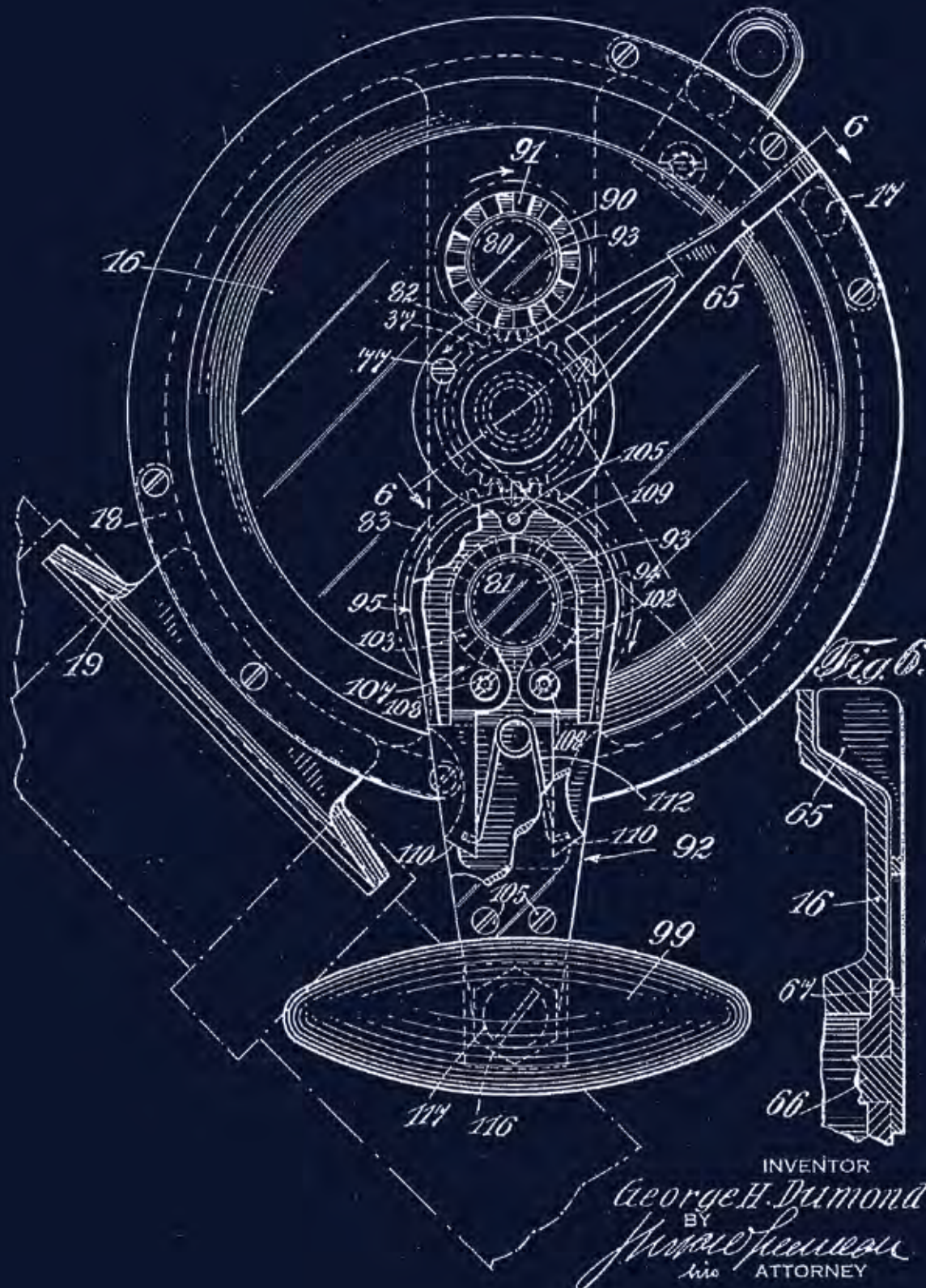


On The Rip

ISSUE 2024



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BY
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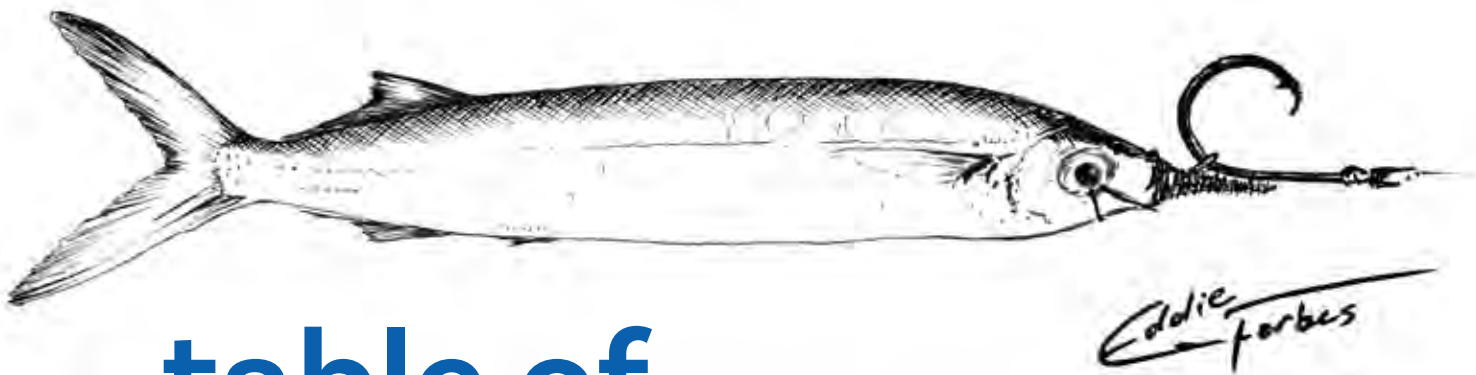


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ISSUE 2024

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OTR EDITOR'S PAGE

A SEASON FOR THE BOOKS



The 2023 season in the Mid Atlantic Zone was one for the books. The early tuna bite was on fire with a bit of the typical nasty early season weather thrown in. As the weather smoothed out the tuna took up residence and stuck around until November. The Blue Marlin bite also showed up early catching more than one boat by surprise as they roamed around chasing tuna. As we rolled into July the offshore water conditions started to deliver patches of Gulf Stream blue water bringing with it a strong showing of White Marlin, kicking off the billfish season giving the anglers and crews a head start on dialing in for the upcoming tournament season. August saw the Gulf Stream moving closer to the canyons, the pods of White Marlin increased, and the action for the major tournaments was hot and heavy. When the smoke cleared, the combined catches made for one of the most successful seasons in recent memory. But it was not over with yet. As Labor Day weekend kicked off, the large offshore mass of Gulf Stream water took a turn inward toward the canyons, the results of this phenomenon are detailed in the **Grand Slam Barrage** article in this issue.

Karl Anderson does another deep dive in this issue; The **Big Game Reel** article traces the development of reels from the "knuckle busters" to the equipment we use today. We were fortunate to have the input of Ed Pritchard of **antiquefishingreels.com** in the research for this article. Check out his website for more. The 2023 Mid Atlantic Wrap Up is a great snapshot of the excitement of the Mid Atlantic when the fish turn on. Thanks to Jeff Merrill for staying on top of the action.

Looking forward to the 2024 season, seeing old friends and welcoming the new ones. Take a look through the 2024 Tournament schedule and jump in. See you on the rip.

Walt Rosenberg, Editor



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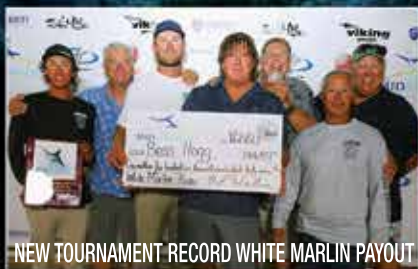


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NEW TOURNAMENT RECORD BLUE MARLIN PAYOUT



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THE 2024 TOURNAMENT SEASON

by Tournament Director Aaron T. Hoffman

Another exciting year is shaping up for our tournament season for 2024! With some substantial changes to existing events and keeping traditions alive with your favorite events, we have many reasons for you to get ready to jump aboard with us this season.

The **School's Out Tuna Tournament (June 19-23)** is the latest rendition of the tuna tournament that certainly aims to kick off the tournament season. We have partnered with the Cape May Marlin and Tuna Club, to make this event a summer celebration on the landing surrounding South Jersey Marina. The School's Out Tuna Tournament has the best options of Calcutta's to target both Bigeye, Yellowfin and even Dolphin and Swordfish. Across the Board on this event ranges only from \$6,250 to \$7,600 depending on the size of your boat. We expect to see plenty of entries this year who are looking forward to an exciting time while not putting much at risk for an even better return on what they are putting up! Participants can fish from any inlet

from Cape May up to Ocean City, New Jersey!

The MidAtlantic Cup (July 4) continually attracts Blue Marlin enthusiasts year after year for the elusive first place prized fish! This low key yet lucrative tournament should certainly not be overlooked by any means. Our one-day, high stakes, multiregional port, winner-take-all tournament, **currently has a starting purse of \$49,600 that rolled over from 2023.** This, plus an expected increase in the number of boats to come join in on the action in 2024, will certainly make for a big payout. Fish from anywhere within the MidAtlantic Bight with four official tournament weigh stations, based out of Manasquan NJ, Cape May NJ, Ocean City MD, and Virginia Beach VA, all are available to weigh-in your



**SCHOOL'S OUT
TUNA TOURNAMENT**
JUNE 19-23, 2024

THE MIDATLANTIC CUP
JULY 4, 2024

**SOUTH JERSEY YACHT SALES
OFFSHORE SHOWDOWN**
JULY 10-13, 2024

**2024 CAPE MAY MARLIN
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AUGUST 18-23, 2024

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qualifying blue marlin. Teams can leave the dock at any time prior to the tournament lines in time of 8:30am and fish through 4:30pm. This winner takes all, best of the best event will surely take bragging rights to the next level!

The **South Jersey Yacht Sales Offshore Showdown (July 10-13)** Once again lived up to its reputation during the 2023 tournament season. With record turnout and fantastic weather, each day was a blast for our participants both on and off the water. Last year's event highlighted our family friendly event with some of the best up and coming fishing teams from our region! Once again, we will, be hosting the Captains Meeting at the local favorite Nauti Spirits distillery and continuing our Fish – Lay – Fish schedule as previous years and exploring the local spots of the City of Cape May and enjoying the dockside hospitality at Canyon Club Resort Marina. Wrapping up on Saturday evening at the elegantly decorated beachfront Grand Hotel for dinner and awards, all the participants come together to congratulate each other on their catches before closing on the event. With two days of family friendly competitive offshore fishing throughout and



all-inclusive hospitality, this event continues to be one of the best events everyone can enjoy!

The **Cape May Marlin Tournament (July 25-28)** has continually attracted the best blue and white marlin fisherman from up and down the coast since the 1950's. What was once the Yacht Club of Stone Harbor Marlin Invitational has now moved in its entirety to the gateway to the coast in Cape May. Building on the 60 plus years of rich history and tradition the Cape May Marlin Tournament continues to grow as one of the oldest and most prestigious release tournaments in the Mid-Atlantic Region!

The **MidAtlantic Tournament (August 18-23)** continues to be the icing on the cake for big

game fishing enthusiasts along the eastern seaboard. With high stakes, big payouts, and hospitality that are all second to none, the MidAtlantic is certainly something to get in on each year. We are once again expecting another great turnout and purse to keep the momentum of such a great event going. We look forward to having you join us for the best event in the world of sportfishing.

With another exciting year ahead, we look forward to seeing old friends and meeting new people at each event this year. We have always built our tournaments with top notch hospitality because it is not just a competition but an event for friends, families, all with a shared passion for spending time on the water. The season always comes and goes quickly, but the memories last a lifetime!

I look forward to seeing you at the scales and on the docks in 2024!

Sincerely,

Aaron T. Hoffman
South Jersey Tournament Director



June 19-23, 2024

School's Out

TUNA TOURNAMENT



The School's Out Tuna Tournament is just in time for the best tuna bite of our region. The best way to celebrate the end of another busy and stressful academic year, the School's Out Tuna Tournament is the perfect event to get out on the water and get in on the action while its red hot!

Now partnering with the Cape May Marlin & Tuna Club and Jim's Bait and Tackle, South Jersey Tournaments is teaming up with the local community to kick off this event! The School's Out Tuna Tournament features Day Trip or Overnight Options, extended weather window and several Calcutta options for your team to target Yellowfin, Bigeye, and even Swords and Mahi. Giving all the

options for anglers to choose from to be on the water at the right time! Teams can depart from any Inlet from Cape May to Ocean City, New Jersey. Weigh-ins will be held at South Jersey Marina, open house hospitality at the Cape May Marlin & Tuna Club and all your bait and tackle needs found readily available at Jim's Bait and Tackle!

We're all looking forward to getting together to kick off this event featuring the landing here in Cape May and we certainly expect plenty of fish to hit the scales and have just as many winners for this year's newest event on the tournament calendar, the School's Out Tuna Tournament!

Schedule of Events

Wednesday, June 19th

Cape May Marlin and Tuna Club

6:00 PM **Late Registration**

7:30 PM **Captains' Meeting**

4 Day Trip Options

Captain's Choice – Fish 2 of 4

Thursday|Friday|Saturday|Sunday

12:00 AM **Depart Inlet**

4:30 AM **Lines In**

3:30 PM **Lines Out**

(11 Hours - Same Day)

3 Overnight Trip Options

Captain's Choice – Fish 1 of 3

Thursday-Friday|Friday-Saturday|

Saturday-Sunday

1:30 PM **Depart Inlet**

5:30 PM **Lines In**

3:30 PM **Lines Out**

(22 Hours - Following Day)

Sunday, June 23rd

South Jersey Marina/Cape May

Marlin & Tuna Club

9:00 PM **Tournament Awards**

Catered Dinner & Beverages

Weigh-Ins

At South Jersey Marina

Thursday|Friday|Saturday|Sunday

5:00 PM **Scales Open**

8:00 PM **Scales Close**

Tournament Calcuttas

Freshman Class Calcuttas (35' and Under)

The following categories target either heaviest Bigeye Tuna, Yellowfin Tuna, or both (Stringer). Boats must be 35' or less in length according to the given boat's model name.

Heaviest Bigeye Tuna - \$400

1st Place 70% | 2nd Place 30%

Heaviest Yellowfin Tuna - \$400

1st Place 70% | 2nd Place 30%

Heaviest Tuna Stringer - \$600

1st Place 70% | 2nd Place 30%

Sophomore Class Calcuttas

The following categories target either heaviest Yellowfin or Heaviest Yellowfin Stringer Only.

Heaviest Yellowfin Tuna - \$600

1st Place 50% | 2nd Place 30% |

3rd Place 20%

Heaviest Yellowfin Stringer - \$600

1st Place 50% | 2nd Place 30% |

3rd Place 20%

Junior Class Calcuttas

The following categories target either heaviest Bigeye or Heaviest Bigeye Stringer Only.

Heaviest Bigeye Tuna - \$600

1st Place 50% | 2nd Place 30% |

3rd Place 20%

Heaviest Bigeye Stringer - \$600

1st Place 50% | 2nd Place 30% |

3rd Place 20%

Senior Class Calcuttas

The following categories target either heaviest Bigeye Tuna, Yellowfin Tuna, or both (Stringer).

Heaviest Bigeye Tuna - \$800

1st Place 50% | 2nd Place 30% |

3rd Place 20%

Heaviest Yellowfin Tuna - \$800

1st Place 50% | 2nd Place 30% |

3rd Place 20%

Heaviest Combined

Tuna Stringer - \$800

1st Place 50% | 2nd Place 30% |

3rd Place 20%

Lunchbox Calcuttas

The following categories target either heaviest Dolphin, Swordfish, or any single heaviest tournament eligible species (Tuna, Dolphin, Swordfish).

Heaviest Dolphin - \$200

1st Place 70% | 2nd Place 30%

Heaviest Swordfish - \$250

1st Place 70% | 2nd Place 30%

Heaviest Fish

(winner take all) - \$1000

1st Place 100%

ENTRY FEE \$500

Tournament Entry Fee includes team's tournament registration and hospitality.



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TIMES & BOUNDARIES

1. Boats may sail from any inlet between Cape May Inlet to Great Egg Inlet.

2. **Boats fishing 11 hour trips** (Day) are not permitted to clear the Sea Buoy at their respective inlet prior to 12:00 AM on each scheduled fishing day. **Boats fishing 22 hour trips** (Overnight) are not permitted to clear the Sea Buoy at their respective inlet prior to 1:30 PM on each scheduled fishing day.

3. **For Boats Fishing 11 hour trips** (Day) fishing begins at 4:30 AM on each scheduled fishing day. **For Boats Fishing 22 hour trips** (Overnight) fishing begins at 5:30 PM on each scheduled fishing day. No lines, chum, or bait of any kind may be put into the water prior to this time.

4. **For Boats Fishing 11 hour trips** (Day) & **22 hour trips** (Overnight) fishing ends at 3:30 PM on each scheduled fishing day. Any fish hooked prior to the deadline may be played until boated or released, provided that said fish is announced hooked on the tournament channel before the deadline.

5. Boundaries for the tournament will be 125 nautical miles from the Cape May Sea Buoy.

6. Weigh-in begins at 5:00 PM. All eligible fish must be available for weigh-in at South Jersey Marina by 8:00 PM aboard the boat on which they were caught.

7. Each boat must declare either one overnight trip or two day trips. The boat must be dockside when the fish day is declared. Boats not declaring a fish day will be assumed to be laying on that day.

Fish days may be declared either with the official Fish Day Form or by direct communication with the Tournament Director. Boats may not fish on a lay day unless all their available fish days have been used. Boats with mechanical problems or other emergencies may use lay days to arrive late to the tournament so long as it is with the advance permission of the Tournament Directors and they conform with all other rules. To withdraw a Fish Day the boat must be dockside and the Tournament Directors notified within three hours after fishing beginning on the day selected.

ANGLING/FISHING

8. Participants shall comply with I.G.F.A. equipment and angling rules with the following exceptions:

- A) A fish may be hooked by someone other than the angler provided the rod is immediately transferred to the angler after hook-up. From that time on, the angler must fight the fish alone until boated or released.
- B) No harpoons, dart gaffs or greensticks.
- C) Spreader bars with hooks ARE permitted. The Tournament Directors retain sole authority for interpreting and implementing the I.G.F.A.'s rules.

9. There is no limit on the number of lines or teasers.

10. All fish boated over 75 lbs. should be reported over the tournament channel at the time of the catch.

11. There are **4 available "Day"** fishing options and **3 available "Overnight"** fishing options for the tournament. Boats may choose **either** 2 of the available days **or** 1 of the available overnights, captains' choice; no weather committee. The crew members of each individual boat will be solely responsible for the decision as to which days or night to fish.

12. Anglers may not switch to another boat nor can anyone from another boat come aboard to assist in fighting or boating a fish.

SCORING/PRIZES

13. Only one day need be fished for the tournament to be considered official and prizes to be awarded. 92% of Calcutta entries will be paid out.

14. Qualifying species are Bigeye, Yellowfin, Dolphin (Mahi-Mahi) and Swordfish. Bluefin Tuna will not be eligible for awards in this tournament.

15. Boats may weigh up to 3 Yellowfin and 3 Bigeye per fish day. Overnight trips will count as two fish days. Participants will be given tags which must be securely attached to each fish prior to being weighed and should include boat number and trip type identified.

16. Fractional weights will be rounded to the nearest pound.

17. Up to 4 fish will be counted towards each tuna stringer Calcutta.

18. In the event of a tie in the cash prize categories, the prize money will be equally divided between those tying.



Photo: Hatteras

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19. In the event that all places are not filled the unwon prize money will be proportionally divided among the winners of that prize.

20. In the event that no qualifying fish are caught in a Calcutta, the payout percentage of that Calcutta will be returned.

21. In order to be eligible for awards, prizes, and calcuttas, fish must be caught in compliance with all tournament rules. Said rules include conformance to state and federal size limits and possession of a current NMFS angling, general or charter/headboat category HMS permit.

22. All fish eligible for cash prizes may be subject to examination by the Tournament Directors, consulting biologists and/or Torrymeter, should there be any question as to the "freshness" of the catch. It shall be the responsibility of the participant to keep all eligible catches

in suitable and proper condition until weigh-in. In the event of any disputes arising from such examination, the decision of the Tournament Directors shall be final. Polygraph examination may be required of winning crews.

ADMINISTRATION

23. The designated tournament VHF radio channels are 69 (Primary) and 71 (Alternate).

24. Registration is by boat rather than by angler. Tournament Directors reserve the right to decline entry of any boat or crew.

25. The Tournament Directors and hosting facilities assume no liability or responsibility for any damage or loss.

26. If needed, with the permission of the Tournament Directors, contestants may transfer to another boat, not en-

tered in the tournament, and may fish in the name of the original but may not transfer back.

27. Allegations of violations of any of the above rules may be submitted only by an official tournament registrant and must be submitted in writing on the day of the alleged infraction. In the event of such an allegation, the Tournament Directors will have the sole and exclusive responsibility to investigate the alleged incident and to rule as to whether any violation materially aided the angler, crew, or vessel, or otherwise affected the outcome of the tournament. Any subsequent penalty will be solely at the discretion of the Tournament Directors and shall be final. In all cases, registrant and their crews agree to be bound by the ruling of the Tournament Directors.

SOUTH JERSEY TOURNAMENTS APP



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THE
MIDATLANTIC CUP
BLUE MARLIN TOURNAMENT

— July 4, 2024 —



The MidAtlantic Cup has continued to attract participants in search for the majestic blue marlin up and down the East Coast. As the largest open boundary tournament with weigh stations from Manasquan Inlet to Virginia Beach, this tournament is the next **MUST DO** events for any marlin fishing enthusiast!

Starting off with nearly a \$50,000 prize purse rolled over from last year's tournament, this year's MidAtlantic Cup will certainly climb higher as teams return to the battle grounds in search for a winning blue marlin to bring back to the scales! This is your chance to compete with marlin anglers across the region. From Sandy Hook, NJ to Virginia Beach, VA all are welcome to join in on the action.

This event allows participants to depart at any time and from any inlet they choose and run as far as they want. Fishing begins at 8:30AM and ends at 4:30PM on July 4th. This one day tournament has only one place to fill... First. A winner take all, best of the best event that surely is going to take bragging rights to the next level.

If you're looking to compete on an additional level, MidAtlantic Cup also coincides with the Blue Marlin World Cup for a chance to not just be the best in the region, but the best in the **WORLD**! So who exactly has the best Blue Marlin fishing action in the MidAtlantic region? Only time will tell on July 4th, 2024 during the MidAtlantic Cup!

Schedule of Events

January 1 – June 18
Open Registration

June 18 – July 3
Open Online Registration Only

July 3 – 5:00 PM
Registration Deadline

July 4 – 8:30 AM
Lines In

July 4 – 4:30 PM
Lines Out

Entry Fee & Calcutta

Tournament Entry Fee \$2,000
1st Place Heaviest Qualifying Blue Marlin

Optional MidAtlantic Cup Calcutta
Entry Fee \$3,000

1st Place Heaviest Qualifying Blue Marlin
Winner Take All Prize Money Purse
See Tournament Rules & Regulations for Details

Official Weigh Stations

Manasquan River Inlet
Hoffman's Marina

Cape May Inlet
Canyon Club Resort Marina

Ocean City Inlet
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1. Entry fee: \$2,000 per boat (each boat is referred to as "Participant").

2. Optional MidAtlantic Cup Calcutta: \$3,000 per Participant (the "MidAtlantic Cup Calcutta or MACC")

3. Payment and Acceptance of Entry Fee: Payment can be made by standard commercial means either by mail, wire transfer or over the internet. After June 18, 2024, only internet credit card payments and cash (US currency only) will be accepted. **All funds must be available without restriction to South Jersey Tournaments on or before 5:00pm, July 3, 2024 (unless otherwise stated, all times in the Rules refer to US EST).** Each Participant must receive a confirmation number prior to July 4 which shall confirm Participant's entry into the Tournament.

4. Revocation of Entry: South Jersey Tournaments reserves the right in its sole and absolute discretion, to reject or revoke participation by any Participant for any reason. Revocation may be communicated or sent to Participant by phone, fax or email and is effective when sent by South Jersey Tournaments.

5. Withdrawal: Refunds will only be made for withdrawals if a written withdrawal and refund notice signed by the Participant is received by South Jersey Tournaments on or before 5:00 PM, July 3.

6. Qualifying fish: The qualifying length for Blue Marlin is 106 inches (LJFL). All fish below the qualifying length and those fish not expected to be the heaviest shall be released.

7. Qualifying fish being weighed: Blue Marlin that meet the minimum length must be brought aboard the boat on which it was caught, to an Official weigh station of The MidAtlantic Cup to be weighed. The fish must be available by midnight.

8. Winning fish: The winning fish will be the heaviest qualifying blue marlin caught in accordance with these Tournament Rules.

9. IGFA and Government Rules: Subject to the express modifications set forth in these Tournament Rules, each Participant shall comply with the IGFA rules which can be viewed at www.igfa.org under "Fishing," and

with all applicable government fisheries regulations. Tournament Anglers **MUST** use only non-offset circle hooks when deploying natural bait or natural bait artificial lure combinations. Tournament anglers may deploy "J" hooks with artificial lures.

10. Boundaries: There are no boundaries for this tournament.

11. Prize Money and Distribution: Prize money is awarded for first place only in this winner takes all tournament to the Participant catching the heaviest qualifying blue marlin. Prize money shall be equal to 80% of Tournament Entry Fees (the "Prize Money"). The Prize Money will be distributed to the "Payee" designated in writing by Participant. **IN THE EVENT THAT A QUALIFYING FISH IS NOT CAUGHT, THE TOURNAMENT PRIZE MONEY (TOURNAMENT ENTRY FEES MINUS 20%) WILL BE ROLLED OVER AND ADDED TO THE PRIZE MONEY FOR THE 2025 TOURNAMENT.** Reentry and payment of the 2025 Tournament Entry Fee will be required to participate in the 2025 MidAtlantic Cup.

12. MidAtlantic Cup Calcutta: Entry in the MidAtlantic Cup Calcutta is optional, and all Tournament Rules will apply. The winning MACC Participant will be the MACC Participant catching the heaviest qualifying blue marlin. The MACC is a winner takes all event with prize money equal to the total MACC entry fees minus 20% (the "MACC" Prize Money). The MACC Prize Money will be distributed to the "Payee" designated in writing by Participant. If there is no MACC winner, 80% of the MACC entry fees will be refunded.

13. Departure: Boats may depart at any time to be able to reach the fishing grounds.

14. Fishing hours: Lines in the water at 8:30 AM and out of the water at 4:30 PM in the Participant's local time zone. Boats may catch bait prior to lines in. If a hookup is reported to MidAtlantic Cup headquarters prior to lines out and the angler reasonably believes that the marlin is the winning fish, the angler may continue fighting the marlin.

15. Video: South Jersey Tournaments reserves the right to require the winning team to provide a video of boated fish along with continuous video of GPS time and date to verify fish was caught during tournament hours.

16. Polygraph: South Jersey Tournaments reserves the right to require that the angler and/or any members of the crew pass a polygraph test, administered in the manner determined by South Jersey Tournaments, in order to collect the Prize Money. All tests or other verification costs incurred by South Jersey Tournaments shall be paid out of the Prize Money.

17. Determination and Verification of Fish Size: Fish weight as well as length (as measured from the tip of the lower jaw to the fork of the tail) and girth (the "Weight and Measurements") shall be taken by a qualified weigh master approved by South Jersey Tournaments. At least two independent witnesses are required to witness the taking of the Weight and Measurements. The Weight and Measurements along with photos taken to verify the Weight and Measurements and the witnesses' names and contact information shall be submitted to South Jersey Tournaments as soon as reasonably possible, but no later than noon, July 5th. An observer approved by South Jersey Tournaments may be required for any Participant fishing in a remote area where there are no other Participants (the "Remote Area"). South Jersey Tournaments shall have the right to refuse any entry if it believes that adequate verification procedures are not available in the Remote Area to modify verification compliances and procedures in its sole discretion.

18. Fishing Line Requirements: Any line (monofilament, Dacron or braided line) with a manufacturer's stated breaking strength of 100 pounds or less; also accepted is any line labeled as "IGFA-rated or Tournament-rated" with a breaking strength of 130 pounds or less. Backing of ANY SIZE is permitted as long as the top shot does not exceed 130lb. test IGFA or 100lb manufacturers stated. **IGFA Top Shot & backing rule.** *The catch shall be classified under the breaking strength of the first five meters of*

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line directly preceding the double line, leader or hook. This section must be comprised of a single, homogenous piece of line.

19. Reporting: Participants shall use their best effort to report, as soon as possible, when a fish is hooked and then when any large blue marlin is boated and the estimated weight of the fish. South Jersey Tournaments may provide Tournament day activity on The MidAtlantic Cup website, or through Twitter or Facebook, as it occurs throughout the day, however, in no event shall South Jersey Tournaments have any liability for any such information that may later turn out to be inaccurate or false.

20. Adverse Conditions: It is the responsibility of each Participant to decide in advance whether to fish on July 4. Participants shall not be entitled to refunds for the Tournament unless Participant complies with the refund rules set forth above. Participant shall not be entitled to a refund after the

refund deadline due to the inability of Participant to fish on July 4 for any reason, including, but not limited to bad weather, adverse sea conditions, other acts of God, mechanical or physical conditions or other similar conditions or events.

21. Dispute Resolution: In order for any dispute or protest to be considered it must be submitted to South Jersey Tournaments prior to 5:00 PM on July 5, 2024. Any dispute shall be determined and resolved by the sole and absolute discretion of South Jersey Tournaments rules committee and said determination and/or resolution shall be final and binding.

22. Indemnification: Anglers/ crews/ boat owner and guests of Participant (collectively "Participating Parties") enter the Tournament at their own risk, individually and collectively, and assume all risks which might occur. Participating Parties hereby release and forever discharge South Jersey Tournaments and their agents, employees, representatives, attorneys, shareholders, officers, directors,

assigns, heirs and successors-in-interest from and against any and all claims, demands, obligations and causes of action, which Participating Parties may have arising out of or in any way connected with their participation in the Tournament.

23. Jurisdiction: In the event of any litigation arising out of the Tournament, participant hereby consents to the jurisdiction of the New Jersey courts with venue in Cape May County, New Jersey.

24. Consent to Rules and Failure to Abide by the Rules: Submission of your entry into the Tournament constitutes your acceptance of the Rules and your agreement to abide by the Rules. Failure to abide by the Rules shall constitute disqualification.

25. Consent to use Photo: Participants consent to South Jersey Tournaments' use their photos and any likeness in future publication or commercial use.



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South Jersey Yacht Sales Offshore Showdown

July 10-13, 2024

Early July Cape May the wake-up call sounds for the pursuit of pelagics offshore. The tuna have arrived and the billfish bite is on! The South Jersey Yacht Sales Offshore Showdown is perfectly timed to allow families and crews to shake the rust off for the start of another great offshore season. The Offshore Showdown has become a family staple with the emphasis on friendly competition

and hospitality events to keep old friendships going and new ones started. From the Captains Meeting at Nauti Spirits Distillery to the poolside cocktails and dinner at Canyon Club Resort Marina, the fish, lay, fish schedule culminating in sit down dinner at the Grand Hotel of Cape May, this event should be on your calendar!



Schedule & Awards

South Jersey Yacht Sales
Offshore Showdown
July 10-13, 2024

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

Wednesday, July 10

Captains Meeting

4:00 PM | Registration & Captains Meeting at
Nauti Spirits Distillery

Thursday, July 11

Fish Day

8:00 AM – 3:30 PM | Lines In
5:00 PM – 7:30 PM | Weigh Ins, Catch Reports &
Dockside Cocktail Service
7:30 PM – 9:00 PM | Dockside Dining & Cocktails
at Canyon Club Resort Marina

Friday, July 12

Lay Day

12:00 PM – 2:00 PM | Dockside BBQ &
Afternoon Events

Saturday, July 8

Fish Day

8:00 AM – 3:30 PM | Lines In
5:00 PM – 7:30 PM | Weigh Ins, Catch Reports &
Dockside Cocktail Service
7:30 PM – 9:00 PM | Seated Dinner & Awards at
the Grand Hotel of Cape May



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AWARDS

Angler Awards

Most Points **Male Angler**, 16 & Over
Most Points **Lady Angler**, 16 & Over
Most Points **Junior Male Angler**, 15 & Under
Most Points **Junior Female Angler**, 15 & Under
Most Points **Angler Blue Marlin**
Most Points **Angler White Marlin**
Heaviest **Tuna**
Heaviest **Dolphin**
Heaviest **Wahoo**

Boat Awards

Most Points **Overall** 1st, 2nd, 3rd
Most Points **White Marlin** 1st, 2nd, 3rd
Most Points **Blue Marlin** 1st, 2nd, 3rd
Most Points **Tuna** 1st, 2nd, 3rd

South Jersey Yacht Sales Special Recognition

Honorable Mentions for New Boat Owners
& Special Guests

Points for Scoring

White Marlin – 100 Points per Release
Blue Marlin – 300 Points per Release
Tuna – The five heaviest Tuna per boat per day
earn 1 point per pound, 35lb minimum
Eligible Tuna: Yellowfin, Bigeye, True Albacore



Yellowfin

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Tournament Rules

South Jersey Yacht Sales
Offshore Showdown
July 10-13, 2024

TIMES & BOUNDARIES

1. All boats must sail from and return to Cape May Inlet.
2. Boats are not permitted to clear the Sea Buoy prior to 4:30 AM.
3. Fishing begins at 8:00 AM. No lines or bait of any kind may be put into the water until starting time.
4. Fishing ends at 3:30 PM on each scheduled fishing day. Any fish hooked prior to the deadline may be played until boated or released, provided that said fish is announced hooked on the tournament channel before the deadline.
5. Boundaries for the tournament will be 100 nautical miles from the Cape May Sea Buoy.
6. Weigh-in begins at 5:00 PM. All eligible fish must be available for weigh-in by 7:30 PM aboard the boat on which they were caught. Boats weighing fish must proceed directly from the inlet to the weigh station.

ANGLING & FISHING

7. Participants shall comply with I.G.F.A. equipment and angling rules with the following exceptions:
A) A fish may be hooked by someone other than the angler provided the rod is immediately transferred to the angler after hook-up. From that time on, the angler must fight the fish alone until boated or released; B) No Harpoons, dart gaffs, or greensticks; C) Live baiting is not permitted. The Tournament Directors retain sole authority for interpreting and implementing the I.G.F.A.'s rules.
8. There is no limit on the number of lines or teasers.
9. All billfish released are to be announced on the tournament channel at the time of the catch. Tuna boated over

50 lbs. should also be reported.

10. This is a trolling tournament. While hook-ups accomplished with no headway are permissible if they occur at a time when baits settle while fighting another fish, the use of live bait or stopping and casting or pitching to tailing fish or fish balling bait is not permissible.
11. For release purposes, a fish will be considered caught when the mate grabs the leader, or the swivel touches the rod tip.
12. Fishing will be on each scheduled day unless cancelled by the weather committee by 6:30 AM.
13. Anglers may not switch to another boat nor can anyone from another boat come aboard to assist in fighting or boating a fish.

SCORING & PRIZES

14. Only one day need be fished for the tournament to be considered official & prizes to be awarded.
15. Fractional weights will be rounded to the nearest pound.
16. For release points to count, boats must be dockside by the weigh-in deadline and submit a Daily Catch Report by 7:30 PM at the official tournament weigh station.
17. In the event of a tie, the winner shall be the first boat or team reaching the winning point accumulation.
18. In order to be eligible for awards and prizes, fish must be caught in compliance with all tournament rules. Said rules include conformance to state and federal size limits and possession of a current NMFS angling, general or charter/headboat category HMS permit.
19. All fish eligible for cash prizes may be subject to examination by the

Tournament Directors, consulting biologists and/or Torrymeter, should there be any question as to the "freshness" of the catch. It shall be the responsibility of the participant to keep all eligible catches in suitable and proper condition until weigh-in. In the event of any disputes arising from such examination, the decision of the Tournament Directors shall be final. Polygraph examination may be required of winning crews.

ADMINISTRATION

20. The designated tournament VHF radio channels are 69 (Primary) and 71 (Alternate).
21. The Tournament Directors and hosting facilities assume no liability or responsibility for any damage or loss.
22. If needed, with the permission of the Tournament Directors, contestants may transfer to another boat, not entered in the tournament, and may fish in the name of the original but may not transfer back.
23. Allegations of violations of any of the above rules may be submitted only by an official tournament registrant and must be submitted in writing on the day of the alleged infraction. In the event of such an allegation, the tournament directors will have the sole and exclusive responsibility to investigate the alleged incident and to rule as to whether any violation materially aided the angler, crew, or vessel, or otherwise affected the outcome of the tournament. Any subsequent penalty will be solely at the discretion of the tournament directors and shall be final. In all cases, registrant and their crews agree to be bound by the ruling of the tournament directors.





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Everglades

HYBRID: 243, 253, 273
CENTER CONSOLE: 235, 285, 315, 335, 365, 395, 455



WORLD CAT

DUAL CONSOLE: 230, 260, 280, 296, 325, 400
CENTER CONSOLE: 235, 260, 280, 295, 325, 400



COBIA

CENTER CONSOLE: 220, 240, 262, 280, 301, 320, 350
DUAL CONSOLE: 220, 240, 280, 330

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2024 CAPE MAY MARLIN TOURNAMENT

July 25-28, 2024

Since the 1950's the County of Cape May and its fishing community have held highlighted events for big game offshore fisherman. Over the years these tournaments and fisherman have made our area known for having some of the most productive fishing for White and Blue Marlin and have created some of the most world-renowned captains and crews that target them.

As the sport fishing industry has grown substantially, the recently rebranded Cape May Marlin Tournament puts our region on the map

as a must-do event for Marlin fishing enthusiasts. Building on the 60 years of rich history and tradition started at the Yacht Club of Stone Harbor, the Cape May Marlin Tournament continues to grow as one of the oldest and prestigious release tournaments in the Mid-Atlantic!

We look forward to hearing from you and fishing beside you in this year's tournament.

For questions regarding the tournament please call South Jersey Tournaments at (609) 884-0177.



Schedule of Events

Thursday, July 25

Poolside Captains Meeting at Canyon Club Marina

6:00 PM | Cocktails and Hors d'oeuvres

7:30 PM | Captains Meeting

Friday, July 26

Fish Day

4:00 AM | Depart Inlet

8:00 AM – 3:30 PM | Lines In/Out

5:00 PM – 8:00 PM | Weigh Station Open

7:30 PM – 9:30 PM | Evening Dockside | Cocktails, Music and Dinner, Poolside at Canyon Club Resort Marina

Saturday, July 27

Fish Day

4:00 AM | Depart Inlet

8:00 AM – 3:30 PM | Lines In/Out

5:00 PM – 8:00 PM | Weigh Station Open

7:30 PM – 9:30 PM | Evening Dockside | Cocktails, Music and hors d'oeuvres

Sunday, July 28

Awards at Corinthian Yacht Club of Cape May

Cocktail Attire Required

5:00 PM | Cocktails and Music

6:00 PM | Dinner

7:00 PM | Presentation of Awards

Awards

Most Points Overall Boat

1st | 2nd | 3rd

5 Angler Awards per Boat

Most Points Overall Angler (IGFA)

1st | 2nd | 3rd

IGFA Points is for anglers who hook and fight their fish until released. Anglers may not be handed any fish at any time throughout the tournament.

Most Points Overall Angler (H&H)

1st | 2nd | 3rd

Hook and Hand Points is for any combination of angling throughout the tournament. Angler Awards are separate categories and anglers can only qualify for one or the other.

1st Place Female Angler

1st Place Junior Angler (16 & Under)

Heaviest Tuna

Heaviest Dolphin

Most Points Overall Team

1st | 2nd

Most Release Points Accumulated by Teams Determined at Captains Meeting

Warren Buckingham Memorial Trophy

Most Outstanding Catch

Walt Hendee Captains Award

1st Place Boat Captain

Marlin Calcutta

\$500 – Most Overall Points

1st Place – 75%

2nd Place – 25%

Tuna & Dolphin Calcutta

\$250 per Category

1st Place – 75%

2nd Place – 25%

Daily Calcutta

\$250 per Fish Day – Most Daily Points

1st Place – 100%

See Rules and Regulations for additional information pertaining to tournament points and prizes.

**TOURNAMENT
ENTRY FEE: \$2,500**

Tournament Entry Fee includes access for guests of up to 6 for nightly dockside hospitality and awards dinner at the Corinthian Yacht Club of Cape May.



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Tournament Rules

2024 Cape May
Marlin Tournament
July 25-28, 2024

TIMES & BOUNDARIES

1. All boats must sail from and return to Cape May Inlet.
2. Boats are not permitted to clear the Sea Buoy prior to 4:00 AM.
3. Fishing begins at 8:00 AM. No lines or bait of any kind may be put into the water until starting time.
4. Fishing ends at 3:30 PM on each scheduled fishing day. Any fish hooked prior to the deadline may be played until boated or released, provided that said fish is announced hooked on the tournament channel before the deadline.
5. Weigh-ins begin at 5:00 PM. All eligible fish must be available for weigh-in at Canyon Club Marina by 8:00 PM aboard the boat on which they were caught. Boats weighing fish must proceed directly from the inlet to the weigh station.

ANGLING & FISHING

6. Participants shall comply with I.G.F.A. equipment and angling rules with the following exceptions: **A) (For Hook and Hand Points Only)** A fish may be hooked by someone other than the angler provided the rod is immediately transferred to the angler after hook-up. From that time on, the angler must fight the fish alone until boated or released; **B)** No harpoons, dart gaffs of greensticks. **C)** Live baiting is not permitted. **D)** Line class shall be limited to the manufacturer's stated rating of no greater than 130 lbs. The Tournament Directors retain sole authority for interpreting and implementing the I.G.F.A.'s rules.
7. There is no limit on the number of lines or teasers.
8. All billfish released are to be announced on the tournament channel at the time of the catch.
9. This is a trolling tournament. While hookups accomplished with no headway are permissible if they occur at a time

when baits settle while fishing another fish, the use of live bait or stopping and casting or pitching to tailing fish or fish balling bait is not permissible. Live baiting shall include live teasing and fishing for boat during the tournament. The use of Chub Mackerel or Atlantic Mackerel is prohibited.

10. For release purposes, a fish will be considered caught when the mate grabs the leader or the swivel touches the tip of the rod.
11. Fishing will be on each scheduled day unless cancelled by the weather committee by 6:30 AM.
12. Anglers may not switch to another boat nor can anyone from another boat come aboard to assist in fighting or boating a fish.

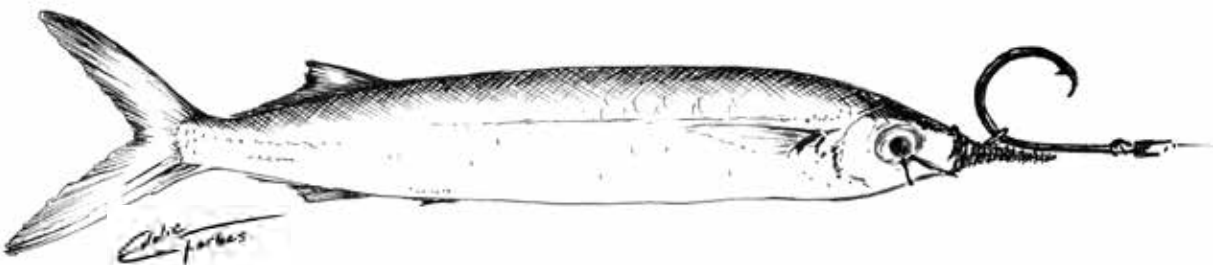
SCORING & PRIZES

13. Only one day need be fished for the tournament to be considered official & prizes to be awarded. 92% of Calcutta entries will be paid out.
14. Team competition will consist of teams of up to three boats each, the teams vying for prizes for first and second place. Teams will be picked lottery style at the Captain's Meeting.
15. Fractional weights will be rounded to the nearest pound.
16. For release points to count, boats must be dockside by the weigh-in deadline and submit a Daily Catch Report by 8:00 PM on each scheduled fish day at the official tournament weigh station.
17. In the event of a tie, the winner shall be the first boat or team reaching the winning point accumulation.
18. In order to be eligible for awards and prizes, fish must be caught in compliance with all tournament rules. Said rules include conformance to state and federal size limited and possession of a current NMFS angling, general or charter/headboat category HMS permit.

19. All fish eligible for cash prizes may be subject to examination by the Tournament Directors, consulting biologists and/or Torrymeter, should there be any question as to the "freshness" or natural state of the catch. It shall be the responsibility of the participant to keep all eligible catches in suitable and proper condition until weigh-in. In the event of any disputes arising from such examination, the decision of the Tournament Directors shall be final. Polygraph examination may be required of winning crews.

ADMINISTRATION

20. The designated tournament VHF radio channels are 69 (Primary) and 71 (Alternate).
21. Registration is by boat rather than by angler. The Tournament Directors reserve the right to decline the entry of any boat or crew.
22. The Tournament Directors and hosting facilities assume no liability or responsibility for any damage or loss.
23. If needed, with permission of the Tournament Directors, contestants may transfer to another boat, not entered in the tournament, and may fish in the name of the original but may not transfer back.
24. Allegations of violations of any of the above rules may be submitted only by an official tournament registrant and must be submitted in writing on the day of the alleged infraction. In the event of such an allegation, the tournament directors will have the sole and exclusive responsibility to investigate the alleged incident and to rule as to whether any violation materially aided the angler, crew, or vessel, or otherwise affected the outcome of the tournament. Any subsequent penalty will be solely at the discretion of the tournament directors and shall be final. In all cases, registrant and their crews agree to be bound by the ruling of the tournament directors.



THE MIDATLANTIC TOURNAMENT

August 18-23, 2024

Tournament Entry Fee: \$3,000



The MidAtlantic has continually set the standard for big game fishing tournaments in terms of prize money, hospitality, and conservation. Now in its 33rd year the MidAtlantic has truly been a one-of-a-kind experience that continues to create memories to last a lifetime for all participants.

This is why each August, boat owners, captains and crews come together from all over the world to compete in this great event! The event is staged out of two world renowned ports; Cape May, NJ, where the Canyon Club Resort Marina is the home base of the tournament and Ocean City, MD, with Sunset

Marina serving as the second port's headquarters. Along with their prime locations, each port has first class accommodations and offers distinct amenities for participants to enjoy while dockside. Both locations have fully run weigh-ins simultaneously, which are broadcast via our livestream media to keep everyone informed as the excitement happens and the participants take center stage.

Online Registration for the MidAtlantic Tournament opens February 1st. Earlier entry guarantees an official boat number for the tournament.

Schedule of Events

Open Registration begins February 1st 2024

Earlier entry guarantees an official boat number for the tournament

Sunday, August 18

1:00 PM – 4:30 PM | Late Registration Calcuttas

Welcome Cocktail Party

4:30 PM | Captains Meeting

Cape May – Canyon Club Marina

Ocean City – Sunset Marina

Friday, August 23

8:00 AM – 3:30 PM | Available Fish Day

7:30 PM Dockside Dining, Entertainment & Awards Ceremony

Monday - Friday, August 19-23

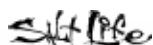
8:00 AM – 3:30 PM | Available Fish Days

5:00 PM – 9:00 PM | Weigh Ins

Dockside dining and entertainment schedules will be provided in detail in participants Captains Packets following the tournament's Registration and Captains Meeting for each port's hosting facility.

SPONSORS

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PREMIER ENGINE SPONSORS:



PRIMARY HOST MARINAS:



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Since the inception of the Mega Marlin Calcutta in 2021, South Jersey Tournaments has donated \$168,000 to conservation organizations, South Jersey Tournaments will be donating a portion of their 2024 proceeds to support the 7th International Billfish Symposium, October 8-10, 2024. The Symposium will be held at Hubbs-Sea World Research Institute in San Diego, California. The Symposium will be focused on billfish biology and management. This conference is not just for scientists and managers but is also open to the public and encourages all interested billfish anglers to attend. In addition to daily sessions there will be numerous socials for networking with old friends and meeting new ones. Go to www.bfsymposium.org for information and schedules.

33RD ANNUAL MEGA MARLIN CALCUTTA

\$33,000 Entry Fee



Pays out as follows:

Heaviest White Marlin – 32%
2nd Heaviest White Marlin – 18%
Heaviest Blue Marlin – 32%
2nd Heaviest Blue Marlin – 18%

In the event that...

- Less than two qualifying fish are taken in any category, the unwon prize money will be proportionally divided among the winners in that category.
- No qualifying fish is taken in any category, the unwon prize money will be equally divided among the winners in the other categories.
- No qualifying fish are caught, the unwon prize money will be refunded.

THE OVERALL CALCUTTAS

50' and Under Overall Calcutta - \$2,000 Entry Fee

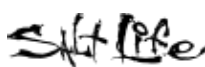
Think the bigger boats have an advantage? To enter the 50' and Under Calcutta, boats must be 50' or less in length according to the given boat's model name. IE: A Viking 50 Convertible will be considered a 50' even though its LOA is 50' 6".



Home Port Overall Calcutta - \$4,000 Entry Fee



In Deep Overall Calcutta - \$6,000 Entry Fee



MidAtlantic Overall Calcutta - \$3,000 Entry Fee

Each of these four Overall Calcuttas will pay out as follows:

Heaviest White Marlin – 20%
2nd Heaviest White Marlin – 10%
3rd Heaviest White Marlin – 5%
Heaviest Blue Marlin – 15%
2nd Heaviest Blue Marlin – 10%
3rd Heaviest Blue Marlin – 5%
Heaviest Tuna – 15%
2nd Heaviest Tuna – 10%
3rd Heaviest Tuna – 5%
Heaviest Dolphin – 2.5%
Heaviest Wahoo – 2.5%

In the event that...

- Less than three qualifying fish are taken in any Overall Calcutta category, the unwon prize money will be proportionally divided among the winners in that category.
- No qualifying white marlin is taken, the unwon prize money will be equally divided among the winners in the blue marlin category.
- No qualifying blue marlin is taken, the unwon prize money will be equally divided among the winners in the white marlin category.
- No qualifying white or blue marlin is taken, the unwon prize money will be equally divided among the winners in the tuna category.
- No qualifying tuna is taken, the unwon prize money will be equally divided among the winners in the marlin categories.
- No qualifying billfish or tuna is taken, the unwon prize money will be equally divided among the Dolphin and Wahoo categories.
- No Dolphin is taken, the unwon prize money will be go to the Heaviest Wahoo and vice versa.
- No Dolphin or Wahoo are taken, the unwon prize money will be equally divided among the winners in the tuna category.

THE PRO JACKPOTS

White Marlin Pro Jackpot -

\$5,000 Entry Fee



Blue Marlin Pro Jackpot -

\$3,000 Entry Fee

Tuna Pro Jackpot -

\$3,000 Entry Fee



Heaviest fish in each category takes all!

In the event that...

- No qualifying fish is taken in a Pro Jackpot Calcutta, the unwon prize money will be rolled over and added to the prize money for that Calcutta in the following year. To compete for the following year's prize, teams will be required to pay to reenter the Calcutta.

ON THE BOARD REWARD

\$3,000 Entry Fee



This Calcutta pays out each time you have a fish on the scoreboard in the following categories at the official close of each day's weigh-in.

Heaviest White Marlin, 2nd and 3rd

Heaviest Blue Marlin, 2nd and 3rd

Heaviest Tuna, 2nd and 3rd

The total purse will be divided by five (5 days). Each day's purse will be split evenly among those winning for that day. If there are no winners for a particular day, the un-won prize money will be split evenly among the purses of the remaining days. In the event that there are

no winners on the last day (Friday), the unwon prize money will be evenly split among the previous 4 day's winners. If there are no winners for the entire week, the money will be refunded.

Example: Let's say the total purse for the On the Board Reward is \$200,000.00. That figure would be divided by 5 (5 days) giving each day a purse of \$40,000. Those who are in this Calcutta and remain on the board at the end of each days weigh-in will evenly split the purse for that day. If there is only one winner, he would take the entire \$40,000.00. Two winners would get \$20,000.00 each and so on.

TUNA, DOLPHIN AND WAHOO CALCUTTA

\$2,500 Entry Fee



Pays out as follows:

Heaviest Tuna – 25%

2nd Heaviest Tuna – 15%

3rd Heaviest Tuna – 10%

Heaviest Dolphin – 13%

2nd Heaviest Dolphin – 8%

3rd Heaviest Dolphin – 4%

Heaviest Wahoo – 13%

2nd Heaviest Wahoo – 8%

3rd Heaviest Wahoo – 4%

In the event that...

- Less than three (3) qualifying fish are taken in any category, the unwon prize money will be proportionally divided among the winners in that category.
- No qualifying fish is taken in any category, the unwon prize money will be equally divided among the winners in the other categories.

BILLFISH POINTS CALCUTTA

\$1,000 Entry Fee

(For Billfish Points only) Port specific.



Pays out as follows:

Most Points – 50%

2nd Most Points – 30%

3rd Most Points – 20%

In the event that...

- Of a tie, the winner shall be the boat first reaching the winning point accumulation in that port.
- That a category is not won, the unwon prize money will be equally divided among the other winners in that port.



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IMPORTANT NOTES

High Boat Awards

Custom trophies will be awarded to the winners of the following categories:

Most Points Overall (Both Marlin & Tuna Points Qualify)

1st | 2nd | 3rd Most Points White Marlin

1st | 2nd | 3rd Most Points Blue Marlin

1st | 2nd | 3rd Most Points Tuna

Qualifying Fish

The minimum measurements for qualifying fish in the MidAtlantic are as follows:

• **Dolphin & Wahoo – 20 Pounds**

• **Tuna – 50 Pounds**

Eligible species in the tuna category are Yellowfin (Allison), Bigeye, and Albacore (Longfin).

• **White Marlin – 69 Inches AND 65 Pounds**

• **Blue Marlin – 102 Inches AND 400 Pounds**

Billfish are measured curved from the tip of the lower jaw to the fork of the tail.

Point Scoring System

Awarded to qualifying fish as follows:

- White Marlin – 75 points per release | 1 point per pound weighed
- Blue Marlin – 150 points per release | 1/4 point per pound weighed
- Tuna – 1/2 point per pound weighed

Fish which do not meet the tournament minimums will not be eligible for prizes, regardless of weight. It is the responsibility of the angler to be aware of current Federal and/or State regulations regarding the catching and/or boating of the various species of fish eligible in this tournament. Under no circumstances may a fish not meeting the Federal and/or State minimum size limits, regardless of weight, be boated and/or brought back to the dock. South Jersey Tournaments will not be responsible for any fine or penalty incurred by any angler who boats a fish which does not meet the Federal and/or State size limit requirements or other restrictions.



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TIMES & BOUNDARIES

1. Each registrant must designate their choice of Official Inlets; Cape May, NJ or Ocean City, MD. Boats must sail from and return to their designated inlet. All boats must return to their designated port for weigh-in. Entries per port may be limited. Canyon Club Resort Marina is the official weigh-in location for Cape May, NJ. Sunset Marina is the official weigh-in location for Ocean City, MD.

2. Boats are not permitted to clear the sea buoy at their designated inlet prior to 3:00 AM.

3. Fishing begins at 8:00 AM. No lines or bait of any kind may be put into the water until starting time.

4. Fishing ends at 3:30 PM on each scheduled fishing day. Any fish hooked prior to the deadline may be played until boated or released, provided that said fish is announced hooked on the tournament channel before the deadline.

5. Boundaries for the tournament will be 125 nautical miles from the Cape May Sea Buoy.

6. Weigh-in begins at 5:00 PM. All eligible fish must be available for weigh-in by 9:00 PM aboard the boat on which they were caught. Boats weighing fish must proceed directly from the inlet to the weigh station.

7. Each boat must pick two NON-FISHING DAYS by submitting the official Lay Day Form prior to 11:00 AM on the days selected. Said forms must be physically delivered to the dockmaster's office at one of the Host Marinas. Boats must be dockside at 11:00 AM on Lay Days. Boats may not fish on lay days unless all of their available fish days have been used. Boats with mechanical problems or other emergencies may use lay days to arrive late to the tournament so long as it is with the advance permission of the Tournament Directors and they conform with all other rules.

ANGLING/FISHING

8. Participants shall comply with I.G.F.A. equipment and angling rules with the following exceptions: **A)** A fish may be hooked by someone other than the angler provided the rod is immediately transferred to the angler after hook-up. From that time on, the angler must fight the fish alone until boated or released; **B)** No harpoons, dart gaffs of greensticks. **C)** Live baiting

is not permitted. **D)** Line class shall be limited to the manufacturer's stated rating of no greater than 130 lbs. The Tournament Directors retain sole authority for interpreting and implementing the I.G.F.A.'s rules.

9. There is no limit on the number of lines or teasers.

10. All billfish boated or released are to be announced on the tournament channel at the time of the catch. Tuna over 100 lbs. should also be reported.

11. This is a trolling tournament. While hookups accomplished with no headway are permissible if they occur at a time when baits settle while fighting another fish, the use of live bait or stopping and casting or pitching to tailing fish or fish balling bait is not permissible. Live baiting shall include live teasing and fishing for bait during the tournament. The use of Chub Mackerel or Atlantic Mackerel is prohibited.

12. For release purposes, a fish will be considered caught when the mate grabs the leader or the swivel touches the tip of the rod.

13. There are 5 available fishing days for the tournament. Fishing days for boats entered will be any 3 of the available 5 days, captains' choice; no weather committee. The crew members of each individual boat will be solely responsible for the decision as to which days to fish.

14. Anglers may not switch to another boat nor can anyone from another boat come aboard to assist in fighting or boating a fish.

SCORING/PRIZES

15. Only one day need be fished for the tournament to be considered official & prizes to be awarded. 92% of Calcutta entries will be paid out.

16. Weights will be rounded to the nearest pound. Billfish are measured curved from the tip of the lower jaw to the fork of the tail.

17. For release points to count, boats must be dockside by the weigh-in deadline and submit a Daily Catch report by 9:00 PM at the weigh station of one of the host marinas. Any catch report received after the deadline will lose 1/2 of its total value.

18. In the event of a tie in the point categories, the winner shall be the first boat reaching the winning point accumulation.

19. In the event of a tie in the cash prize categories, the prize money will be equally divided among those tying.

20. For the purpose of release points

identification only, sailfish & longbill spearfish will be considered white marlin. For all purposes of identification, Roundscale Spearfish will be considered white marlin.

21. In order to be eligible for awards and calcuttas, fish must be caught in compliance with all tournament rules. Said rules include conformance to state and federal size limits and possession of a current NMFS angling, general or charter/headboat category HMS permit.

22. All fish eligible for cash prizes may be subject to examination by the Tournament Directors, consulting biologists and/or Torrymeter, should there be any question as to the "freshness" or natural state of the catch. It shall be the responsibility of the participant to keep all eligible catches in suitable and proper condition until weigh-in. In the event of any disputes arising from such examination, the decision of the Tournament Directors shall be final. Polygraph examination may be required of winning crews.

ADMINISTRATION

23. The designated tournament VHF radio channels are 69 (Primary) and 71 (Alternate).

24. Registration is by boat rather than by angler. The Tournament Directors reserve the right to decline the entry of any boat or crew.

25. The Tournament Directors and hosting facilities assume no liability or responsibility for any damage or loss.

26. If needed, with the permission of the Tournament Directors, contestants may transfer to another boat, not entered in the tournament, and may fish in the name of the original but may not transfer back.

27. Allegations of violations of any of the above rules may be submitted only by an official tournament registrant and must be submitted in writing on the day of the alleged infraction. In the event of such an allegation, the tournament directors will have the sole and exclusive responsibility to investigate the alleged incident and to rule as to whether any violation materially aided the angler, crew, or vessel, or otherwise affected the outcome of the tournament. Any subsequent penalty will be solely at the discretion of the tournament directors and shall be final. In all cases, registrant and their crews agree to be bound by the ruling of the tournament directors.



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Clint Clement's **Common Sense** won \$201,388 for the heaviest white marlin which weighed 87 pounds.

2023 MidAtlantic Wrap-Up

*The Leaderboard
Takes Another Beating,
Albeit a Day Early!*

by Jeff Merrill

The 2023 MidAtlantic was another one for the record books as 181 boats gathered at Canyon Club Resort Marina in Cape May and Sunset Marina in Ocean City, Maryland to battle for a cash purse of nearly \$5.8 million! Although the tournament format allows for participants to select three of five days during the week to fish, weather played a major role in last year's event and crews had to plan their fishing strategy carefully as the forecast for late in the week became clear by Day Two of the event. Looking back, the tournament got off to a fast start as 176 boats headed out on Day One and the billfish bite was decent as numerous boats were able to score multiple releases including Billy Wrede's **Lovin' Life** with eight white marlin and one blue marlin while Gina Addeo's **Gina Lisa** released eight white marlin.

Ken Hager's **Taylor Jean** released seven white marlin and Pat Healey's **Viking 80** released six white marlin. Numerous boats had four white marlin releases. The hard luck award for the day and possibly the entire tournament went to the crew of Shon Craig's Tarpon Springs, Florida-based **Amarula Sun** as a huge blue marlin was hooked an hour before lines out and was fought before two fly gaffs were properly placed into her. However, as the marlin tried to free herself from the gaffs the huge billfish got caught in the boat's running gear, thus mutilating the fish. The MidAtlantic follows IGFA rules which clearly states mutilated fish are disqualified. In a display of class and sportsmanship, **Amarula Sun** self-disqualified their fish which after weighing still pulled the scale down to 808 pounds!

A weak cold front overnight leading up to Day Two spread through the MidAtlantic's tournament ports of Cape May and Ocean City bringing relief from the heat and humidity but also brought a steady northeast breeze and occasional strong gusts and only 11 boats headed offshore. As noted earlier, the offshore forecast for the end of the week was beginning to become clear and crews spent the day preparing for what looked to be back-to-back days of

fishing on days three and four.

Day Three got off to a bumpy start as the back end of the cold front from the previous day lingered into the morning hours. Sea conditions improved by late morning for the 165 boats fishing and the billfish continued to bite at a fierce pace and several boats racked up some impressive numbers. David Bowen's **Big Stick** released 15 white marlin and one blue marlin while Gene Sowers' **Trash Man** released 15 white marlin. Marty Judge's **Judge** released nine white marlin while Pat Healey's **Viking 80** and Dave Anderson's **Krazy Salts** each released eight white marlin. Ryan Putman's **Is That So** and David Schockley's **Liquidity** each released six white marlin while Gina Addeo's **Gina Lisa** released five white marlin.

Day Four was another big fishing day as an overcast sky and light breeze greeted the 180 boats that headed out into a light chop. It's been well documented that the last day of the MidAtlantic typically is the most exciting as the leaderboard has seen significant changes on the final day of fishing over the years. That wasn't the case in 2023 as "Moving Day" would come a day early. The billfish bite continued at a torrid pace and bigeye tuna

Common Sense awards photo.





Chip Caruso's **Pipe Dreamer** weighed the heaviest blue marlin in the tournament at 889 pounds and won \$1,180,342.

showed up in force. As a result the white marlin and tuna categories were both entirely reshuffled. Notable billfish releases on Day Four included Pat Healey's **Viking 80** with seven white marlin released while Gina Addeo's **Gina Lisa** released six white marlin. Marty Judge's **Judge** released five white marlin while Alan Sadler's **Intents** and George Robinson's **Polarizer** each released four white marlin.

On Day Five, the final fishing day of the 2023 MidAtlantic, only 11 boats headed offshore into a stiff southerly breeze and sporty sea conditions. By early afternoon the sun began to peak through though a gusty wind made for a bumpy afternoon and a rough ride home. With nearly the entire 181-boat field having wrapped up their eligible days of fishing at the close of Day Four, little change in the standings was expected. When the scales at Canyon Club Resort Marina in Cape May and Sunset Marina in Ocean City closed officially at 9 PM the

leaderboard remained unchanged and nearly \$5.8 million was handed out to three dozen different winners. Note that payouts vary based on their level of winner's calcutta participation.

In the white marlin category, Clint Clement of Cape May Court House, New Jersey aboard his **Common Sense** took the Heaviest White Marlin award with his 87-pounder and won \$201,388. The largest payout in the white marlin category went to a 76-pounder taken aboard Howard Berger's **Boss Hogg** from Edgewater, Maryland. Although **Boss Hogg** finished in second place, the crew still netted \$1,406,938! The **Catch 23** of Jupiter, Florida and NBA Hall of Famer Michael Jordan finished in third place and won \$462,318 with a 75-pounder. All three of the winning white marlin were weighed on Day Four. Note that the payout for the second place white marlin on **Boss Hogg** is a tournament record payout for any position in the category.



Pipe Dreamer awards photo.



Talkin' Trash awards photo.



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The heaviest tuna in the tournament at 253-pounds aboard Christopher Little's **Talkin' Trash** was worth \$361,353.

The blue marlin division saw Ocean, New Jersey's Chip Caruso's aboard his **Pipe Dreamer** walk away with the Heaviest Blue Marlin award as his 889-pounder netted \$1,180,342! Worthy of note at 889 pounds that's the third heaviest blue marlin weighed in the tournament's history. The crew aboard Shon Craig's **Amarula Sun** from Tarpon Springs, Florida were able to redeem themselves after self-disqualifying their 808 pounder earlier in the week. **Amarula Sun** was able to take second place thanks to a 548-pound blue marlin which was good for \$494,886. Mount Airy, Maryland's Jay Keller aboard his **Tighten Up** took third place with a 528-pounder and received \$112,148. All three of the winning blue marlin were weighed on Day Three. It's worth noting the payout for **Pipe Dreamer** is a tournament record for a blue marlin.

Once again big eye tuna showed up just in time at the tournament and while several large yellowfins were brought to the scale of the 58 tuna weighed

nearly two dozen were bigeyes. Christopher Little of Pasadena, Maryland aboard his **Talkin' Trash** took the Heaviest Tuna award with a 253-pound bigeye and walked off \$361,353. Worthy of note is that's only one pound short of the 254-pound tournament record set in 1993 by Bernard and Drew Dinardi's **Absolut-ly**. Summit, New Jersey's Bob Hugin on his **The Right Place** finished second and received \$552,483 for a 234-pound bigeye. Ken Hager of Tinton Falls, New Jersey aboard his **Taylor Jean** finished third and won \$159,574 for a 216-pound bigeye. All three of the winning tuna were weighed on Day Four.

Kyle Dougherty of Cape May Court House, New Jersey aboard his **Y-Knot** took the Heaviest Wahoo award with a 56-pounder caught on Day Three and won \$51,129. Shillington, Pennsylvania's Jim McCarthy aboard his **Covert Mission** finished second and won \$67,666 for a 52-pounder caught on Day Four. Ocean City, Maryland's Wayne

Odachowski board his **Water Damage** weighed a 51-pounder on Day Three to finish third and won \$17,894.

The dolphin category saw David Schockley of Jupiter, Florida on **Liquidity** take the Heaviest Dolphin award for a 45-pounder weighed on Day One and received \$67,321. Joe Bernert of Hatboro, Pennsylvania on his **Quick Raise** weighed a 34-pound dolphin on Day Four and won \$51,474 for second place. Jeff Kogok of Saint Michaels, Maryland finished third with a 33-pounder weighed on Day Two from his **Too Many Martinis** and won \$25,024.

It's worth noting the 750 white marlin caught, of

which 735 were released, is the third highest in the MidAtlantic's history. That's also a 98% release rate as well! Further, with 181 boats fishing three days for a total of 543 boat-days of fishing that's a catch rate of 1.38 white marlin per-boat-per-day! Additionally, when the 44 blue marlin, of which 36 were released, are added in the number jumps to 1.46 billfish per-boat-per-day! As always, the MidAtlantic tournament prize structure features large payouts to multiple winners. The 2023 MidAtlantic saw two winners receive more than \$1 million in prize money while three others received \$460 thousand or more. Four others won \$112 or more and seven additional winners won \$50 thousand or more! 🐟



Though it was the second heaviest white marlin at 76 pounds, Howard Berger's **Boss Hogg** nabbed the biggest payday of the tournament receiving \$1,406,938!



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CASH PRIZE WINNERS

Note that cash payouts vary by the level of calcuttas a participant enters.

Heaviest White Marlin – 87 lbs. – **Common Sense** – Clint Clement – Cape May Court House, NJ – \$201,388

2nd Heaviest White Marlin – 76 lbs. – **Boss Hogg** – Howard Berger – Edgewater, MD – \$1,406,938

3rd Heaviest White Marlin – 75 lbs. – **Catch 23** – Michael Jordan – Jupiter, FL – \$462,318

Heaviest Blue Marlin – 889 lbs. – **Pipe Dreamer** – Carmine Caruso – Ocean, NJ – \$1,180,342

2nd Heaviest Blue Marlin – 548 lbs. – **Amarula Sun** – Shon Craig – Tarpon Springs, FL – \$494,886

3rd Heaviest Blue Marlin – 528 lbs. – **Tighten Up** – Jay Keller – Mount Airy, MD – \$112,148

Heaviest Tuna – 253 lbs. – **Talkin Trash** – Christopher Little – Pasadena, MA – \$361,353

2nd Heaviest Tuna – 234 lbs. – **The Right Place** – Bob Hugin – Summit, NJ – \$552,483

3rd Heaviest Tuna – 216 lbs. – **Taylor Jean** – Ken Hager – Tinton Falls, NJ – \$159,547

Heaviest Wahoo – 56 lbs. – **Y-Knot** – Kyle Dougherty – Cape May Court House, NJ – \$51,129

2nd Heaviest Wahoo – 52 lbs. – **Covert Mission** – Jim McCarthy – Shillington, PA – \$67,666

3rd Heaviest Wahoo – 51 lbs. – **Water Damage** – Wayne Odachowski – Ocean City, MD – \$17,894

Heaviest Dolphin – 45 lbs. – **Liquidity** – David Schockley – Jupiter, FL – \$67,321

2nd Heaviest Dolphin – 34 lbs. – **Quick Raise** – Joe Bernert – Hatboro, PA – \$51,474

3rd Heaviest Dolphin – 33 lbs. – **Too Many Martinis** – Jeff Kogok – St. Michaels, MD – \$25,024

Salt Life Billfish Points Calcutta – Cape May

Most Points – 1645 – **Viking 80** – Pat Healey – New Gretna, NJ – \$13,800

2nd Most Points – 1425 – **Gina Lisa** – Gina Addeo – Staten Island, NY – \$8,280

3rd Most Points – 1125 – **Judge** – Martin Judge, Jr. – Wayne, PA – \$5,520

Atlantic Tackle Billfish Points Calcutta – Ocean City

Most Points – 1950 – **Trashman** – Gene Sowers – Savannah, GA – \$27,600

2nd Most Points – 1800 – **Big Stick** – David Bowen – Suwacee, GA – \$16,560

3rd Most Points – 1725 – **Billfisher** – John Duffie – Gaithersburg, MD – \$11,040

The following participants received calcutta winnings for various positions on the leaderboard during the tournament. Cash payouts vary by the level of calcuttas a participant enters.

White Marlin

70 lbs. – **Viking 80** – Pat Healey – New Gretna, NJ – \$123,188

69 lbs. – **Big Oil** – Tim Tanghare – Vincentown, NJ – \$72,864

66 lbs. – **Max Bet** – Matthew Weber – Vero Beach, FL – \$29,072

Blue Marlin

489 lbs. – **Pipe Down** – Jeff Crabtree – New Smyrna Beach, FL – \$31,464

470 lbs. – **The Zipper** – Eddie Zajdel – Ocean City, MD – \$25,944

Tuna

205 lbs. – **Marli** – Joe Stein III – Marriotsville, MD – \$60,536

195 lbs. – **Talkin' Trash** – Christopher Little – Pasadena, MD – \$41,952

113 lbs. – **Big Deal** – Brian Rabbitt – Carlstadt, NJ – \$20,608

112 lbs. – **Random Chaos** – Michael Pintozzi – Langhorne, PA – \$52,256

106 lbs. – **Hall Pass** – George Hall III – Avenue, MD – \$12,972

67 lbs. – **Fish On** – Andrew Dotterweich – Jupiter, FL – \$8,648

66 lbs. – **Still Lucky** – Steve Gladwin – Ocean City, MD – \$4,324

Wahoo

46 lbs. – **Waste Knot** – Michael Tickle – Morehead, NC – \$9,292

Dolphin

23 lbs. – **Impulse V** – Adam Demeusy – Newington, CT – \$2,162

POINT WINNERS (TROPHIES)

Note ties are broken based on time of catch.

Most Points White Marlin – 1950 – **Trashman** – Geno Sowers – Savannah, GA (Ties Tournament Record)

2nd Most Points White Marlin – 1725 – **Billfisher** – Jon Duffie – Gaithersburg, MD

3rd Most Points White Marlin – 1650 – **Sweet Spot** – Chris Kubik – Kill Devil Hills, NC

Most Points Blue Marlin – 300 – **Big Stick** – David Bowen – Suwanee, GA

2nd Most Points Blue Marlin – 300 – **Get Reel** – Brian Arni – Nottingham, PA

3rd Most Points Blue Marlin – 300 – **Reelin' Feelin'** – Adam Youschak – North Wildwood, NJ

Most Points Tuna – 318 – **Lovin' Life** – Billy Wrede – Randolph, NJ

2nd Most Points Tuna – 224 – **Talkin' Trash** – Christopher Little – Pasadena, MD

3rd Most Points Tuna – 163.5 – **Big Deal** – Brian Rabbitt – Carlstadt, NJ

Most Points Overall – 2010 – **Trashman** – Gene Sowers – Savannah, GA (**New Tournament Record**)

Catch Report

White marlin released – 735

White marlin boated – 15

Blue marlin released – 36

Blue marlin boated – 8

Tuna weighed – 58

Wahoo weighed – 7

Dolphin weighed – 15

*For further information contact Tournament Director Aaron Hoffman at 609-884-0177 or visit the tournament's web site at **themidatlantic.com** where you'll find all the facts, figures, and information about the 2023 MidAtlantic including a complete rundown of catchups, rules, points, and an event schedule. On social media follow the MidAtlantic on Facebook at The MidAtlantic Tournament; on Twitter @midatl and on Instagram @themidatlantictournament*



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Where the Bridge Meets Cape May

2024 IGFA RULES



The following angling rules have been formulated by The International Game Fish Association to promote ethical and sporting angling practices, to establish uniform regulations for the compilation of world game fish records, and to provide basic angling guidelines for use in fishing tournaments and any other group angling activities.

The word “angling” is defined as catching or attempting to catch fish with a rod, reel, line, and hook as outlined in the IGFA International Angling Rules. There are some aspects of angling that cannot be controlled through rule making, however. Angling regulations cannot insure an outstanding performance from each fish, and world records cannot indicate the

amount of difficulty in catching the fish. Captures in which the fish has not fought or has not had a chance to fight do not reflect credit on the fisherman, and only the angler can properly evaluate the degree of achievement in establishing the record.

Only fish caught in accordance with IGFA International Angling Rules, and within the intent of these rules, will be considered for world records. Following are the rules for freshwater and saltwater fishing and a separate set of rules for All-Tackle Length and fly fishing. Fish caught in violation of laws or regulations governing the species or waters are not eligible for an IGFA World Record.

RULES FOR FISHING IN FRESH AND SALT WATER

Equipment Regulations

A. LINE & BACKING

1. Monofilament, multifilament, and lead core multifilament lines may be used. For line classes, see World Record Requirements.
2. Wire lines are prohibited.
3. Backing is permitted.
4. The catch shall be classified under the breaking strength of the first 5 meters (16.5 feet) of line directly preceding the double line, leader, or hook. This section must be comprised of a single, homogenous piece of line and may not exceed 60 kilogram (130 pound) line class.

B. DOUBLE LINE

If a double line is used, it must meet the following specifications:

1. A double line must consist of the

actual line used to catch the fish.

2. Double lines are measured from the start of the knot, braid, roll or splice making the double line to the farthestmost end of the knot, splice, snap, swivel or other device used for securing the trace, leader, lure or hook to the double line.

Saltwater species: In all line classes up to and including 10 kilograms (20 pounds), the double line shall be limited to 4.57 meters (15 feet). The combined length of the double line and leader shall not exceed 6.1 meters (20 feet).

The double line on all classes of tackle over 10 kilograms (20 pounds) shall be limited to 9.14 meters (30 feet). The combined length of the double line and leader shall not exceed 12.19 meters (40 feet).

Freshwater species: The double line on all classes of tackle shall not exceed 1.82 meters (6 feet). The combined length of the double line and the leader shall not exceed 3.04 meters (10 feet).

C. LEADER

If a leader is used, it must meet the following specifications:

The length of the leader is the overall length including any lure, hook arrangement or other device, and is measured to the bend of the last hook. The leader must be connected to the line with a snap, knot, splice, swivel or other device. Holding devices are prohibited. There are no regulations regarding the material or strength of the leader.

Saltwater species: In all line classes up to and including 10 kilograms (20 pounds), the leader shall be limited to 4.57 meters (15 feet). The combined length of the double line and leader shall not exceed 6.1 meters (20 feet).

The leader on all classes of tackle over 10 kilograms (20 pounds) shall be limited to 9.14 meters (30 feet). The combined length of the double line and leader shall be limited to 12.19 meters (40 feet).

Freshwater species: The leader on all classes of tackle shall be limited to 1.82 meters (6 feet). The combined length of the double line and leader shall not exceed 3.04 meters (10 feet).

D. ROD

1. Rods must comply with sporting ethics and customs. Considerable latitude is allowed in the choice of a rod, but rods giving the angler an unfair advantage will be disqualified. This rule is intended to eliminate the use of unconventional rods.

2. The rod tip must be a minimum of 101.6 centimeters (40 inches) in length. The rod butt cannot exceed 68.58 centimeters (27 inches) in length. These measurements must be made from a point directly beneath the center of the reel. A curved butt is measured in a straight line. When the rod butt is placed in a gimbal, the measurement from the center of the reel seat to the pivot point of the gimbal can be no more than 68.58 centimeters (27 inches). (The above measurements do not apply to surfcasting rods.)

E. REEL

1. Reels must comply with sporting ethics and customs.

2. Power-driven reels are acceptable under the following situation and configuration.

a) Reels that have power accessories (e.g., electric drill attachments, motors or other power accessories specifically designed for a reel) that can be physically removed from the reel may be used strictly for the purpose of retrieving a deployed bait or lure at depth all the way to the boat.

b) Power accessories may only be used to retrieve a bait or lure completely to the boat and are not permitted for adjusting the position of a bait or lure in the water column. Once a power accessory is attached to the reel, the bait or lure may no longer be legally used to catch a fish and the bait or lure must be retrieved all the way to the boat for manual redeployment before it may be legally used to hook or catch a fish. Power accessories may not be attached to the reel during the deployment of a bait or lure.

c) Power accessories must be physically removed from the reel before

the act of or hooking or fighting a fish. Any fish that strikes a bait or lure being fished with a reel with power accessories still attached- whether or not under electric operation will not be eligible for record consideration.

d) Electric reels that do not have removable electronic components that allow them to be completely manually driven are prohibited.

3. Ratchet handle reels are prohibited.

4. Reels designed to be cranked with both hands at the same time are prohibited.

F. HOOKS AND BAIT FISHING

1. For live or dead bait fishing, no more than two single hooks may be used. Both must be firmly imbedded in or securely attached to the bait. The eyes of the hooks must be no less than a hook's length (the length of the largest hook used) apart and no more than 45.72 centimeters (18 inches) apart. The only exception is that the point of one hook may be passed through the eye of the other hook. A hook may not precede bait, lure or bait/lure combo by more than one hook's length.

2. The use of a dangling or swinging hook is prohibited. Double or treble hooks are prohibited.

3. A two hook rig for bottom fishing is acceptable if it consists of two single hooks on separate leaders or drops.

Both hooks must be imbedded in the respective baits and separated sufficiently so that a fish caught on one hook cannot be foul hooked by the other.

4. A photograph or sketch of the hook arrangement must accompany all record applications made for fish caught on two-hook tackle.

G. HOOKS AND LURES

1. When using an artificial lure with a skirt or trailing material, no more than two single hooks may be attached to the line, leader, or trace. The hooks need not be attached separately. The eyes of the hooks must be no less than an overall hook's length (the overall length of the largest hook used) apart and no more than 30.48 centimeters (12 inches) apart. The only exception is that the point of one hook may be passed through the eye

of the other hook. The trailing hook may not extend more than a hook's length beyond the skirt of the lure. A hook may not precede bait, lure or bait/lure combo by more than one hook's length. A photograph or sketch showing the hook arrangement must accompany a record application.

2. Gang hooks are permitted when attached to plugs and other artificial lures that are specifically designed for this use. Gang hooks must be free swinging and shall be limited to a maximum of three hooks (single, double, or treble, or a combination of any three). It is permissible to imbed or securely attach a gang hook to a lure provided that the hook becomes free swinging once the fish takes the lure. Gang hooks may not be used with live or dead baits. A photograph or sketch of the plug or lure should be submitted with record applications.

3. Assist hooks or other such single hooks that are attached to a lure with a lead constructed of monofilament, multifilament, wire or other such material must conform to the following: when using assist hooks on any artificial lure, other than a skirted lure, the lead cannot be more than 1 ½ hook's length and the bend of the hook may not be more than 10.1 centimeters (4 inches), whichever is less, from the closest point of attachment on the lure. Double and treble hooks may not be used as assist hooks.

4. Only one lure containing hooks may be used at a time.

H. OTHER EQUIPMENT

1. Fighting chairs may not have any mechanically propelled devices that aid the angler in fighting a fish.

2. Gimbals must be free swinging, which includes gimbals that swing in a vertical plane only. Any gimbal that allows the angler to reduce strain or to rest while fighting the fish is prohibited.

3. Gaffs (including flying gaffs) and nets used to boat or land a fish must not exceed 2.44 meters (8 feet) in overall length. In using a flying or detachable gaff, the rope may not exceed 9.14 meters (30 feet). The gaff rope must be measured from the point where it is secured to the detachable head to the other end.

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Only the effective length will be considered. If a fixed head gaff is used, the same limitations shall apply and the gaff rope shall be measured from the same location on the gaff hook. Only a single hook is permitted on any gaff. Harpoons or lances are prohibited. Tail ropes are limited to 9.14 meters (30 feet). When fishing from a bridge, pier, or other high platform or structure, this length limitation does not apply.

4. Entangling devices, either with or without a hook, are prohibited and may not be used for any purpose including baiting, hooking, fighting, or landing the fish.

5. Outriggers, downriggers, spreader bars and kites are permitted to be used provided that the actual fishing line is attached to the snap or other release device, either directly or with some other material. The leader or double line may not be connected to the release mechanism either directly or with the use of a connecting device. Spreader bars are also acceptable when used strictly as a teaser.

6. Daisy chains, birds, floats and similar devices may only be used if they do not unfairly hamper or inhibit the normal swimming or fighting ability of the fish, thereby giving the angler or crew an unfair advantage in fighting, landing or boating the fish.

7. A safety line may be attached to the rod, reel or harness provided that it does not in any way assist the angler in fighting the fish.

ANGLING REGULATIONS

1. From the time that a fish strikes or takes a bait or lure, the angler must hook, fight, and land or boat the fish without the aid of any other person, except as provided in these regulations.

2. If a rod holder is used, once the fish is hooked, the angler must remove the rod from the rod holder as quickly as possible.

3. In the event of a multiple strike on separate lines being fished by a single angler, only the first fish fought by the angler will be considered for a world record.

4. If a double line is used, the intent of the regulations is that the fish will be

fought on the single line most of the time that it takes to land the fish.

5. Use of a rod belt or waist gimbal is permitted.

6. When angling from a boat, once the leader is brought within the grasp of the mate, or the end of the leader is wound to the rod tip, more than one person is permitted to hold the leader. Anyone assisting a shore-bound or wading angler must be within a rods length of the angler before touching the leader or netting or gaffing the fish.

7. One or more gaffers may be used in addition to persons holding the leader. The gaff handle must be in hand when the fish is gaffed.

8. The angling and equipment regulations shall apply until the fish is weighed.

THE FOLLOWING ACTS WILL DISQUALIFY A CATCH:

1. Failure to comply with equipment or angling regulations.

2. The act of persons other than the angler in touching any part of the rod, reel, or line (including the double line) either bodily or with any device, from the time a fish strikes or takes the bait or lure, until the fish is either landed or released, or in giving any aid other than that allowed in the rules and regulations. If an obstacle to the passage of the line through the rod guides has to be removed from the line, then the obstacle (whether chum, rubber band, or other material) shall be held and cut free. Under no circumstances should the line be held or touched by anyone other than the angler during this process.

3. Resting the rod in a rod holder, on the gunwale of the boat, or any other object while playing the fish.

4. Handlining or using a handline or rope attached in any manner to the angler's line or leader for the purpose of holding or lifting the fish.

5. Shooting, harpooning, or lancing any fish (including sharks and halibuts) at any stage of the catch.

6. Chumming with or using as bait the flesh, blood, skin, or any part of mammals other than hair or pork

rind used in lures designed for trolling or casting.

7. Using a boat or device to beach or drive a fish into shallow water in order to deprive the fish of its normal ability to swim.

8. Changing the rod or reel while the fish is being played.

9. Splicing, removing, or adding to the line while the fish is being played.

10. Intentionally foul hooking a fish.

11. Catching a fish in a manner that the double line never leaves the rod tip.

12. Using a size or kind of bait that is illegal to possess.

13. Attaching the angler's line or leader to part of a boat or other object for the purpose of holding or lifting the fish.

14. If a fish escapes before gaffing or netting and is recaptured by any method other than as outlined in the angling rules.

15. Holding or touching an angler in a manner that assists them in fighting the fish or takes pressure off of the angler. Touching or briefly holding the angler to prevent them from falling does not constitute a disqualification.

THE FOLLOWING SITUATIONS WILL DISQUALIFY A CATCH:

1. When a rod breaks (while the fish is being played) in a manner that reduces the length of the tip below minimum dimensions or severely impairs its angling characteristics.

2. Mutilation to the fish, prior to landing or boating the catch, caused by sharks, other fish, mammals, or propellers that remove or penetrate the flesh. Injuries caused by leader or line, scratches, old healed scars or regeneration deformities are not considered to be disqualifying injuries. Any mutilation on the fish must be shown in a photograph and fully explained in a report accompanying the record application.

3. When a fish is hooked or entangled on more than one line.

4. When a catch violates laws or regulations governing the species or the waters where it was caught.



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Author Zane Gray in Tahiti with his Mothership "Fisherman" at anchor in the background. "Fisherman" was the first Mothership in the modern sportfishing era.

THE BIG GAME REEL

by Karl Anderson

Few of us today suffer the tackle failures of our predecessors in the big game fishing world. The trials, tribulations and developments along with the advancements of materials and execution of manufacturing technology have given us an incredible advantage over those salty souls that forged the path of game fishing success. Watching old films with crewmen pouring water over a smoking reel is a dramatic look into the past and the problems crews faced fighting big fish.

Looking back on the history of our sport from the early 1900's there were several places and many people that lead the charge in tackle and particularly

First Fin-Nor double handled reel. IGFA determined that this set up gave anglers an unfair advantage in fighting a fish and banned it's use for IGFA catch recognition.



big game reel development. To be sure, this is the infantile stages of big game fishing and there are few places along either coast or in the world for that matter, that were focused on developing the tackle and skills to chase pelagic and other game fish with sporting tackle. Just like the commitment it takes today to pursue the sport, back then it took time and money. Lots of the latter, even more of the former!

Famous ports of today were not even developed at this time, no Ocean City, MD, no Palm Beach or Gulf of Mexico fishing scene, no Oregon Inlet. Most of these places got their starts in the 30's and after World War II. The lion's share of development came from active fisheries of that time like the Tuna Club of Avalon at Catalina Island, the tuna fisherman of the northeast and mid-Atlantic coast



Fred Grieten in his shop perfecting the legendary Fin-Nor reel. The Fin-Nor reel was the predecessor of the Big Game reel as we know it today.

including Montauk, the Manasquan Tuna Club fleet, the charter skippers of the Beach Haven Yacht Club, especially Capt. Tom Jones who is credited with developing the techniques to target and repeatedly catch bluefin tuna. The Beach Haven captains followed the lead of the Atlantic City Marlin & Tuna Club whose fleet innovated the use of homing pigeons to communicate from offshore back to the club of fish school locations and activity. The first reel with an internal brake type drag was made by Edward vom Hofe and patented in 1902. It was not possible to adjust the drag while fighting the fish, but this is a huge piece in the evolution of the big game reel. A few years later, in 1907, Sarasota, Florida inventor George Blackburn comes up with the idea and produces the first anti-reverse mechanism to stop handles from spinning backwards as line goes out, known as the knuckle busters!

In 1913 the star drag, which allows anglers to manipulate the plate system drag during a fight is developed and utilized by Avalon Tuna Club member William C. Boschen whose concept came to life by noted reel makers Julius vom Hofe in New York and Joe Coxe in Los Angeles. Boschen proves the star drags worth by catching the first swordfish on rod and reel. The fish weighed 315-pounds and was hooked off a kite with a bait skipping the surface, a method still used today with great success. The plate drag system of the star drag is a precursor to what we have today in lever drag reels.

Of course, Zane Grey, the prolific writer of western novels, pursued his fishing habit with great flare and began going to Catalina Island in 1914. Spending 21 days at sea his first summer he saw 19 surface swordfish and did not get a single strike. Undeterred and with dogged determination, he continued his pursuit and would later set the record of the time catching four surface swordfish in one day, a noteworthy feat that received much attention at the time and to this day is a near impossible goal for that fishery.

However, after spending time in Nova Scotia giant bluefin tuna fishing with his legendary captain, Laurie Mitchell, who later was Grey's travel companion, Grey's greatest effort was the

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purchase of a 146-foot schooner. He named her the “Fisherman” and would sail her, to the far flung Pacific and fish the coasts of Mexico, the Galapagos, Cocos Island and the Gulf of Panama. She was outfitted with a pair of motorized launch fishing boats built in Nova Scotia for the task. This was the first big game fishing mothership operation. His writings of the expeditions helped promote and build the sport of recreational fishing.

Through the early 1930’s up to World War II, Cat Cay, Bimini and the giant bluefin tuna brought about a dramatic ramp-up of tackle improvements, specifically with heavy tackle, which then filtered down to lighter tackle. This is a time when Ernest Hemingway who in 1934 bought his famed Wheeler “Pilar” wrote so eloquently about his big game quests in popular magazines of the day. He put to sea and invested a great deal of time plying the blue water.

Known for his jaunts to Bimini where he was successful in landing the first un-mutilated bluefin tuna at Tuna Alley, a much-ballyhooed achievement of the day in sportfishing. His pursuit of blue and white marlin in Key West, Bimini and Cuba consumed a large portion of his attention at the time. Hemingway’s celebrity of the day played a huge role in popularizing big game fishing which inspired anglers and impacted tackle manufacturers although he was not intimately involved in tackle development himself.

Miami, Florida was a hotbed of game fishing in the 1930’s. As the story goes, Frank O’Brien, a tackle salesman glued 5 different pieces of wood together creating the “Bimini King” big game rod and Tycoon tackle was born. According to Ed Pritchard, across town an auto mechanic by the name of Fredrick Grieten “applied the principle of the automobile drum brake to his massive 15/0 big game reel and the results culminated in the birth of the legendary Fin-Nor reel. Fin-Nor went on to capture scores of notable catches and big game world records, of which Captain Tommy Gifford guided clients to 26 in his career, yet they were the only company mass-producing handmade reels prior to and remain successful well beyond WWII.”

The hard charging Gifford was leading the charge in innovation from on the water. He helped push the



16/0 Roswell Lee “Bimini” model designed for Tuna fishing in the Bahamas. Lee went on to design and manufacture the Lee Outrigger and numerous other fishing and boating products used worldwide.

development of the first Fin-Nor reel, pioneered renown fishing grounds and claimed to have caught the first giant bluefin tuna at Wedgeport on the west coast of Nova Scotia as well as the first swordfish on rod and reel off Cape Breton, on the northeast end of Nova Scotia.

Gifford’s outrigger concept, which was to get the “skip baits” of the day out away from the boat and offer a wider spread, covering more water. Miami’s Roswell Lee who had developed a big game reel for tuna fishing, eventually stopped making them pursue manufacturing Gifford’s outrigger, rod holders and fighting chairs creating an internationally known tackle brand, Lee’s Tackle of Miami.

Gifford, who had his hands in the outrigger, kite fishing and other significant developments was unapologetic in his views regarding light tackle versus heavy tackle to fight big game fish. In a 1964 Sports Illustrated feature by Gilbert Rogin, Gifford espoused the benefits of light tackle, which later in his career became his focus, while casting scorn at heavy tackle angling.

As Rogin writes, *“Gifford’s most significant contribution to big-game fishing, however, was in championing the radical theory that big fish could be brought to gaff on light tackle. This now amounts to his fire-and-brimstone religion, and he gets a big, righteous bang out of demonstrating its miracles to nonbelievers. With stern moral judgment he has divided fishermen into the damned, or muscleheads, and the saved, or sportsmen.*

Muscleheads, whom he scorns, fish only with “rope,” or heavy tackle, for fear they will hook into “Minnie the Monster” and lose her. Sportsmen fish with nothing heavier than 50-pound test line and gain Gifford’s blessings. Gifford recalls with delight a June day in 1941 when Mrs. Marian Hasler caught a 374-pound giant tuna on 15 thread (roughly comparable to 50-pound test) at Cat Cay. “We came in with a matchstick in the horn button and a great big bed sheet flying,” Gifford says. “And they said there was a casket waiting for the woman who caught a giant tuna!” Gifford was quite a character to be sure. Make no mistake, he caught plenty on heavy tackle in his day between Nova Scotia, Cat Cay and his other expeditions, perhaps most notably 15 tuna with an aggregate weight of 9600 pounds on one trip.

Also, during this time, Grey buys his second mothership after selling off the “Fisherman”. He buys a 195-foot steel hulled schooner naming her “Fisherman II” and sets off for Tahiti, New Zealand



16/0 “Commander” model star drag by Edward von Hoff. E. von Hoff and Joe Cox perfected the star drag reel, a major development in Big Game Reel evolution.

and Australia. His fishing books, *Tales of Tahitian Waters*, *Tales of the Angler’s Eldorado New Zealand*, *An American Angler in Australia*, *Tales of Swordfish and Tuna* and *Tales of Fishing Virgin Seas* are basically logbooks turned into stories of their fishing exploits in these places. Grey was an innovator in heavy tackle and pursued large fish with great commitment. Feeling the need for specialty tackle

up to the task he aspired to, he contracted reel maker Joe Cox to build big reels from 10/0 to 16/0 to his specifications for the task.

Grey believed light tackle for big game contributed to the loss of fish to sharks and tackle breakage. His celebrity and driven personality impact his tackle selections and requirements. The cost was of little consequence for the explorer. Years ago, I was with Grey’s son Loren when he told us the story of being on “Fisherman II” when the stock market crashed. Grey received a telegram from his wife saying they were out of money and to return home. Grey looked around and said “We’re going fishing. There is nothing we can do about it at home.” He wrote to his publishers for an advance on his next book. It would be over a month before they returned home. The first fish caught on rod and reel to weigh over 1000-pounds was a tiger shark in Australia. According to expert antique tackle collector Ed Pritchard, Grey caught the 1036-pound shark “on a 16/0 Kovalovsky reel with planetary gears and the first rim control operated band break style drag.” The band brake was similar to an automobile drum brake, imagine putting a hose clamp around the diameter of the drum inside the reel and tightening and loosening to manipulate how much “drag” or tension was on the spool allowing it to revolve while restricting its ability to freewheel. Hardly a precise





robust gear. Advancements in boat design, construction and engine advancements which included the diesel engine in recreational craft, also had an impact on tackle. With new hull designs and improved ancillary equipment crews could run faster, going farther and push the limits of the tackle with improved boat handling techniques as well as fish fighting tactics. Then in the late 1960's the first 1000-pound marlin caught in air, ralia led to another time of incredible advancements in all phases of tackle and gear.

operation, but a steppingstone to the disc brake drags of the star and lever drags to come. Kovalovsky called it the "Zane Grey Reel" with a price of \$1000.00. Quite a cost leading up to the great depression. Also, during this time, the first two-speed big game reel is built by the famed Hardy Brothers in England.

With the massive Black Marlin, you now had a fish that pulled like a giant tuna but also jumped! This brought different scenarios that crews had to deal with in the tackle area in regard to rod building, guides, line and leader assembly and especially reel and drag material development and maintenance.

The advent of the two-speed reel was a significant development for several reasons. First it created another tool for anglers to use when fighting fish to increase efficiency while fighting fish with the ability to change gears and go to a low speed and gain inches if necessary, on a hard pulling fish. It also increased the crew speed when changing baits out and retrieving line quickly after a missed fish when in high gear. Once again this dramatically changed the geometry of the reel and there have been many versions of how to change gears leading to the simple push buttons we have today. I have seen several times in my early career where the angler pulled the handle to change gears and the whole mess came out in his hand in a great panic! Interestingly, Fin-Nor picked up on the two-speed set up and also offered a third gear on their 80's for a time.

Throughout all of this reel development, the game also kept changing in regard to line material which had many effects on reel construction. From linen line things transformed to Dacron, a high-strength fiber woven into a hollow core line that then morphed into monofilament, then a blend of the two and now we have the fine diameter high tensile braids. All of these advancements have had a huge effect on reel builders as they brought their own technology and innovations to the game, ultimately impacting fish fighting — all starting at the reel.

After World War II, the largest ramp up of tackle development and improvements were led by a host of technically skilled machinists and exploratory skippers and crewmen who reached too far out places to find more and bigger game fish. They had the use of new materials developed for the war effort and began to push forward again with not only material and technique advancements but manufacturing acumen.

Every aspect of big game fishing has been refined and improved allowing us today to implement different technologies and materials to continue the legacy of evolution and refinement in offshore fishing. It cannot be understated the importance of the pioneers, innovators, machinists, captains and crews that pushed forward leaving a blueprint for success and world record catches. 

Goaded along by the top captains and crewman who through necessity pushed improvements forward to conquer their quarry, these skilled craftsmen worked to solve problems and develop

*The input and knowledge of Ed Pritchard of **antiquefishingreels.com** was invaluable in the writing of this article. The antiquefishingreels.com site is a treasure trove of information and history. If you have an antique reel and are looking to get a valuation to sell or are a collector seeking to add to your collection, you will find Ed to be very responsive and helpful. All photos provided by antiquefishingreels.com*

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GRAND SLAM BARRAGE!

— by Walt Rosenberg

Marlin Month in Cape May came in with a vengeance to wrap up the 2023 season. September rolls into Cape May and things on the water slow down as owners and crews catch up with maintenance, family, business, and life in general after a busy season on the water. September here can be both a blessing and a curse. On a blessed September, the Gulfstream water meanders inshore, the pressure on fish has eased up, and for those who are still chasing the opportunity to get covered up with White Marlin, the percentage for success is on their side. Conversely, on a cursed September the tropical storms blow up the coast, the blue water gets pushed offshore, and promising fishing grounds turn into the Dead Sea.





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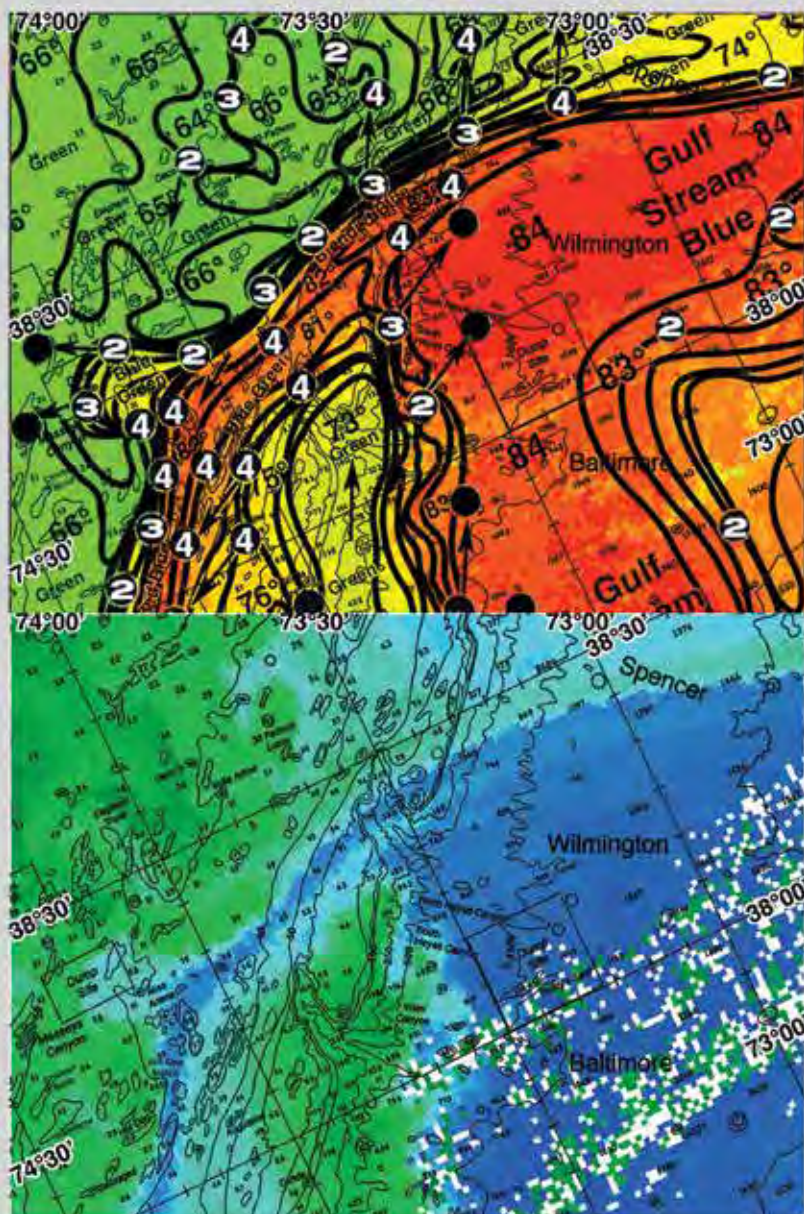


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As August wound down a large mass of Gulfstream water had formed up far offshore carrying with it the nutrients and baitfish that attract and hold gamefish as they feed up for their migratory journeys. Patches of this water had moved inshore for the late August Tournaments bringing a red-hot billfish bite on the water. In the Mid Atlantic alone, 735 White Marlin were released, and 36 Blue Marlin released. One of the best showings of billfish in Tournament records. The best was yet to come as Labor Day weekend took us into September. The mass of Gulfstream blue water pushed northward into the 1000-1500 fathom line from the Norfolk Canyon to the Baltimore Canyon, bringing the blue water further inshore than has been seen for decades. Back in the day a “canyon trip” was a foray to the thirty-fathom line. The water was clean, bluer, and productive. Over the ensuing years these conditions have changed along with the vessels, techniques, and equipment. A canyon trip is

now a jaunt of anywhere from seventy miles to one hundred miles plus. The days of towing six baits and a couple of teasers in traditional spots have been replaced by SST projections, multifaceted electronics, circle hook rigged baits, multiple dredges to name just a few of the many advancements to the art of billfishing. Coupled with these advancements is the seaworthiness and speed of the modern sportfishing boat. Getting further offshore in less time and having the ability to pick up and run to another area at will. All of this takes us to the week after Labor Day 2023.

The mass of Gulf Stream water had moved further inshore and had settled into the canyons with little wind and current to break it up or send it back further offshore. Local long time Captains and anglers could not recall a Gulf Stream mass of water this wide ranging and this far inshore of the canyons. I touched base with Matt Upton of ROFFS for his



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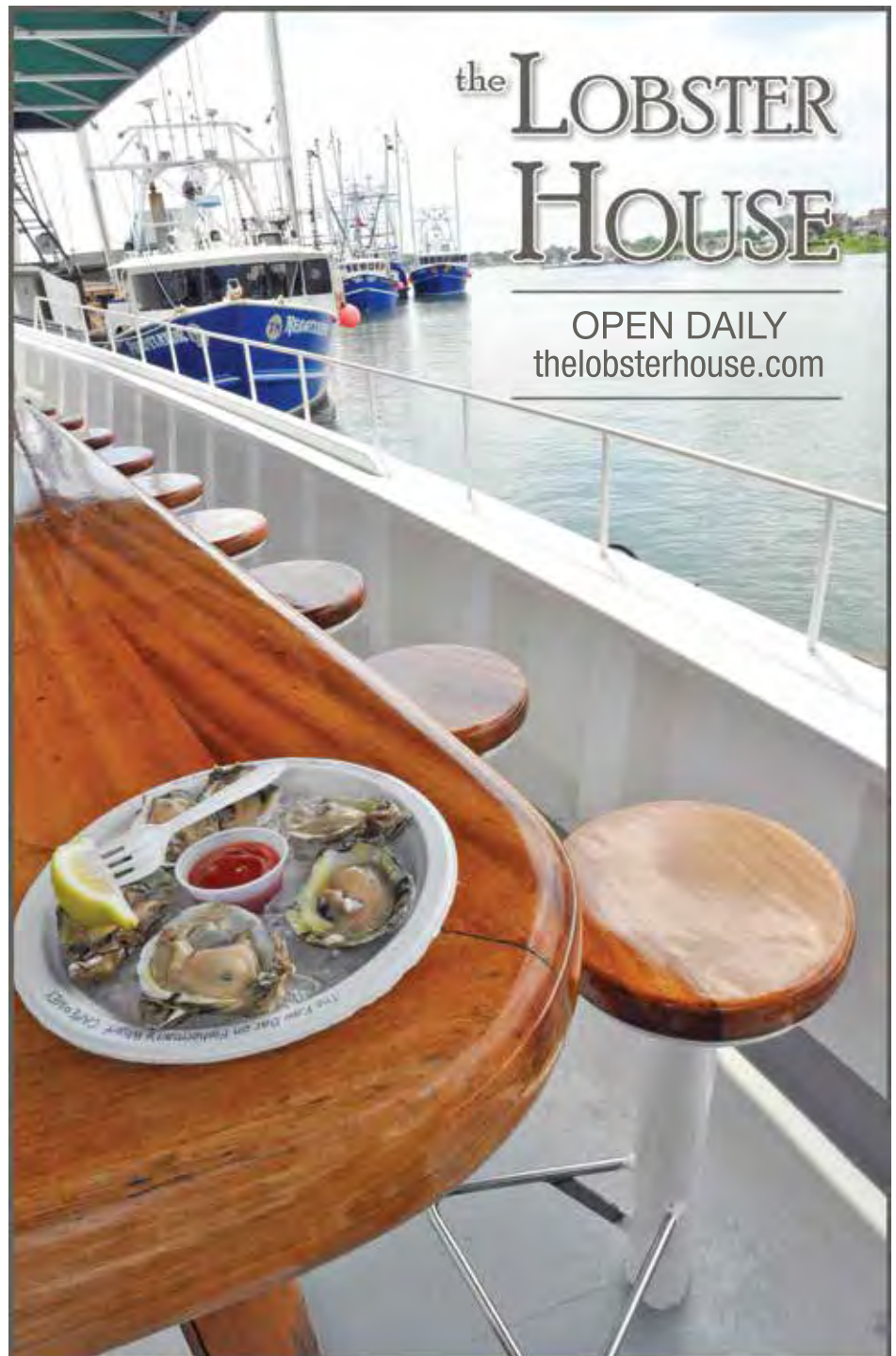
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take on these conditions. Matt has done the Northeast area analysis at ROFFS for over twenty years and could not recall ever seeing these conditions during his career or in the archives at ROFFS. Seeing these conditions form up, the crews set out from Cape May inlet to see what this extraordinary occurrence would produce. Anticipating the possibility of a strong White Marlin bite, areas to target were chosen, the

hunt was on. As the boats started picking up White Marlin bites, another seldom seen element was added to the mix. Sailfish, who are occasionally caught in our waters showed up in numbers never before seen. As the fishing turned on, the Sailfish were mixed in with the whites and crews were jumping all over the cockpits to keep up with the bite. September is also prime time for Blue Marlin fishing in the Northeast canyons. Adding the presence of Blue Marlin to the mix, the chance of scoring the coveted billfish Grand Slam became a reality. In the Northeast Canyons, the Grand Slam consists of Atlantic Blue Marlin, White Marlin, and Atlantic Sailfish. Normally the Atlantic Sailfish is scarce in our waters, making a Grand Slam extremely difficult to attain. The elements all converged in the first week of September for the crews fortunate enough to be on the rip. Memories of a lifetime and congratulations to the following boats and crews; **Krazy Salts** - 1 Blue, 9 Whites, 1 Sailfish. **Canyon Lady** - 1 Blue, 6 Whites, two Sailfish. **Judge** - 1 Blue, 5 Whites, 2 Sailfish. **La Barca** - 1 Blue, 7 Whites, 2 Sailfish. **Wish You Were Here** - 1 Blue, 4 Whites, 1 Sailfish. **Viking 80** - (2 Slams)

1 Blue, 5 whites, 2 Sailfish, -1 Blue, 2 Whites, 5 Sailfish.

There is no doubt that September 2023 truly lived up to the Marlin Month nickname, with a vengeance! 🐟





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