



TAG & RELEASE

Jim Goller, Editor Email: wildlife@sc.rr.com

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2000 12TH ANNUAL GOVERNOR'S CUP BILLFISHING SERIES...

**Edisto Marina
Billfish Tournament**

**Bohicket Invitational
Billfish Tournament**

**Georgetown Landing
Blue Marlin Tournament**

**Marlin Quay
Billfish Tournament**

**Isle Of Palms Marina
Billfish Tournament**

**Dock Holidays
Billfish Tournament**

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

"BIG KAHUNA" KEEPS LEAD...

"Big Kahuna," owned by Rhett Spencer of DeBordieu, still leads the 2000 Governor's Cup Billfishing Series as the Outstanding Billfish Boat with 1,918 total points. "Big Kahuna" has tagged and released three blue marlin and a sailfish, and weighed-in two blue marlin at 422.8 pounds and 395.2 pounds.

Since the Isle of Palms tournament and tagging and releasing a blue marlin, "Mar Jen," owned by Romo, Inc. of Charleston, remains in second place with 1,300 points. "Mar Jen" also leads in the Outstanding Billfish Conservationist category.

"Cookie Monster", owned by Chris Ravenel of Mt. Pleasant, is in third place with 1,100 points after winning the Isle of Palms tournament. "Billistic," owned by Hutch Hulseberg and Dale Martin of Ridgeville, is close behind with 1,000 points. Before the Isle of Palms tournament, "Billistic" was tied with "Mar Jen" for second place in the series.

Angler Robbie Renken aboard "Hey Doc", owned by Allen Fogle of Charleston, caught a 446.3-pound blue marlin in the Bohicket tournament, earning "Hey Doc" the lead for the Outstanding Billfish Award.

The Outstanding Female Angler leader is Chandler Byrd of Charleston. Byrd boosted "Billistic's" points standings when she tagged and released a blue marlin in each of the first two tournaments. Byrd was already leading in the Outstanding Female Angler category when she landed a 28.6-pound wahoo in the Dock Holidays Billfish tournament, the last of the series.

At the Isle of Palms tournament, 15-year-old Christina Williamson of Irmo,

Leaders continued on page 2...

NMFS TAKES ACTION TO PROHIBIT LONGLINING...

On August 1, 2000, the National Marine Fisheries Service published final regulations amending the Highly Migratory Species Fishery Management Plan. The plan covers Atlantic tunas, sharks and swordfish and the amendment is aimed at reducing bycatch, bycatch mortality, and incidental catch in the Atlantic pelagic longline fishery.

The new regulations create two time/area closures in the Atlantic Ocean and one in the Gulf of Mexico. The Gulf of Mexico closure is in the area of the Desoto Canyon. This is a year-round closure which becomes effective November 1, 2000. The second area is off the east coast of Florida and this area is also closed year-round beginning February 1, 2001.

The area of most interest to South Carolina fishermen includes most of Georgia, all of South Carolina and a small portion off North Carolina. This area (designated the "Charleston Bump" area) is closed from February 1 through April 30 each year beginning February 1, 2001. The area closed extends from the coast out to 76 degrees west latitude between 31 degrees north longitude and 34 degrees north longitude. All U.S. commercial fishermen holding federal highly migratory species permits and using pelagic longline gear will be prohibited from fishing in these closed areas.

The South Atlantic Fishery Management Council, recognizing that pelagic longline gear can be used to fish for dolphin without a highly migratory species permit, is considering including a provision in its dolphin/wahoo fishery

Longlining continued on page 3...

Leaders continued...

earned her lead as the Outstanding Youth Angler. She tagged and released a sailfish from "Capitol's Gain," owned by Paul B. Sanders of West Columbia.

In the biggest fish categories, the most impressive lead is the largest yellowfin tuna, a 103.5-pound fish caught by "Summertime Blues" during the Marlin Quay tournament. This is the largest yellowfin tuna caught so far in the 12-year history of the S.C. Governor's Cup.

"Yellowfin", owned by Bill Cox, Sr. of Orangeburg, leads the Series in the biggest dolphin category with a 58-pound fish caught in the Edisto leg by Donald Dukes of Edisto. "Sound Machine" leads the biggest wahoo category with their 75.3-pound fish caught by owner Frank Wicker of Alpharetta, GA at Bohicket.

Final standings were presented to the Governor's Cup Board of Directors for their approval August 2, and the awards will be presented at the annual banquet August 25.

"Dock Holidays was the perfect wrap-up for the 2000 Governor's Cup Series. The comradery and good fellowship at this tournament were above par," said Wayne Waltz, assistant director for the Office of Fisheries Management for the SC Department of Natural Resources. "It has been a great year, with over 90% of the billfish released during the Series," Waltz said. The Department of Natural Resources coordinates the Series through its Office of Fisheries Management in the Marine Resources Division.

DIRECT LINES...

Pêcheurs de femmes...

I really struggled, trying to come up with a neat title of this piece. Acronyms like GRITS and titles like "Carolina Girls" were already taken and lacking the creativity to do something original, I simply decided to change languages. Lady anglers have made their presence in the Governor's Cup known over the years. It would be impossible to mention them all by name, but here are a few of the current participants you certainly will be hearing more about:

Bryson Ritter Hills - This 25 year old newly wed has already tagged a blue marlin this year and landed a 74 lb tuna. You may recall that last year Bryson was the first lady angler in the series to capture a Grand Slam, tagging a sailfish, blue and white marlin all in the same day. She has been fishing offshore for about 2 years now. This year most of her success has been aboard the Mar Jen. When she's not fishing you can find her working for the Isle of Palms Recreation Department.

Chandler Byrd - Chandler is the daughter of former Governor's Cup Board of Director's **Ch a i r m a n** , Tommy Byrd, hence her interest in sportfishing. This 23 year old medical assistant has a degree in Marine Biology and is a graduate of the College of Charleston. She has been fishing with her dad since she was 7 and is currently the leader in the 2000 Series Lady Angler category after tagging two blue marlin. She notes that women have to work a lot harder at offshore fishing then the guys. "You have to always watch the rods to get your chance and it's much more of a challenge handling the heavy gear."

Carson Dennis - So far this year Carson's biggest catch has been a 52 lb. dolphin landed in the Edisto tournament. When she's not attending the College of Charleston, majoring in marine biology, she works at the Charleston Harbor Hilton. Her stepdad is Mar Jen's captain Tom Murphy and she has been fishing offshore with him now for about 4 years. "I have met a lot of nice people at the tournaments and have made some lasting friendships" says Carson.

Lyn Tayloe - Lyn had a great tournament at Marlin Quay this year landing 38 lb. yellowfin and a 34 lb.

dolphin aboard the C'est La Vie. She also tagged a sailfish at the Charleston Harbor tournament last year. She fishes with husband Artie and son Will, who captains the boat. This is her third Governor's Cup Series. She enjoys the competition and the sound of the reels when they hook a big one. Lyn adds "It's a privilege to be able to fish along side some of the best anglers in the state".

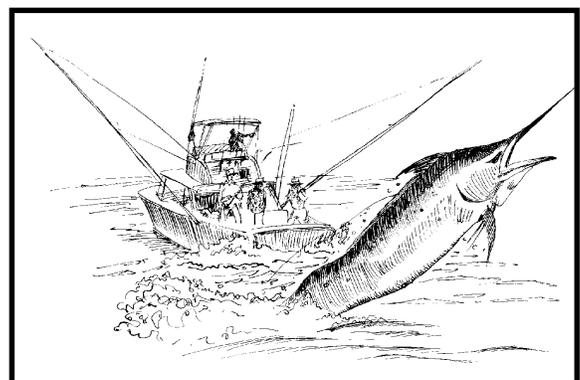
Nancy Ravenel -

This is Nancy's fifth season on the **Cookie Monster**. Formerly from New Jersey, she began fishing after she married her husband Chris. This Clemson graduate is the mother of 2 year old girl Ginny, who is already learning from captain Frank how to steer to boat. She won the female angler category at Bohicket a few years ago, but does her best fishing abroad, as she loves to travel. She loves the comradeship that goes along with the Series. "It may look like we are all out there in separate boats competing, but we all stick together like one big family and we all have fun."

Thank you to all the past and present "pêcheurs de femmes de la tasse du Gouverneur." You have helped build this series to make it what it is today and as Nancy so aptly put it, your presence has helped make this into a truly family affair.

Wayne Waltz

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**2000
SC GOVERNOR'S CUP
BILLFISHING SERIES
LEADER BOARD**

Results through Dock Holidays...

TOP TEN BOATS

| | |
|-------------------------|--------|
| <i>BIG KAHUNA</i> | 1918.0 |
| <i>MAR JEN</i> | 1300 |
| <i>COOKIE MONSTER</i> | 1100 |
| <i>BILLISTIC</i> | 1000 |
| <i>SPORTIN' LIFE</i> | 952.2 |
| <i>SUMMERTIME BLUES</i> | 850 |
| <i>PERSISTENCE</i> | 650 |
| <i>ROCKIN MAMA</i> | 625 |
| <i>BIG GAME</i> | 562.8 |
| <i>SKEE BO</i> | 550 |

TOP BOAT

POINTS: 1918.0
BOAT: *BIG KAHUNA*
OWNER: RHETTSPENCER

LARGEST BILLFISH

FISH: 446.3 lbs. Blue Marlin
BOAT: *HEYDOC*
OWNER: ALLENFOGLE
ANGLER: ROBBIERENKEN

BILLFISH CONSERVATIONIST

POINTS: 1200
BOAT: *MAR JEN*
OWNER: ROMOINC.

BLUEWATER CONSERVATION

POINTS: 850
BOAT: *MISTRESS*
OWNER: SCOTTBOYD

LADY ANGLER

FISH: 2 BLUEMARLINT&R
BOAT: *BILLISTIC*
ANGLER: CHANDLERBYRD
OWNER: DALEMARTIN

TOTAL

YOUTH ANGLER

FISH: SAILFISHT&R
BOAT: *CAPITOL'S GAIN*
ANGLER: CHRISTINA WILLIAMSON
OWNER: PAUL B. SANDERS

LARGEST WAHOO

WEIGHT: 75.3 lbs.
BOAT: *SOUND MACHINE*
ANGLER: FRANK WHICKER
OWNER: FRANK WHICKER

LARGEST TUNA

WEIGHT: 103.5 lbs.
BOAT: *SUMMERTIME BLUES*
ANGLER: SKIPPER JELLISON
OWNER: RON WALLSCHLAGER

LARGEST DOLPHIN

WEIGHT: 58.0 lbs.
BOAT: *YELLOWFIN*
ANGLER: DONALD DUKES
OWNER: BILL COX Sr.

*Boats Participating: 132
Billfish Caught: 64
Billfish Tagged & Released: 59
Billfish Weighed: 5
Tag and Release Rate: 92%*



**LONGLINING
CONTINUED...**

management plan to also reduce longline bycatch. The Council action would close these same Atlantic Ocean areas to fishing with longline gear during these same time periods. Such an action would complement the NMFS action and further reduce the capture and mortality of bycatch by the pelagic longline fishery.

We applaud NMFS's actions and are glad that the Highly Migratory Species Fishery Management Plan finally contains some significant actions to reduce bycatch in the pelagic longline fishery and to begin rebuilding and conserving the stocks of highly migratory species and billfish.

Whether the time/area closures will achieve the objectives of the plan remains to be seen and it will be important to monitor what happens in the fishery to evaluate the effectiveness of the closures. However, we believe that these actions represent an important step in the right direction to deal with the bycatch problem.

*David Cupka, Director
Office of Fisheries Management*



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