first came down here, rumors began to spread about this crazy white guy who lets his fish go. It took time, patience, and support from The Billfish Foundation to finally show the locals the benefits of conservation and release techniques for the local fishery. There has even been a tag and release policy implemented and a minimum marlin weight in the Annual Local Samoan fishing tournament. This is an exciting start to a fishing conservation ethic in a culture where in the past even the local sport fisherman killed every marlin they caught.

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To learn more details and benefits for TBF's Club Memberships or Conservation Partnerships contact Deborah at: Deborah_Cummings@billfish.org or 954-938-0150 ext 106.

To learn more visit Billfish.org

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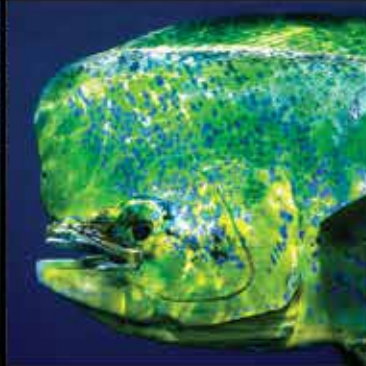
2015 TOURNAMENTS

**The Top Gulf
of Mexico TBF
Supporting Club**

Photo courtesy of Alec Breaud of Metal Shark Boats

- **Memorial Day**
May 22nd – 25th, 2015
- **Memorial Day
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May 22nd – 23rd, 2015
- **Junior Angler
Tournament**
July 3rd – 4th, 2015
- **Billfish Limited
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July 24th – 26th, 2015
- **Ladies Tournament**
July 31st – Aug 2nd, 2015
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TBF & SEAKEEPERS Each with unique specialties, partner for billfish conservation!



The Billfish Foundation (TBF), with its research, education and advocacy expertise, and The International SeaKeepers Society, with its direct link with the yachting community to advance awareness of global ocean issues, have entered a partnership to advance billfish science and conservation. While TBF benefits from the data gathering assistance from sportfishing teams, SeaKeepers benefits from the yachting community's willingness to provide platforms for research and bringing attention to ocean issues.

The organizations' first co-hosted event to raise awareness of the partnership took place during the Miami Yacht & Brokerage Show on the Denison Dock. The floating dock platform was greatly enhanced with art and furniture provided by well known photographer Tony Ludovico. Guests enjoyed delicious appetizers sponsored by Savvy Graphics, drinks by Sailfish Brewery and Source Water. Guests supported a raffle presented by TBF, which included a customized ORCA cooler filled with goodies from Costa sunglasses, Pelagic High Performance Offshore Gear, Bluefin

Pre-Expedition meeting with Annie Peterson, Angela Rosenberg of SeaKeepers, Peter Chaibongsai of TBF, and Dr. Duncan Irschick.



Staff from both TBF and SeaKeepers uniting for billfish conservation.

USA apparel and tackle with other great items for anglers and boaters.

The partnerships' first research project was launched in waters off Bimini with Dr. Duncan Irschick, a functional and evolutionary morphologist from the University of Massachusetts, Amherst, who also conducts research on various shark species. Duncan's initial billfish research focused on Atlantic sailfish with the goal to develop a user-friendly method and device for computing the fish's weight, an indicator of the condition of the fish stocks. The device is to quickly take volumetric measurements of each fish at sea. Unfortunately, no sailfish were caught off North Bimini during the two day expedition on board the *Reel Buzz* sportfishing boat, but other trips are scheduled. To stay informed of the joint activities of the TBF-SeaKeepers partnership go to www.billfish.org or www.seakeepers.org.

TBF'S BREW CHARITY NIGHT WITH SALTWATER BREWERY

Saltwater Brewery in Delray Beach played host to a night of fundraising for The Billfish Foundation (TBF) on May 21st. The events on tap for the night included live music, multiple raffles and great hand-crafted beer provided by Saltwater Brewery.

Members, supporters and new faces were interested in TBF's efforts to raise



Peter Agardy of Saltwater Brewery drawing a lucky raffle prize winner!

awareness of billfish conservation and billfishing activities. The six raffles held throughout the night were a hit thanks to the prizes provided by Saltwater Brewery and other TBF supporting companies including Costa sunglasses, Pelagic High Performance Offshore Gear, Troll Pro, Bluefin USA and King Sailfish Mounts. Peter Agardy of Saltwater Brewery also provided several pieces of his original artwork and tours of the brewery as additional raffle prizes. TBF was able to raise over \$650 from the raffle ticket sales. Saltwater Brewery offered TBF the proceeds from purchases of their Quest for the Crest English Style Pale Ale.

TBF thanks Saltwater Brewery for hosting this community event and for supporting TBF's conservation efforts. Thanks also to the members, friends and guests in attendance for contributing to our cause.

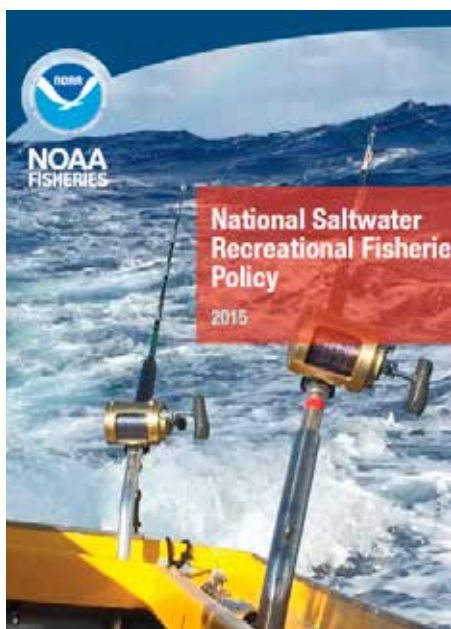
TBF staff on the brewery tour.



UNITED STATES - NMFS KEPT PROMISE

Keeping a 2014 promise, the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) released a Draft National Saltwater Recreational Fisheries Policy. After accepting public comments the agency then released the Final Policy with goals and guiding principles, which are to be incorporated into NOAA's fishery management processes. The goals include: 1) support and maintain sustainable saltwater recreational fisheries resources, including healthy marine and estuarine habitats; 2) promote saltwater recreational fishing for the social, cultural, and economic benefit of the nation; and, 3) enable enduring participation in, and enjoyment of, saltwater recreational fisheries through science-based conservation and management.

Subsequently, the NMFS released its National Saltwater Recreational Fishing Implementation Plan as a blueprint for managing, promoting and fostering recreational fishing consistent with the new Policy at the federal level. The Plan calls for commissioning an independent research council to review the Marine Recreational Information Program (MRIP), improving engagement with recreational fishing



communities, improving electronic trip reporting for charter boats in the Gulf and Atlantic states, and developing models to assess impacts of management decisions on anglers.

CONGRESSIONAL ACTION

TBF, as a member of the Center for Coastal Conservation (CCC), a coalition of leading advocates for marine recreational fishing and boating, continues its support of the coalition's work before Congress to amend and reauthorize the nation's primary fishery management law, the Magnuson Stevens Act (MSA). In addition to the inclusion of legislative language specific for a national recreational policy, goals include revising the government's approaches to recreational fishing, allocating marine fish for the greatest benefit to the nation, creating reasonable latitude in stock rebuilding timelines, codifying a process for cooperative management and managing for the forage base.

The MSA reauthorization and amendment process may take a few years to complete, especially with next year's Presidential election.

AUSTRALIAN MARINE RESERVES: Take Two

The Australian government has finally begun reevaluating its 2012 proposed management plan for a

network of Commonwealth Marine Reserves encompassing close to 900,000 square miles of oceanic waters, including a complete no-take zone of approximately 192,000 square miles in the Coral Sea. The country's new governmental leadership, with independent review, is moving forward with a new consultation process that reassesses the 2012 proposed plans in hopes of restoring the confidence of stakeholders, including 5 million Australian anglers.

The sportfishing and other user groups expressed their robust opposition to the 2012 plans, including assertions by scientists that proposed reserve boundaries were not based on sound scientific evidence. It was made clear the government's consultation process fell massively short of fully comprehending the stakeholders' needs. Now the government's current Minister of the Environment, Greg Hunt, asserts the 2012 creation of the marine reserves network was "rushed through by the previous government." Independent assessments in Queensland project a \$15 million (Australian) loss, including half the charter boats in Cairns, if the marine reserves network is implemented as proposed in 2012 for the Coral Sea. The assessments estimate the actual financial impact could be closer to \$1 billion (Australian), three times greater than estimates calculated by the nation's federal government.

To avoid the government repeating mistakes it made in the 2012 review process, Independent Bioregional Advisory Panels were established to conduct consultation, survey stakeholders and collect other relevant information. The Advisory Panels working with an Expert Scientific Panel will consider issues identified by stakeholders, relevant science and potential options to change the proposed zoning of the reserves. One of TBF's 2014 Rybovich Lifetime Achievement award recipients, Dr. Julian Pepperell, is a member of the science panel and will represent the needs of anglers.

Excel Long Range Sportfishing



Pacific bluefin caught aboard one of California's commercial passenger fishing vessels.

CRITICAL TIME FOR PACIFIC BLUEFIN TUNA

Even though 2014 provided U.S. west coast anglers with record numbers of Pacific bluefin tuna, those numbers contradict the heavily overfished status reported by scientists. In its latest assessment of Pacific bluefin tuna (PBF), the International Scientific Committee, an informal group of nations, including the United States, Japan, Chinese Taipei, Korea, Mexico and Taiwan, estimated the 2012 biomass of PBF to be at a historical low level of 4% of its unfished biomass with “overfishing” occurring across the stocks entire Pacific wide range. In response, the following year the Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission (IATTC), a regional multilateral management organization for fisheries in the eastern Pacific Ocean, implemented a 10,000 metric ton quota that was subsequently slashed in half for 2014. At the same time, advisory groups had recommended a more stringent reduction down to 3,300 metric tons. Anglers in California are concerned that the call to reduce the juvenile bluefin catch and to limit catches by the recreational sector, will threaten the iconic long range tuna fleet.



Unlike management of Atlantic bluefin tuna, possession limits for Pacific bluefin vary by state with California currently responsible for the vast majority of the U.S.’s recreational landings with a bag limit of 10 bluefin per day and a trip limit of 30 fish per boat. Between 2000 to 2010 the average annual recreational landing of Pacific bluefin was estimated to be 215 metric tons, but preliminary estimates of landings for 2013 indicated a figure as high as 984 metric tons. These figures are generated from data collected from commercial (rod and reel) passenger fishing vessels (CPFV) and dockside sampling programs using an average size fish of 34 lbs. California anglers maintain that their average size landed Pacific bluefin is usually half that size.

Following the international science advice, May 2015, the U.S. federal Pacific Fisheries Management Council

(PFMC) agreed to a two fish bag limit (per angler, six fish per trip) for boats departing California to fish in federal waters, which is more than a 50% reduction of non-commercial landings. The restrictions may deter potential clients from booking trips with the long range tuna fleets, an unfortunate situation resulting from uncertainties in the Pacific bluefin tuna science, which is primarily dependent upon reported landings data.

Pacific bluefin tuna are managed as a single, Pacific-wide stock of fish requiring actions to cover all age classes throughout the entire ocean, even though mature fish spawn off Japan and only juvenile bluefin are caught primarily in the eastern Pacific Ocean. The impact of bluefin tuna fisheries in the Western and Central Pacific Ocean is far greater (84%) than in the eastern Pacific Ocean.

ATLANTIC BLUEFIN MANAGEMENT

Atlantic bluefin tuna are currently managed as three stocks – eastern and western Atlantic and Mediterranean, which many think reflects arbitrary delineations based on politics.

As more traditional tag recapture reports are received and coupled with other research, one day the Atlantic bluefin tuna management may look more like today’s Pacific bluefin tuna management.



UNDERSTANDING MAXIMUM SIZE IN THE CATCH: Atlantic Blue Marlin as an Example



Dr. Goodyear doing field research in Alaska.

TBF scientist, Dr. Phillip Goodyear's most recent Atlantic blue marlin research focused on the effect fishing has on the

number of the largest fish (granders) in a population. His research is published by the American Fisheries Society, the oldest, largest and most influential association of fisheries professionals in the world.

Typically, fishing reduces the number of fish that survive to old age, which also reduces the average age of fish available to be caught. With most species this also significantly reduces the average size of the catch, which is an important indicator of stock health. However, in earlier research Goodyear discovered that average size is a poor indicator of population health in fast-growing species like blue marlin. This is a consequence of the fact that the fast growth of young fish reduces the difference between the size of the very old and young fish. Hence the average size can't change very much when fishing removes most of the old, large fish from the population. This phenomenon lessens the utility of average size as a population standard of measurement (metric) for stock assessments. Still, the abundance of the oldest and very largest fish does decline even in fast growing species, but there has been no statistic to quantify this fact for use in stock monitoring or assessments.

Goodyear's research developed a new statistical measure (NZ50) to fill this gap and showed it to be a sensitive indicator of excessive fishing. NZ50 is the smallest number of observations required from the catch or population to include at least one fish of some



Marlin grander being tagged. Courtesy of the Dreamin' On.

particular large size half of the time. Think of it as the statistical measure of the number of fish an average angler would have to catch to have a 50-50 chance of catching a "grander" at different population levels of abundance. Goodyear illustrated the statistic with data from a simulated hypothetical population modeled after Atlantic blue marlin. The results showed NZ50 to be a much more responsive indicator of the decline in abundance than the use of average size for judging population status. He concluded that this new statistical measure would be useful for monitoring stock recovery and should be routinely included in stock assessments.

GRANDERS ARE IMPORTANT IN OCEANS:

It is important to have blue marlin granders in the water at abundance levels high enough to be occasionally encountered in the catch, which would signify a healthy population. In addition, the presence of very large fish in the current population enhances the probability that future generations of the species will continue to include such extraordinary individual fish because of their contribution to the gene pool.

RECREATIONAL PELAGIC FISHING & ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY ON COLOMBIA'S CARIBBEAN COAST

A report of the results from a socio-economic survey conducted by two former TBF interns (Kristina Trotta and Brendan Mackesey) and members of Club de Pesca de Cartegena, Colombia, has been accepted for presentation at the 2015 American Fisheries Society Conference. The acceptance of this non-traditional fish science report illustrates that more people in fisheries academia and professional societies are becoming aware and interested in learning about the influences that can flow from sportfishing ecotourism. Some nations' fishery managers and tourism officials recognize that economic benefits from ecotourism trade influences fishing practices, including changing from kill to catch and release. Once it is realized that properly releasing a fish, so it can be caught by another tourist, on another day, makes good sense, then economic incentives drive change for the good of fish conservation, while generating jobs and economic returns.

Recreational Pelagic Fishing & Economic Opportunity on Colombia's Caribbean Coast

(Continued on page 36)

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(Research continued from page 34)

reflects answers provided by anglers in several locations on Colombia's Caribbean coast about why they fish for specific species and how much they spend annually for recreational fishing. Specifically, billfish anglers were asked of their attitudes toward recreational fishing, do they target one or a few species, do they fish for sport and release or do they fish to harvest the fish for food. Analysis indicates that most of these anglers targeted a wide variety of species, not just billfish, and preferred fishing for sport rather than for consumption. In response to the question about how much they spend in a year on recreational fishing, the answers averaged \$2,534 per survey participant.

With a growing economy and tremendous opportunities for a vibrant sportfishing eco-tourism trade, Colombia is at a pivotal point in deciding whether to develop such a trade. Sportfishing, especially with a catch and release fishery, generates recurring economic benefits to local communities. Previous surveys



Club Nautico Marina (above left) and new clubhouse.

indicated if the targeted fish species are well managed so abundance and encounter rates for anglers are high, anglers will pay respectable sums for the opportunities to travel

to the host nation and fish its waters repeatedly. A predominantly catch and release fishery also is compatible with sustaining fish resources, and thus, supports conservation of the species. Overall, many factors indicate that Colombia is a prime location for further socio-economic study and a sustainable sportfishing fishery.

A RECORD-BREAKING BILLFISH TOURNAMENT

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FAMILY FUN FEST AT BISCAYNE BAY NATIONAL PARK

The Billfish Foundation (TBF) always looks for new avenues to engage the public with its programs, especially young people. TBF staff enjoyed the unique opportunity to educate over 400 children and adults about the Tag & Release program during Biscayne Bay National Park's Family Fun Fest on February 8th. The event gave TBF a venue to show how citizen science drives the program and contributes to science and conservation.

At the TBF station, participants learned about billfish through photos and larval fish samples. Following a brief discussion on the importance of the billfish tagging program, they were armed with a Billfish Foundation tag card and then went "fishing" (wandering) through the park in search of "billfish". When they encountered a "billfish" (a person with a special t-shirt, a flag, and GPS unit), they "caught" the fish by interviewing it: what kind of fish are you, how much do you weigh, how long are you, what is your tag number and what is your current GPS location? Participants recorded all of this data on the tag card and returned to the TBF station where the data was processed and plotted on Google Earth. Participants saw on the map where their "fish" was caught, as well as all previous locations where that fish was caught. The combined data created a map showing how the "fish" moved around the park.

For real world applications, TBF displayed recapture tracks, even some from Biscayne Bay, showing how far these fish can travel and grow. The participants seemed amazed about what they learned concerning billfish, TBF's program and the biological and economical importance of the fish to south Florida. To learn more about TBF's education programs or to have TBF come to an event please contact us at education@billfish.org.



This boy scout excitedly shows off the blue marlin data he collected on the TBF tag card.

TBF VISITS CUTLER BAY ACADEMY WITH CAREY CHEN

The Billfish Foundation (TBF) and famous marine artist Carey Chen enjoyed a great time speaking with the bright students of Cutler Bay Academy in May before school adjourned for the summer. The students are part of the Cutler Bay Ocean Academy of Science and Technology (COAST) program headed by Mr. Marshall Ruffo. At the heart of the COAST academy's mission lays the advancement of marine and environmental conservation. Through their education the students learn responsible stewardship alongside sustainable practices of natural marine resources.

Carey Chen, TBF Staff and students of Cutler Bay Academy.



Discussion by Carey Chen on how he learned to integrate his artistic talent to advocate for the conservation of billfish allowed the students to see that there are a plethora of methods to making a difference for these fish.

Alongside Carey's colorful stories of fishing around the world, staff from TBF explained how these fish not only need to be protected for the health of the ocean but for economies that rely on recreational sportfishing as a way of securing a higher quality of life. Discussion from the class centered on how the tagging process works, navigation of TBF's website and, of course, fishing stories.

After hours of enthralling discussion, TBF's Adrienne Katz and Courtney Capehart were proud to present the class with unfinished fishing mounts, generously donated by King Sailfish Mounts, for the students to paint and display around the school. Other donations included a gift certificate from King Sailfish Mounts and prints from Carey Chen's collection. These items will be prizes at the end-of-the-year ceremony for the students. The collaboration between the young intelligent minds, Carey Chen and TBF highlights the importance of education about billfish around the world. Thanks again to Carey Chen and the students of Cutler Bay Academy for engaging in TBF's mission.

If your school or education program is interested in hosting The Billfish Foundation for a fun and interactive presentation, please contact us at education@billfish.org.

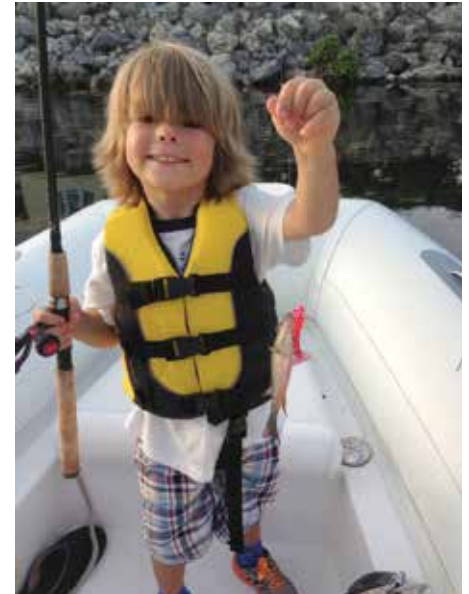
TODAY'S JUNIOR ANGLERS OFFER A PROMISING FUTURE... A Reason for Optimism!

Tournament season, full of excitement, camaraderie, action, exhilaration, strategy, hard work, parties, anticipation, optimism and the exuberance of youth, should serve as a reminder of how and why we got hooked on fishing and why we must continue investing in today's junior anglers.

These fishing season experiences, especially those we observe of junior anglers, should evoke optimism for tomorrow's fishing and for responsible adults of tomorrow. We know recreational fishing offers very positive experiences for helping to develop young anglers for it takes them outdoors, it requires physical activity and teamwork for a successful experience. It also teaches discipline, patience and the need for practice to advance one's skill, which usually requires an investment of adult guidance, supervision, encouragement and time together.

TBF's contribution for helping to inspire today's young anglers comes primarily through educational opportunities and publications. Our youth publications, *Sailfish* for middle and high school students, and *Spearfish* for elementary and younger students are excellent teaching aids and educational reads for young anglers. Parents are encouraged to submit fishing stories and photos of young anglers that can be included in the publications. Copies of the two publications are distributed to schools and when possible used in class presentations on billfish and ocean issues. Thanks to the generosity of one donor, Molly Fleming, TBF is able to produce the two publications and make sure they are distributed to as many youth as possible.

For young adults, the Winthrop P. Rockefeller Student Ocean Program, also currently supported by only one donor, offers college internship opportunities at TBF for graduate and undergraduate students from a variety of academic disciplines. While at TBF, students complete meaningful projects related to our mission and to their educational studies and goals.



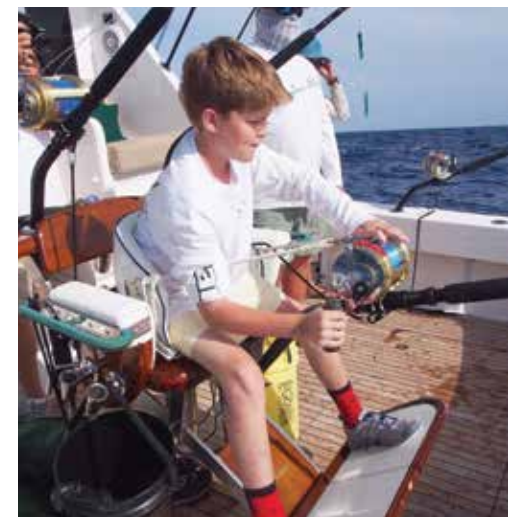


Each project is approved by the university and TBF staff to best insure a meaningful learning experience and one that enhances their studies. Students are not paid for their time at TBF, but if their work performance is successful they are eligible for a \$1,000 stipend at the conclusion of their intern experience.

Individual anglers at all ages are rewarded by TBF for positive conservation acts of catch and release and tag and release with receipt of TBF's beautiful Carey Chen illustrated Release Certificate. The Certificates are impressive when displayed

and generate wonderful memories of fond fishing experiences. When submitting tag and release or catch and release data for junior anglers, their date of birth must be included on each data report. Once a TBF member, Certificates are free for a year, along with TBF magazines.

By investing in preparing today's junior anglers to learn how to fish responsibly, to support conservation through team work and hard work, both they and the fish will be in good shape. *A reason for optimism!*



TBF SALUTES MOLLY FLEMING - A Passionate Angler & Philanthropist



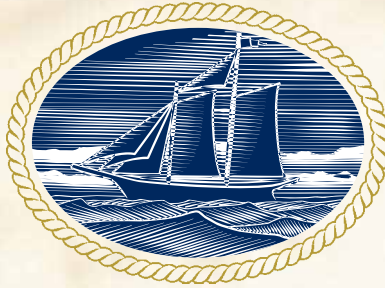
Molly Fleming

Molly Fleming not only supports TBF's educational publications for youth, *Sailfish* and *Spearfish*, but she also is an avid angler and philanthropist who likes to tournament fish, not just for billfish, but, some say for pretty much any species. She fishes on her 54-foot Merritt *Fish Tales* named in honor of one of her beautiful golden retriever dogs, Fisher. Molly says she loves "to fish in Islamorada and my other favorite place is Tropic Star Lodge in Panama; I've been fishing there for about 20 years."

Her sportfishing enthusiasm began while she was a young girl and fished with her parents, Bill and Kathleen Fleming, and her sister Marti, for mackerel, tarpon and bonefish. When Molly was 15 her mother signed the girls up as junior members of International Women's Fishing Association (IWFA). The IWFA is a non-profit organization for female anglers that in its early years included fishing teams but evolved into an organization with individual members;

Forty-three years later Molly remains a member. Molly is a lifetime member of the West Palm Beach Fishing Club (WPBFC), after serving for over 25 years. She supports the Club's Kids Fishing Days for underprivileged children and assists with their annual Wounded Warrior fishing day project. She regularly competes and wins categories in the Club's famous Silver Sailfish Derby and has won the Club's Top Sailfish Release Award, the Tracy Schneider Memorial Trophy.

Only through Fleming's support can TBF's two youth publications, *Sailfish* and *Spearfish*, be printed and distributed. Molly is committed to educating today's youth about the oceans and marine resources so the next generation of anglers, decision makers, adult citizens and others are well informed about basic ocean and fish dynamics, threats to the resources and anglers' need to fish responsibly. Fleming also supports, through her Fleming Family Foundation, "small organizations whose focus is on animals, including Casting for Cats in Islamorada, Loggerhead Marinelifelife Center and others." Fleming is a sportfishing philanthropist, who invests her financial resources to help insure healthy oceans and great sportfishing opportunities for generations to come.



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VESSEL CONSTRUCTION CONTRACTS: A Worthy Investment

by Raleigh Watson, Cox Maritime Law



It often surprises me to see so many individuals and builders cringe over the idea of a written contract when it comes to the construction

of a new sportfish boat. A boat is a complex, movable and expensive asset. Nowadays, learning the systems on a new sportfish boat almost requires an engineering degree! So it makes very little sense, from the builder's or the buyer's standpoint, to go into a new construction process without a thorough written agreement.

Neither the builder nor the buyer should be intimidated by a written agreement. The point of a written contract is not for one party to take advantage of the other. The goal is to clearly layout the terms of the agreement. Of course, the builder should want to produce a satisfactory product and the buyer should want the builder to make an acceptable profit while doing so. However, sometimes life is unpredictable and an enforceable written contract comes in handy when things take an unexpected turn. To put it another way, a contract takes the guesswork out of a dispute. A final



draft of a written agreement may take a bit of negotiating, but a thorough construction contract gives the parties something to look to if a dispute or unexpected event or incident does occur.

Perhaps a couple examples will shed light on some of the issues that can arise during the construction of a new boat, and also reveal how those issues can be addressed through a written agreement. To begin with, one obvious dispute that can arise involves the standard or quality of construction. For example, a buyer may be unhappy about the finish of a paint job. As you can imagine, the parties can have drastically different expectations or a different interpretation of a "high quality finish" the builder may have promised. One way to take out the guesswork and room for interpretation on this is for the builder to agree to a finish and overall quality as "high or higher than its sistership," or another similar boat the parties agree to

during the negotiation of the terms of the contract. This gives the parties something definite and tangible to refer to if a dispute arises. Of course, you need an independent party to make the final determination. As such, we normally have the parties agree to an independent surveyor in the contract who is called upon when technical issues arise, which can drastically reduce the time spent on disputes and keep the construction process on schedule.

Just like with any other businesses, builders can run into financial issues. To be protected, a buyer should perfect their security interest in the boat and its materials to assure that no other party, such as another creditor of a builder or a bankruptcy trustee, is able to claim an interest in that property in the event the builder becomes insolvent. Through perfection, a secured party is essentially seeking to have top priority over all other creditors with respect to certain

(Continued on page 42)





Kenny Vines MEMORIAL Tournament

CAPTAIN'S PARTY:
Friday, 9-25-2015

TOURNAMENT:
Saturday, 9-26-2015

For more information contact: Tim Howard
Orange Beach Sportfishing Club
andrew@marinegroupec.com • Phone: 251-923-9912
orangebeachsportfishingclub.com/KV_Memorial_Tournament.html

(Maritime Law - Vessel Construction continued from page 41)

items. Without getting too technical, the issue of perfection can typically be resolved by filing a UCC financing statement in the necessary public office. The financing statement puts other people and creditors on notice of a secured party's interest in a particular item or good. It is also important that the builder agrees to provide such a security interest to the buyer in the construction contract, and also clearly marks and identifies all items in its shop with the buyer's name, along with the boat name and/or hull number. Those basic actions should prevent a creditor from taking claim to a buyer's boat, materials, parts or items.

Despite the parties' best efforts to draft a thorough set of plans and specifications, it is inevitable that the buyer will want to change something before construction is complete. To avoid conflict, it is imperative that

the parties agree to a change order process. Written change orders are often forgotten or skipped over by buyers and builders, but a simple modification can drastically affect the cost, time table, speed or aesthetics of a boat. And remember, modifications to one boat may not only affect that boat's time table, but also others as well if a builder is constructing multiple boats at once. The parties need to have an understanding as to how they should address modifications to the plans and specifications. The lack of a formal change order system can create significant conflict and stress in a builder's shop, as well as derail an entire business, so a properly drafted contract should clearly lay out the process of a requested modification

Naturally, I believe it is wise, from the perspective of both parties in a build process, to have a thorough construction contract. Attorneys are not free, but legal assistance is

typically worth the investment to avoid problems down the road. Drafting the contracts and being involved with a build process is arguably my favorite part about this profession. It is fun to work with buyers and the builders and see a project come together. Whether we are representing a builder or a buyer, I believe in fair agreements and try to approach the process as if I were in the shoes of each. The issues discussed above were just the tip of the iceberg, but hopefully they illuminated some of the potential setbacks that can arise during the construction of a new boat without a formal written agreement.



ROCK THE OCEAN CONSERVATION VILLAGE

In April, The Billfish Foundation (TBF) took part in Rock The Ocean's Tortuga Music Festival Conservation Village on Fort Lauderdale Beach. Rock the Ocean is a not-for-profit organization whose mission is to increase public awareness about the issues affecting the world's oceans and to support scientific research, education, and ocean conservation initiatives through benefit concerts, brand partnerships, and entertainment industry events. This year's third annual festival brought over 75,000 fans to the sand for the sold-out two-day event at Fort Lauderdale Beach Park. All-star lineup of some of live music's hottest acts helped celebrate the event's oceanfront setting while raising awareness of issues impacting the world's oceans and supporting marine research and conservation. Ocean conservation was front and center as nearly 40 marine conservation and research exhibits were featured in Rock The Ocean's Conservation Village. The Village was a designated area where patrons came and learned about ocean issues and wildlife today and how to support the cause. A portion of ticket proceeds and donations from the festival are distributed back to benefit ocean research and conservation organizations.

Key issues addressed in this year's Conservation Village included: sea turtle conservation, overfishing of key species that interrupt the ocean's



"When we started this festival, the goal was to bring awareness to the issues that are killing our oceans," says Rock The Ocean founder Chris Stacey. "I am thrilled so many fans came out to enjoy the amazing music, but more importantly, that they left with a greater knowledge of the issues impacting our world's waterways and their part in helping us preserve them." -Chris Stacey

delicate balance, lionfish invasion, degradation of habitats (including sandy beachfront, water quality and seagrasses), loss of coral reefs, marine pollution and its effect on

costal environments, shark conservation and much more.

TBF was thrilled to be alongside fellow sportfishing organizations in the overfishing tent in the Village. Throughout the weekend, TBF staff and volunteers interacted with the public by explaining the importance of billfish conservation and responsible recreational fishing.

Thanks to long-time TBF supporter and sponsor, King Sailfish Release Mounts, TBF was able to have an actual blue marlin mount available at the booth for patrons to practice proper tagging and release methods. Also available at the TBF booth was the interactive tagging database (tagbillfish.org), showing where the data appears via Google Earth. It was an exciting time to share with the public and raise awareness of TBF's tagging program and how recreational fishing plays a critical role in ocean conservation.

TBF wants to thank Rock the Ocean and all involved in making the 2015 Tortuga Music Festival a success. More than \$100,000 has been donated by Rock The Ocean Foundation from ticket proceeds and donations toward marine and ocean research and conservation programs. TBF looks forward to continuing work with Rock the Ocean and hopes to return next year. For more information on the event please visit rocktheocean.com.



46TH BUDGET MARINE SPICE ISLAND BILLFISH TOURNAMENT

January 22-25, 2015
www.sibtgrenada.com

The largest and often called “the most fun” billfish tournament in the southern Caribbean Sea, the Budget Marine Spice Island Billfish Tournament, once again was a fantastic event with 67 billfish released from 48 participating boats with 229 anglers. Under the guidance of a Tournament Committee Chaired by Richard McIntyre the popular event was hosted for the 46th time at the Grenada Yacht Club. The tournament festivities began with the boats leaving the Club’s marina and parading around the beautiful downtown Carenage followed by a Bimini start just outside the natural harbor.



Team *Arabian Princess*

The winning team was *Arabian Princess*, Top Female Angler was Marissa Zeller, Top Junior Angler was Isiah Aleong, Nicholas George was Top Grenada Angler and Top Meat Fish was landed by Norma Sabga. TBF is pleased to have the BMSIBT as a supporting conservation partner.

SAILFISH CHALLENGE

www.sailfishchallenge.com
February 5-8, 2015

A total of 231 releases during the 2015 Sailfish Challenge kept teams on their toes while competing for a purse in excess of \$380,000. Seventy-four boats cleared three different inlets in hopes of claiming the 1st place title during this one-day tournament. Action began straight out of the gates with a hot morning bite. After taking home the win in the first leg of the series, Team *Bar South*, kept their



Team *Miss Annie*

momentum going and shot to first place with 7 releases before noon. During the last ten minutes of the tournament, the radio came alive with boats calling in hook-up after hook-up.

Team *Swagger* caught their 8th fish of the day during that flurry to leap frog past *Bar South* for the lead. It was a hard fought battle until the last minute and at one time there were three different boats (*Bar South*, *Qualifier* and *Miss Annie*) with fish on the line to win the whole tournament! *Miss Annie* and *Qualifier* both had triple-headers on as the clock pushed closer to the required check-in time. When the salt spray settled, *Miss Annie* finished on top with a total of 10 releases! *Swagger* ended up finishing in 2nd place and *Bar South* in 3rd. Master Angler of the tournament went to Will Morrison of *Qualifier* with seven releases. The Top Female title went to Stephanie Choate of *Miss Britt* and the Top Junior was James David, Jr. from *Jichi*. The Top Senior of the Sailfish Challenge was Frank Napurano of *Miss Annie*. Team *Crescendo* also walked away as winners by submitting their releases for the Costa TBF Release Report Challenge and taking home some great prizes from Costa.

MARINA CASA DE CAMPO CUP

March 15 – April 15, 2015
casadecampomarinanews.com

On Saturday, March 18th, the *S/F Reel Passion* became the first Marina Casa de Campo Cup Champion, after releasing 29 blue marlin in 21 days of fishing. Second and third place

were received by *S/F Fully Occupied* with 25 releases in 18 days and *S/F Shoe* with 17 releases in 12 days of fishing respectably. One hundred fifty-eight blue marlin were released by 17 participating vessels.

Marina Casa de Campo Cup is a perpetual cup for the Marina Casa de Campo fishing season. The boat with the most blue marlin released will be the winner and its name inscribed on the Cup, which will be housed at Casa de Campo Yacht Club. The winning team receives a replica of the cup.



Reel Passion, first Marina Casa de Campo Cup Champion.

QUEST FOR THE CREST FINAL SAIL

April 16-19, 2015
www.bluewatermovements.com

The fourth and concluding leg of Bluewater Movement Inc.’s Quest for the Crest Sailfish Series – Final Sail – was held in the sub-tropical paradise of Key West. Renowned for its top notch sportfishing, as well as its rich maritime heritage, anglers and captains took to the waters and the streets to participate and celebrate this grand finale. Captain and crew from 40 boats released 181 sailfish over three days, with the top boat, Team *Sea Hunter*. Top Angler honors went to Bernie Perez from *Sea Hunter*. Top Female Angler, CeCe Imbrie, was fishing on the second place boat, *OCD*. Congratulations as well go to the team on *Bar South* for winning the overall series title and taking home the Crest Jacket.

The Billfish Foundation was honored to take part in the Quest for the Crest series for the first time. To promote the



Winning boat the Sea Hunter

importance of sailfish conservation throughout the series, teams that submitted release cards to TBF were entered into the Release Report Challenge. A truly fantastic prize package including an all-expense paid 5-day, 4-night trip to Casa Vieja Lodge in Guatemala came courtesy of our generous sponsors; Casa Vieja Lodge Costa and Sunglasses. The series award ceremony concluded with the raffle drawing by TBF staff, Michael Kelly and Adrienne Katz, with the lucky Release Report Challenge winners being the team from *Kimbuktu*, led by one of TBF's past Top Release award winners, Capt. Dean Panos.

Special thanks go to the crew at Bluewater Movement Inc. for organizing this intense and exciting event. TBF looks forward to continued collaborations with them in the future.

YAMAHA CONTENDER MIAMI SPORTFISHING TOURNAMENT

April 23-25, 2015
www.miamisportfish.com

2015 brought with it a new name and format for the Yamaha Contender Miami Sportfishing

Eren's Addiction Too, winners of the Yamaha Contender Miami Sportfishing Tournament.



Tournament (formally the Miami Billfish Tournament) which made the competition friendlier to anglers of all experience levels. With more emphasis on fun fish categories, the tournament brought out a total of 54 boats to fish the one day event.

Coming out on top was *Eren's Addiction Too* taking home Top Boat! Second place was Team *Doing It All / Bluewater Towers* followed by *First Choice*. Individual winners included James David aboard *Frick & Frack* as both Master Angler and Top Junior along with Debbie Morrell as Top Lady Angler on the *Bar Bill*.

CAJUN CANYONS BILLFISH CLASSIC

May 26 – 31, 2015
www.comefishla.com/ccbc

Mother Nature shined this year on Tournament Director Steve Thomas and his Cajun Canyons Billfish Classic (CCBC), which allowed 46 boats to fish the event out of Cypress Cove Marina & Lodge. In the great Louisiana style, boiled shrimp, smoked pork, oysters and lots of other seafood was served at the Captain's meeting by the well-known



Top Boat *Relentless Pursuit*

Acme Oyster House restaurant. Winner of the Catch and Release Division was *Relentless Pursuit* with 4 blues caught and released by Dale Artigue; the boat also won 1st place Blue Marlin and the Top Billfish Boat memorial trophy given in honor of the late C.R. Bob Potter. Top Youth Angler was Gage Herbert, on board the *Duke*, releasing his first billfish, a white marlin. Top Female Angler was Laurie Jones on board the *Reel Addiction*. TBF appreciates the support from the CCBC.

2015 PRESIDENTIAL PAPAGAYO CUP

May 28-31, 2015
www.presidentialchallenge.com

Marina Papagayo, Costa Rica hosted the 5th Presidential Papagayo Cup billfish tournament in May, perfectly timed with a terrific marlin bite. Twenty blue marlin and 17 sailfish were released during the three day tournament, each confirmed by an IGFTO certified observer on board.



Dreamtime wins Presidential Papagayo Cup

The 80 foot Bayliss *Dream Time*, owned by Darryl Schroeder took the lead early on day one with four blue marlin and a sailfish, all released from non-offset circle hooks and Momoi Diamond 30-pound test line. But day two saw Team USA on board Captain's Skeet Warren's Charterboat *Bushwacker* taking the lead. At the end of three days of fishing Angler Anthony Arriage on board the *Dream Time* prevailed as Top Angler followed by J. Godwin on the *Bushwacker*.

Joan Vernon, Tournament Director, is a strong advocate for attracting anglers from many countries to fish the waters off Costa Rica. She knows those waters produce great sportfishing opportunities, and the resulting sportfishing eco-tourism trade demonstrates to government officials a sustainable and clean use of the nation's billfish resources. Vernon's goal is for the government to continue embracing sportfishing as a welcomed source of tourism, and after seeing the economic benefits, govern the species to insure the highest catch rates. A released billfish is worth so much more to Costa Rica than a landed one caught by a longline or purse seine vessel. All the trophies presented to winners of the Papagayo Cup are wooden billfish sculptures, again Vernon purchases locally for the tournament, a clean and sustainable use of the fish resources, which generates a lot of expenditures to the host nation.

(continued on next page)

30TH LADIES FISH OFF May 28-31, 2015 www.ladiesfishoff.com

The Ladies Annual Fish-Off recently celebrated 30 years of great fishing, fun and giving back. It was a great day for fishing with boats returning to the weigh-in station with a wide variety of catches. The party started with a festive kick-off



Top Boat *Native Son*

held May 28 at Galuppi's Restaurant in Pompano Beach. Anglers, crew members and friends of the tournament bid fiercely on coveted silent auction items. All funds raised benefit the tournament's designated charities, The Billfish Foundation and Ronald McDonald House.

The Billfish Foundation was represented by 3 staff anglers, Adrienne Katz and Interns Courtney Capehart and Hunter Tyson. Hunter caught the first fish of the entire tournament, a 24 lb. blackfin tuna. Adrienne Katz landed a 25 lb. blackfin tuna as well. Courtney Capehart also successfully caught a bonita. *Native Son* was the top boat of the tournament,

Big Winners on the *Done Deal*



captained by Art Sapp. *Team O-Sea-D* came in second, with Jr. Angler Jordan White taking home trophies for top Jr. Angler and heaviest fish, a 32.9 pound blackfin tuna. Third place honors went to *Tax Relief*, with 16 year old Ashley Lauren Kidwell catching all the fish and landing the prize as Top Angler. Kiera Stephens, daughter of LFO President, Stephanie Despreaux, was crowned 1st place Pee Wee Angler.

MISSISSIPPI GULF COAST Billfish Classic June 1-7, 2015 www.mgcbc.com

Teenager Katie Gonsoulin and her team aboard *Done Deal* were the big winners of the 2015 Mississippi Gulf Coast Billfish Classic. The crew took home the biggest check after the Sunday morning awards ceremony at the host Golden Nugget Casino Resort.

Born2Run, a 63' Hatteras GT based in Pensacola, Florida, led by Capt. Myles Colley, settled for the second-place award. *Caribe* was the top boat in the hard-fought catch and release division, after releasing three blues. Capt. Jeff Shoults and the team aboard *Mollie*, a 66' G&S based in Destin, Florida, won the second-place catch and release award, based on time. Stephen Chapman, onboard *A Work of Art*, outlasted the largest wahoo, a 63.6-pound speedster, while teammate Wes Mincin added a 133.3-pound yellowfin to win the tuna division. Jennifer Attaway on *Controlled Chaos*, captured the second-largest wahoo at 54.2 pounds, with Carrie Gerber on *Cut N Run* earning third place with a 47.7-pound fish.

A total of 48 billfish were released over the 2.5 days of fishing, including 22 blue marlin, six whites, two sailfish and one unknown billfish.



Cotton Patch took home first place blue marlin.

EMERALD COAST BLUE MARLIN CLASSIC June 17-2, 2015 www.fishecbc.com

With the highest number of boat entries since 2008, The Emerald Coast Blue Marlin Classic, held at the beautiful Sandestin Golf & Beach Resort, was an eventful competition. With a total of 78 vessels participating in the tournament, over 29 teams were awarded cash prizes at the award ceremony on Sunday. Team *Cotton Patch* broke the tournament's 2012 blue marlin record with a huge 899.6 lb blue marlin caught by Captain/Owner and TBF board member, Johnny Dorland who won first place.

The Billfish Foundation's board member Keith English and his team on the *Click Through* landed the weekend's third largest blue marlin at 548 pounds and a 150 pound yellowfin tuna. Scott Cooper, TBF board member, won first place dolphin with a 47 pounder for his team on the *CE*.



TBF's Peter Chaibongsai with Gulf Coast Yacht Group's Tim Jones.

Pier Pressure won the Top Release Team prize with release of three blue marlin, one white marlin, and one unidentified billfish. A total of 43 billfish were caught over the three days of fishing, including 28 blue and 15 white marlin.

17TH ANNUAL ORANGE BEACH BILLFISH CLASSIC

Top Donating Billfish Tournament 2015

May 13-17, 2015 • www.orangebeachbillfishclassic.com

Photo courtesy of Kate Dorland

The most prestigious billfish tournament in the Gulf of Mexico, the Orange Beach Billfish Classic, had 37 “big boy” boats registered from every state on the Gulf Coast. The boats, clearly the top boats in the Gulf, presented possibly the best array of sportfishing vessel architecture and performance machines anywhere in the region. The boats came with “highly orchestrated and competitive teams” said Johnny Dorland, Chairman of the OBBC board of directors. Dorland added “these teams work as smoothly and as fast as do formula car racing teams, everyone has their responsibilities and are highly skilled at accomplishing them.”

The OBBC is the only tournament that donates all of its proceeds to advance research, education and advocacy for billfish conservation and management. OBBC clearly dominates as the top

supporting tournament for billfish conservation in the Gulf of Mexico, through its large donation to TBF, surpassing all others by thousands of dollars. The event was organized in 1998 for the express purpose of providing financial support for organizations that work effectively for all recreational fishermen; The Billfish Foundation has become the deserving beneficiary.

This year the OBBC raised \$37,000 for TBF, an increase of \$11,000 over last year’s donation. The support got even better when tournament winner **Rusty Skalla on the Rise Up, a 56 foot Viking, donated another \$10,000 to the conservation fund**, raising the total to \$47,000. Ellen Peel, President of TBF, said “Rusty sets an example of giving back to conservation of the species upon which billfishing tournaments are based, that is the

spirit that continues to distinguish this tournament.” In addition to winning the Blue Marlin Category, Skalla’s team took third place in the Catch and Release Division.

You Never Know, a 72 foot custom F&S Boatworks Yacht, owned by Thomas Turner of Baton Rouge, Louisiana, took top honors in the Catch and Release Division. Captain Joey Birbeck elected to tag their blue marlin with a TBF tag to start accruing points in TBF’s Gulf of Mexico Regional Tagging Competition. Birbeck understands that the data collected from tag recaptures contributes to the scientific stock assessments of billfish, upon which management decisions are made. The combined releases from the *You Never Know* won the team the Johnny Johnson Memorial Award a perpetual trophy named in honor of a very competitive boat owner, Johnny Johnson, from Brandon, MS, who died unexpectedly last fall.

Left to right: Blue Marlin Winning Team, *Rise Up*. Catch & Release Johnny Johnson Memorial Winning Team, *You Never Know*. Photos by ParShots.



38TH ANNUAL MOBILE BIG GAME FISHING CLUB'S MEMORIAL DAY TOURNAMENT - Sets Tournament Conservation Standards - Blue Marlin - 106"

May 22-25, 2015 • www.mbgfc.org

The Mobile Big Game Fishing Club, a Founding Member of TBF, attracted 85 boats to fish a fantastic Memorial Day Tournament under leadership of Tournament Director Dr. Joe Crow. The Club hosts 5 tournaments each year all produced and run by volunteers; each attracting a lot of boats, great camaraderie and of course great food prepared by Berglin Catering.

The Club's conservation leadership is steadfast, which includes setting its tournaments' blue marlin minimum size limit at 106 inches – a conservation standard. The club goes even further for billfish conservation by making a large donation to TBF each year to support billfish research, education and advocacy programs that will best insure exciting billfishing opportunities in the Gulf for generations to come. No blue marlin were brought to the scales; 21 blue marlin and 8 white marlin were released.



Winning team Jubilee, photo courtesy of ParShots.

Top Boat was won by *Jubilee*, along with the Top Catch and Release award and Top Junior Angler winner, Dalton Beard. Large tunas were weighed with the winning fish caught by *Sea Hunter*, a 170.30 pound yellowfin, *Annie Girl* took second with a 152.60 yellowfin and *Don't Blink* placed third place with a 132.80 yellowfin. The Gulf wahoo also ran big with the *Double J* winning with a 66.90 pound fish.

One sad note brought all participants to stop and remember that we never know how long we have in life when one angler, Bill Smallwood from Eufaula, Alabama, fishing on board the *Annie Girl*, caught the second place yellowfin tuna and died right afterwards of a heart attack on board. Bill's family attended the awards ceremony and received the 2nd place Tuna Trophy.



Photo courtesy of Alec Breaud of Metal Shark Boats



56TH ANNUAL HATTERAS MARLIN CLUB BILLFISH RELEASE TOURNAMENT

Top US Donating Club 2015

June 14 – 20, 2015 • www.hatterasmarlinclub.com

Photos by © Scott Kerrigan / AquaPaparazzi.com

The week of June 14 – 20, 2015 at the historic Hatteras Marlin Club was filled with family fun, great food, camaraderie, fishing and a commitment to billfish conservation. The 56th HMC Billfish Release Tournament was a prestigious event that focused on sportfishing skill, fishing ethics and supporting billfish conservation. Under the leadership of Club President Robert High and Tournament Director Will Huntley, the Club produced a great fishing event with a wide range of fun on-shore activities for those who elected not to fish.

Forty-six teams fished and released 41 billfish, an increase over the previous year. Well known fishing photographer Scott Kerrigan took photos during the week's events with the photos being used to create a fantastic 56th HMC

Capt Fin Gaddy with Top Youth Angler, Charles Gaddy.



Tournament table top book. Anglers fished three out of five days, with many boats opting to test the waters on Day One, though the last two days proved the most bountiful. With extremely high temperatures, billfish seemed initially to opt to hang out "down deep" in cooler waters early in the week. Even so, on Day One twin 7 year old brothers, Charles and Brown Gaddy, each caught and released one white marlin and a dolphin. At the conclusion of the week, the team fishing on board the *Desperado* with George Venters took top honors with 2 blue marlin and 1 white marlin caught and released all on Day Four of the competition. Individual winners included: Top Female Angler - Jessie Wilson, Top Male Angler - George Venters, Top Youth Angler - Charles Gaddy, Top Angler for Wahoo - Keith Street, and Top Angler for Dolphin - Mike Tamburri.

On-shore activities included Sea Quest Kids boat building and racing, a half day of activities with a rock climbing wall, a bounce house, inflatable slide, mechanical bull riding, a coloring contest and a fishing tournament, all for the children. Famous marlin artist Steve Goione was the official tournament artist and was seen providing helpful comments to some of the young aspiring

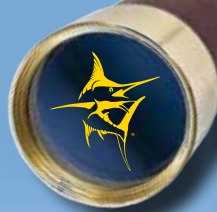


Overall Team Desperado

artists. Ladies were pampered with a Wine and Design painting class, a tennis clinic and a Tennis Round Robin Tournament, and a photography class all arranged by Ashlee Huntley. Evening activities included a Great Gatsby Night during which some fantastically dressed individuals seemed to have stepped back in time to join the Club's 2015 festivities. On a more casual note everyone enjoyed all the "fix'ns" at the annual pig picking BBQ dinner that raised funds for local charities. The fantastic week concluded with a Champagne Breakfast on Saturday morning. The event would not have gone as smoothly without the expertise and energy of Kathy Robinson and Billy Webster and their teams from the HMC.

To support billfish conservation a HMC member put forth a \$25,000 Challenge Grant to be matched by tournament participants who purchased raffle tickets from TBF. The final tally of funds raised once again placed the Hatteras Marlin Club in the position of being honored as the Top US Donating Club for billfish conservation.

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Anglers We Will Miss

MARION "BOYD" COLGATE, father of TBF board member Curtis Colgate, passed away on April 24th at the age of 89. One of Boyd's favorite pass times was fishing with his son. Curtis has fond memories of his father teaching him how to fish on Linkhorn Bay, the Chesapeake Bay and on Buggs Island Lake in Mecklenburg County all in Virginia.

Boyd is proudly remembered by family and friends as a World War II Navy veteran who fought in the battle of Iwo Jima. After returning home from the service, he opened Colgate and Company, Inc. in 1947 on Main Street in Chase City, Virginia selling appliances, TVs and radios. In the years that



followed, the store expanded to include home furnishings and was known as Colgate Square.

Boyd was also very active in the community; he was a member of the Centenary Methodist Church, the Shriners Club, American Legion Post 34, VWF Post 8228 and a founding board member

of the Virginia Aquarium. He was also a former board member of the Virginia Tourism Corporation, served as Secretary of Economic Development of Virginia Beach, and was honored as Citizen of the Year for Chase City.

Mr. Colgate was predeceased by his wife, Jeanne Dixon Colgate. He leaves behind two daughters; Beverley Colgate Franklin, and Carolyn Colgate Cantrell and two sons; M.J. Colgate, Jr., and Curtis Colgate. He is survived by five grandchildren; Christian Craft, Anne-Elizabeth Taydus, Cade Colgate, Clay Colgate and Claire Cantrell, and three great-grandchildren; Carter, Cate and Charlie.

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WILLIAM "BILL" SMALLWOOD III of



Eufala, AL passed away quite unexpectedly on May 23, 2015 at the age of 63 while fishing in a tournament in the Gulf of Mexico. Bill loved fishing, restoring his boat, and most of all spending time with his family. His special joy was his two grandchildren who called him "Pop Willy".

At the time of his death, Bill was fishing on board the well known and successful charter boat *Annie Girl*, with whom he had fished numerous times. On this trip Bill had just caught a 152.60 pound yellowfin tuna, which won second place in the Mobile Big Game Fishing Club's Memorial Day Tournament, when he died from an apparent heart attack. Despite all efforts to revive him, they were unsuccessful. Bill's family attended the awards ceremony the next day and accepted his second place Tuna Trophy on his behalf.

Bill was a proud Auburn graduate "War Eagle!" and worked for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers for 33 years. His most recent title was Operations Project Manager of the AFC Rivers Project. Bill is survived by Joy, his wife of 41 years, sons Billy, Brad and Brian, grandchildren Harlan and John-Major and brothers Don Smallwood and Tommy Cornwell.

...so far this year...



Scott Kerrigan / AquaPaparazzi.com

Be sure to support tournaments, sponsors and events that support TBF.

2015 TBF Calendar of Events

JULY

15-19 – ALABAMA DEEP SEA RODEO
Mobile, AL
www.adsfr.com/about_rodeo.html

21-26 – HBGFC TEXAS
LONESTAR SHOOTOUT
Port O'Connor, TX
www.thelonestarshootout.com

AUGUST

4-8 – BISBEE'S EAST CAPE
OFFSHORE TOURNAMENT
Buena Vista, Mexico
www.bisbees.com

5-9 – TEXAS LEGENDS
BILLFISH TOURNAMENT
Port Aransas, TX
www.txlegends.com

10-14 – PIRATES COVE BILLFISH
Pirates Cove Marina, Manteo, NC
www.fishpiratescove.com

12-15 – AUGUST BILLFISH CLASSIC
Freeport, TX
www.augustbillfishclassic.com

19-22 – VIRGINIA BEACH
BILLFISH TOURNAMENT
Virginia Beach, VA
www.vbbt.com

SEPTEMBER

24-30 – CLUB NAUTICO DE SAN
JUAN INT'L BILLFISH TOURNAMENT
San Juan, PR
www.sanjuaninternational.com/v3

25-26 – OBSC- KV MEMORIAL
Orange Beach, AL
orangebeachsportfishingclub.com

OCTOBER

16-18 – BISBEE'S LOS
CABOS OFFSHORE
Los Cabos, Mexico
www.bisbees.com

20-24 – BISBEE'S BLACK &
BLUE TOURNAMENT
Los Cabos, Mexico
www.bisbees.com

22-25 – CHIVAS REGAL ARUBA
CARIBBEAN CUP
Varadero Aruba Marina, Aruba
www.preschallenge.com

29 through 11-1 – PRESIDENTIAL
CHALLENGE OF EL SALVADOR
Bahia del Sol, San Salvador
www.preschallenge.com

NOVEMBER

5-9 – FORT LAUDERDALE
INTERNATIONAL BOAT SHOW
Fort Lauderdale, FL
www.showmanagement.com

6 – TBF'S HEMINGWAY'S
HAVANA NIGHTS ANNUAL GALA
Marriott Harbor Beach,
Ft. Lauderdale, FL
www.billfish.org

For more information on TBF supported events please visit billfish.org/events



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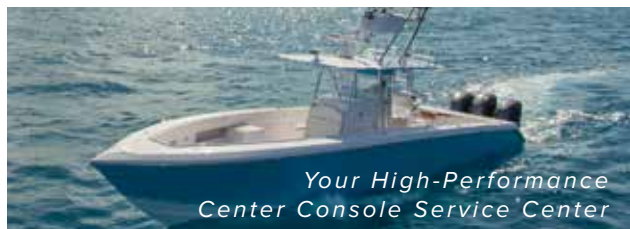
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