

TALE ROPE

Newsletter of the
CANBERRA GAME FISHING CLUB
(Incorporated)



P.O. Box 94
WODEN ACT 2606



February 2018

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POSTAL ADDRESS

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Editors Report

Hello Everyone,

If you have any stories, photos, jokes, information or anything else you would like included in the Tale Rope, please send an email with all the information to admin@canberragamefishing.com.au and we will be sure to include it.

Be sure to check out the website: <https://www.canberragamefishing.com.au> it has been updated with all the new committee contacts, photos from the AGM and all of the 2016 – 2017 events have been added. If you want any photos or anything added to the website, please email admin@canberragamefishing.com.au

See you all on the water.

Cheers,

Alan

GOHOSTING



Presidents Report

Good Evening everyone

Happy New year to all. It has been a great start to the year, with the Marlin turning up in numbers and the odd Yellowfin as well.

In January, the tournaments start to roll with The Golden Lure in port Macquarie. I attended and I can say it is a great place to go and fish with Black Marlin just offshore and Blue Marlin from there out. Thanks to Chris, Paul and Kim for the invite. I highly recommend this Tournament and I had a ball.

We also had the Tollgates Classic with club boats doing well. Panlicker came in 2nd place T&R. Square Metre's, Kemp and Escape got into the fish too.

Next was the Blue Water Classic, with Kemp taking out boat under 7.1m T&R and Debra Kemp winning Ladies Highest Point Score. Panlicker was in the winnings again, with the Biggest Blue Marlin taking out the cash.

Into February and the Jess Sams was held with a few club boats traveling up for the weekend. Most boats got a fish or saw a few.

To those anglers who have got their first Marlin this year – well done, even if it has been a long time between drinks.

There are a lot more tournaments to come over the next few months so good luck to those going. Don't forget our Bermi Bash, which is on the weekend of the 17th of March. I hope to see you all there with friends in tow for a fun weekend.

At the Blue Water Classic, we had the Clubs first BBQ for the year and it went down great with good weather and great food. Thanks to those who turned up. The next one will be at the Alliance T&R which is on the weekend of 10th and 11th of March. If you need T&R cards and can't get to a meeting, give Matt Crampton a call to get some.

The next meeting is on the 13th of February 2018 at the Hellenic Club Woden at 7.30pm.

See you all there.

Regards
Mario Imbriano
President

Secretary's Report

Hi everyone,

I hope everyone had a safe and happy Christmas and New Years break and managed to get some fishing in as well. The New Year always marks the start of the Marlin season on the South Coast and this year is no exception. So far we have seen Striped Marlin showing up in pockets up and down the coast with the occasional big Blue amongst the mix. Throughout this there has been a few tournaments held from the Bermagui Bluewater Classic, Tollgate Island Classic and the Jess Sams to name a few. So far there has been good success reported from many Club boats and anglers, with Kempy, Escape, Onsite, and Relentless Pursuit all getting fish in the Jess Sams. Hopefully the fish will continue to stick around in numbers well into the Autumn months and the later tournaments.

At the December meeting a proposed notice of motion was passed as follows.
It was proposed to amend the Constitution of the Canberra Game Fishing Club by deleting the last sentence of Clause 3(g). Clause 3(g) currently reads as follows:

The Committee may submit the name of any Member to an Annual General Meeting to receive by vote of simple majority, the honour of Honorary Life Member. A minimum requirement for such an honour shall be that the Member has rendered outstanding service to this Club and to the sport of Game Fishing for a minimum of seven years. Honorary Life Members shall have the right to attend all Committee, General and other Club Meetings and to have a voice and vote at all meetings. No more than one submission may be made in any one year.

The sentence proposed for deletion reads as follows:

"No more than one submission may be made in any one year".

If agreed, the change cannot take effect until an amended Constitution is registered with the ACT Government Office of Regulatory Services and that must be done within 1 month of any agreement to alter the Constitution.

To follow up after the December meeting I have been advised that we don't have to pay affiliation fees for life members.

Upcoming events

Newcastle & Port Stephens Billfish Shootout February 16 – 18

NSWGFA Interclub February 22 – 25

Newcastle East Coast Classic March 10 – 11

Alliance March 11 – 12

Eden SGFC Open March 16 – 18

Shoalhaven Open March 23 – 25

Port Hacking 100 March 24 – 25

Kiama GFC April 7 – 8

Sydney Peter Goadby Memorial April 14 – 15

Regards

James Wearn

Secretary



Weigh Master contacts

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Bermagui: Mark Parton 0437 722 469

Botany Bay: Ameen Ayoub 0418 442 244

Jarvis Bay: Dave Venn 0422 429 385

Kiama: Nick Hodgkins 0403 090 422

Merimbula: Roger Skitt 0408 289 153

Newcastle: Scott Johnston 0431 293 705

Shoalhaven: Paul Aulsebrook 0413 021 156

Wollongong: Greg Barea 0418 219 620

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CANBERRA GFC YELLOWFIN TUNA TOURNAMENT

26-27-28 MAY 2018

TROPHY CATEGORIES AND PRIZES

CAPTURE
HEAVIEST YELLOWFIN TUNA TBA
NEXT HEAVIEST YELLOWFIN TUNA BY SENIOR MALE TBA
NEXT HEAVIEST YELLOWFIN TUNA BY SENIOR FEMALE TBA
NEXT HEAVIEST YELLOWFIN TUNA BY A JUNIOR TBA
NEXT HEAVIEST YELLOWFIN BY A SMALL FRY TBA
HEAVIEST YELLOWFIN TUNA ON BOAT 7.1 METERS and under TBA
MOST MERITORIOUS YELLOWFIN TUNA TBA
HEAVIEST Other Game Fish excluding sharks TBA

TAG & RELEASE
MOST YELLOWFIN BY SENIOR MALE TBA
MOST YELLOWFIN BY SENIOR FEMALE TBA
MOST YELLOWFIN BY A JUNIOR TBA
MOST YELLOWFIN BY A SMALL FRY TBA
MOST STRIPED TUNA BY SMALL FRY MALE TBA
MOST STRIPED TUNA BY SMALL FRY FEMALE TBA
MOST MARLIN BY BOAT TBA
MOST SHARKS BY BOAT TBA
TEAM WITH MOST YELLOWFIN TBA
TEAM WITH 2nd MOST YELLOWFIN TBA
HIGHEST POINT SCORING ANGLER - T & R TBA
HIGHEST POINT SCORING ANGLER EACH DAY – TBA



HELLENIC CLUB
Where Canberra Meets

CANBERRA GAME FISHING CLUB POINTSCORE

MONTH ENDED JANUARY 2018

TAG AND RELEASE

DATE	ANGLER	BOAT	TAG CARD NUMBER	FISH SPECIES/LINE CLASS	POINT SCORE
June	Melissa Chaffey				38175
August	Lachlan Cairns (S/F)				13
August	Brett Gray			Broadbill Sword (Other Waters) 37KG	4250
January	Carly Res				10000
January	Debra Kemp				20000
January	Peter Kemp				10000
January	Andrew Swan				11500
January	Luke Stuart				10000
January	James Kemp				10000
January	Anthony Canulli				10000
January	Andre Buskermolon				21500
January	Joel Spilsbury				7500
January	Harley Meneghel (S/F)				10004

CAPTURE

DATE	ANGLER	BOAT	FISH SPECIES	WEIGHT OF FISH	LINE CLASS	POINT SCORE
June	Matt Harman	Relentless Pursuit	BF TUNA	43.6KG	15KG	2,851
August	Melissa Chaffey	Another Screemer	YF TUNA	51.4KG	24KG	
January	Joel Spilsbury	Panlicker	Blue Marlin	193.2KG	60Kg	

BOAT TAG AND RELEASE

BOAT	POINT SCORE
Relentless Pursuit	71,500
Another Screemer	49,675
Mr Hooker	35,500
Kempy	30,000
Hide N Seek	30,000



DATES TO REMEMBER

- Shellharbour Tournament - 10th - 11th Feb 2018
- Club Meeting Hellenic Club - 13th Feb 2018
- NSWGFA Interclub - 24th - 25th Feb 2018
- Alliance T/R Tournament - 10th - 11th Mar 2018
- Bermi Bash - 17th Mar 2018

NOTICE: CHANGE OF POINT SCORE FOR SHARKS

SPECIES	6-10 kg	15kg	24kg	37kg	60kg
Sharks	3750	3450	3000	2550	2250
Blue sharks	3125	2875	2500	2125	1875

Please note the changes above to shark points for tag and release. These were changed at the NSWGFA AGM after the motion put up by Broken Bay GFC.

Be sure to support these fellow Southern Zone Clubs by attending their tournaments if at all possible. We cannot expect clubs to support our Yellowfin Tuna Tournament unless we reciprocate.

SOUTHERN ZONE EVENTS CALENDAR 2017-2018

Zone weekend	June 10-11
Merimbula Open*	June 10-11
Zone weekend	June 24-25
Southern Zone AGM and Presentation Lunch	July 2
Merimbula Broadbill & SBT Tournament 1 st leg	July 7-9
Merimbula Broadbill & SBT Tournament 2 nd leg	July 14-16
Zone weekend	July 22-23
Zone weekend	August 12-13
Shellharbour Mako Tournament	August 19-20
Zone weekend	August 26-27
Zone weekend	September 10-11
Zone weekend	September 23-24
Labour Day	September 30-October 2
Zone weekend	October 7-8
Zone weekend	October 21-22
Zone weekend	November 11-12
Jervis Bay White Sands Tournament *	November 24-26
Zone weekend	November 25-26
Zone weekend	December 9-10
Zone weekend + Christmas & Boxing Day	December 23-26
New Years	December 30-January 1
Zone weekend	January 13-14
Batemans Bay Tollgate Island Classic*	January 19-21
Zone weekend including Australia Day	January 26-28
Bermagui Blue Water Classic *	January 27-29
Jess Sams Ulladulla Open *	February 2-4
Zone weekend	February 10-11
Shellharbour Tournament *	February 10-11
NSWGFA Interclub	February 23-25
Zone weekend	February 24-25
Zone weekend	March 10-11
Southern Zone Interclub *	March 10-11
Alliance T/R Tournament *	March 10-11
Eden Open *	TBA
Shoalhaven Open Tournament *	March 23-25
Zone weekend	March 24-25
Easter	March 30-April 2
Kiama Blowhole Big Fish Classic *	April 7-8
Zone weekend	April 14-15
Zone weekend	April 28-29
Zone weekend	May 12-13
Canberra Yellowfin Tournament *	May 19-21
Zone weekend	May 26-27
Zone weekend	June 9-10
Merimbula Open *	June 9-11
Zone weekend	June 23-24
Southern Zone AGM & Presentation Lunch	July 1
Merimbula Broadbill & SBT Tournament 1 st leg	July 6-8
Merimbula Broadbill & SBT Tournament 2 nd leg	July 13-15

NB: Zone weekends are the second and forth full weekends of every month. Fish tagged or captured at the NSW Interclub will be counted in SZ monthly Cock O the Walk competition. All gazetted NSW Public Holiday long weeks are included. * denotes nominated tournaments eligible for Zone points plus the Columbus and George Bass trophies.

Southern Zone

CHAIRMAN: Sanchia Glaskin

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COCK O' THE WALK RESULTS DECEMBER 2017

CAPTURES : HEAVIEST

SPECIES	WHT	LINE	S/J	ANGLER	BOAT	CLUB	PTS
MARLIN							
SHARK							
TUNA							
BROADBILL							
OGF							

MOST MERITORIOUS

MARLIN							
SHARK							
TUNA							
BROADBILL							
OGF							

CAPTURE POINTS FOR MONTH**TAG & RELEASE PONTs FOR MONTH**

Hole Shot	Jervis Bay	11500	5
Angie 2	Jervis Bay	10000	4
Brayne Washed	Ulladulla	10000	3
Kempy	Canberra	10000	2
Just Eat It	Shellharbour	3450	1

PROGRESSIVE CAPTURE POINTS 2017-18

Shoalhaven	23
Jervis Bay	20
Merimbula	18
Shellharbour	17
Canberra	10

PROGRESSIVE TAG & RELEASE POINTS 2017-18

Shellharbour	18
Shoalhaven	13
Canberra	11
Jervis Bay	10
Merimbula	10
Ulladulla	3

I hope you all had a wonderful Christmas and are looking forward to lots of fish for 2018.

I spent Christmas on a cruise to New Zealand which has confirmed my idea that flying is the way to go. The boat, a Royal Caribbean ship, Ovation of the Seas, was far too big with over 4000 passengers. More than half of them were overweight, drunken bogans and not my idea of people to holiday with. I know I sound spoilt, and I probably am, but it was an experience never to be repeated.

February is a busy month starting with Ulladulla 2-4, then Shellharbour 10-11, followed by Eden 16-18. Please support tournaments in your area if possible as for most clubs they provide financial viability. Unfortunately, at times there are some conflicting dates with other Zones so it is important to remember the clubs in our Zone and turn up at these events and show your solidarity.

To end the month, we have the State Championships, the NSWGFA Interclub 22-25 February at Port Stephens. I know we have a number of boats entered and I look forward to seeing you all there. Quite bizarre.....there was a man sitting at the next dinner table on board one night who recognised me and my voice and had fished the Interclub many times.

Rather dismal in the capture side this month and not a lot of fish tagged on Zone days either. With a bit of luck ad some good weather things will no doubt improve.

Stay safe and enjoy your fishing
Sanchia

JANUARY MARLIN – by Judy Sillis

The Christmas holiday period and all of January has seen a solid start to the 2018 marlin season on the south coast.

At the end of December John and Haydn Collins in their boat Yella Terra, fishing out of Narooma tagged a nice striped marlin to Haydn after successfully switching it. Two days later they repeated the dose with a mate getting his first marlin. Carly Res and Andrew Swan had a day out on Mr Hooker at the beginning of January and each managed to tag their first marlin. The team aboard Relentless Pursuit showed their commitment when they spent a very long day on the water to travel all the way to Eden and successfully tagged four for the day, including small fry Harley Meneghal's first marlin – well done Harley.



Photo Judy Sillis

The 80th Anniversary Batemans Bay Tollgate Islands Classic attracted 40 boats, of which nine were from Canberra – great to see our club boats supporting other tournaments. A number of Canberra Members also fished on other club's boats. Fishing on the first day was phenomenal with 67 marlin tagged. Unfortunately, the water conditions changed overnight making it very hard for competitors and seeing only 11 more tagged over the final two days. Most of our boats managed to tag fish with some getting multiples.

A number of boats who were unable to fish the Tollgates, on hearing the reports, fished out of Bermagui on the Saturday. Their enthusiasm soon turned to frustration when they saw the water conditions, with Relentless Pursuit the only boat managing to tag one.

The Australia Day long weekend saw 90 boats enter the 82nd Bermagui Bait & Tackle Shimano Bluewater Classic. Canberra was again represented by 10 boats. With the current running hard from the north, fishing was very slow and just 26 marlin were tagged over the three days.

The big news was in the capture category when Joel Spilsbury aboard Panlicker, captured a blue marlin of 193.2 kg. This took out the \$17,000

cash prize for the heaviest marlin over 180kg. The crew of Panlicker – Skipper Gary Capp, Ryan Capp, Mark Trew, Jack and Joel Spielsbury - are to be congratulated, although, having caught the fish on Day 2 spent some nervous hours of Day 3 when one boat called in as hooked up before the 11.05am sched and were still fighting over three hours later – that fish was eventually lost. Gary and his crew fish hard and well and support many club's tournaments – a most deserved achievement.

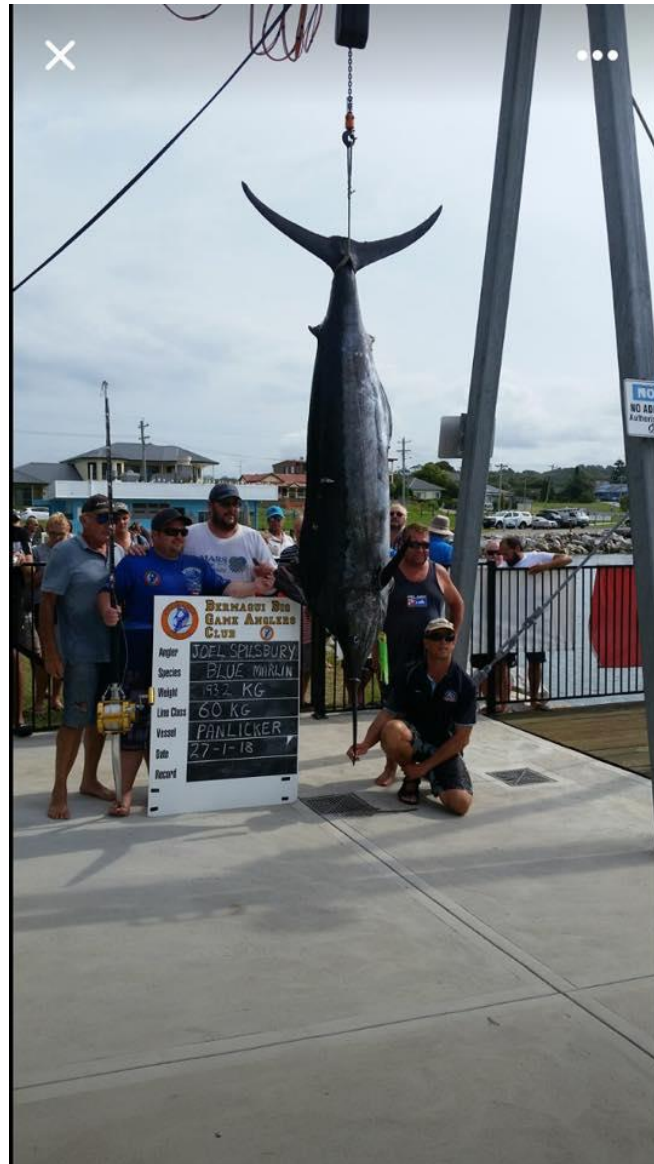


Photo Joel Spielsbury

Peter, Debra and James Kemp fishing aboard their boat, Kempy had a great weekend with Deb tagging a striped marlin on Day 1 and a black marlin on Day 2 to take out the highest point scoring female angler tag and release and the boat winning the category for most marlin tagged by a boat under 7.1 metres. Small Fry, Harley Meneghal aboard Relentless Pursuit won a day award with a mahi mahi and striped tuna tagged and Junior Finn Bradley also won one for his striped marlin tagged on Mr Hooker.



Photo James Kemp

Several club boats also fished the 80th Annual Jess Sams Tournament hosted by Ulladulla Game Fishing Club. This tournament was blessed with plenty of fish with Kempy, Escape and Relentless Pursuit all tagging marlin. With reports of the current starting to slow off Bermagui I am sure everyone is looking forward to the marlin fishing in February and March. Best of luck to Aaron Meneghal and his crew on Relentless Pursuit who are now heading north to fish the Newcastle Port Stephens Cash Shootout and the NSW Interclub.

Australia's first "grander" blue marlin landed off Exmouth

2 January 2018





(image: Eddy Lawler).

AUSTRALIA'S first 1000 pound blue marlin has been landed off Exmouth, Western Australia, by Captain Eddy Lawler and his crew from Peak Sportfishing. The massive fish weighed in at 1089.7lb (494.3 kg).

Other details:

Date: Jan 1st

Boat: Black Marlin

Angler: Clay Hilbert

Line Class: 60 kg

Method: Switched off a Bonze Violator

According to the [Exmouth Game Fishing Club](#) "Eddy has tagged over 1000 billfish with the Billfish Foundation and hundreds more with NSW Fisheries. Last week he satellite tagged fish too. Exmouth Game Fishing Club has won top tagging club in Australia more than once, which is a great effort in this remote location. From this capture, we will gain more information on these species and we believe in highlighting the positives of recreational fishing to help others learn, respect and appreciate the ocean and fish within it. This fish will be used for years to come. It will be used for research and education and be available for visitors to the region to view and grasp the size of fish out there."

Update

More from Eddy Lawler:

"On board for this day were our anglers Clay Hilbert, Leigh Freestone and Hayley Dellar. Clay was up first with a hot fish coming in for a sick switch on a smaller model blue marlin. Unfortunately it didn't eat the bait right and jumped off. Now here's where it all starts. The call was made to fish a really nice mark that showed at 55 m on the Simrad Yachting sounder. Everyone was poised and ready and then the star off the season made her entrance, showing her true size, trucking in on the Bonze Lures Violater as if she was picking her line of attack...and boy did she get angry quick with some insane crash bites on the teasers, before she lined up the pitch and absolutely smoked the skipjack tuna. This gave Clay the hook up on stand up 60 kg (130 lb test) gear as she left big holes of water as she greyhounded across the surface, before settling in and making her way S/W. After 40 minutes our crewman Wes Jones had leader in hand but after couple jumps she wasn't done yet and smoked off back deep. Clay gave all his ticker fishing some extremely heavy drag for the next 3 hours before once again leader was in hand and the fish was done!

Later on back at the club half of Exmouth patiently weighted to see what the sea creature would drop the scales to and when the winch finally got it up, it was confirmed as Australia's first legally caught 1000 lb blue marlin.

The fish came in at 1089 lb and is a new pending All Tackle National Record.

Words cannot describe how stoked we are here at Peak Sportfishing after the effort we have put in for our shot at one of these Critters. But we would really like to thank a lot of people who made dealing with this fish a whole lot easier including Matt and Jeni Gates from Bluewater Tackle World Exmouth for helping out so much, including the organisation of transport of the fish back to town and prepping the club for the weigh in!

Thanks again to all others who helped out with the fish!"

Reprinted Courtesy Fishing World

Not a bad effort from a former Tathra "wharf rat"

OPINION

A big blue marlin caught off Exmouth was killed, but that's OK

By Jim Harnwell

Updated 4 Jan 2018, 6:11pmThu 4 Jan 2018, 6:11pm



PHOTO: [Significant numbers of blue and black marlin are caught and released. Many survive, some die.](#)

The 1089.7 pound (496.3 kilogram) blue marlin landed on January 1 out of Exmouth, WA, by angler Clay Hilbert with game skipper Eddy Lawler and his crew from Peak Sportfishing Adventures will go down in the record books as the first "grander" blue caught in Australian waters.

It has also put game fishing in the spotlight, with many critics using social media to put forward the view that "trophy" fishing is unsustainable and ethically dubious.

Social media and mainstream press attention about the capture of this massive blue marlin has also resulted in the local and international game fishing community getting pretty hyped up. A catch of this significance hasn't been recorded for more than 50 years.

The last time there was this much hoo-haa about a big fish getting caught was back in 1966 when Cairns-based angler George Bransford weighed a 1064lb black marlin, the first grander ever caught in Australia.

As social media was non-existent back then, the excitement about Bransford's big black marlin was likely more subdued than it has been with this more recent catch.

Still, that particular fish is notable in that it kick-started an entire industry based on the now world-renowned — and very lucrative — Cairns heavy tackle game fishery.

[There's every opportunity for Hilbert's big blue marlin to do the same for Exmouth as Bransford's big black marlin did for Cairns.](#)

Already well regarded as a diverse and appealing sport and game fishery, this remote WA town now has the potential to lure in well-heeled international game fishermen keen on trying their luck — and spending their bucks — for the chance at a genuine thousand-pounder.

There are only a few locations around the world offering legitimate shots at grander marlin.

Thanks to Hilbert's big blue, Exmouth now joins an elite coterie of game fishing hotspots including Cairns, Hawaii, Brazil, Maderia and Tahiti.

You have to kill it to weigh it

While most marlin these days are caught and released, the economic potential of the Exmouth blue as a genuine "grander" was doubtless a key factor behind the decision to bring it into port to be weighed.



PHOTO: [Inspired and motivated by mighty catches, modern anglers are in a unique position of influence regarding conservation.](#) (Facebook: Peak Sportfishing)

This process had to happen in order for the fish to be considered for records and for verification as an "official" grander.

Hilbert and Lawler could have elected to release it. But then it wouldn't be a "grander" — it'd just be a really big fish.

International game fishing rules are very strict. If you want to claim it, you have to weigh it.

The good news is that a measurement system has been developed to allow catch and release (C&R) records for "trophy" fish. This system is in its early days, but with a growing trend towards C&R and other "low impact" forms of fishing it seems likely measuring rather than weighing will be the way of the future.

In this case, however, Hilbert and Lawler made their choice and weighed the fish in. As a result, they have copped significant online flak — most of it emotive and not particularly

well informed.

Record puts Exmouth on the map

On the plus side, the fishermen have put Exmouth fairly and squarely on the international game fishing map.

As mentioned above, this presents significant socio-economic potential, important for a town which, like many other coastal communities, relies heavily on recreational fishing tourism as an economic driver.

To put things into perspective, thousands of tonnes of marlin — including granders — are caught and processed every year by industrial fishing fleets working in the Pacific, Indian and Atlantic oceans. About 15,000 tonnes are taken from the Indian Ocean alone.

The Exmouth blue taken by Hilbert and Lawler weighed about half a tonne. Its potential economic worth to Exmouth would significantly — no, astronomically — outweigh the dollar value of a similar sized fish cut up and sold in a market in Korea or Taiwan.

The point here is that big fish get caught around the world every day.



PHOTO [A marlin and game fisher face off in waters off Exmouth, WA.](#) (Facebook: Peak Sportfishing)

In Australia, commercial long-line fishermen can legally target and take striped marlin. Any black or blue marlin on their lines must be released, dead or alive.

About 300 tonnes of striped marlin are sold in or exported from Australia every year. Significant numbers of blues and blacks, some of which are grander size, are also caught and released. Many survive, some die.

Game fishers release 96pc of marlin

Recreational game fishers, on the other hand, release 96 per cent of all the marlin they catch. Tagging programs reveal survival of released fish is high at more than 90 per cent.

Even though the recreational sector takes very few marlin, the money invested in the fishery is significantly greater than that generated by the commercial sector, which kills far more fish.

Yet recreational fishers like Hilbert and Lawler, who predominantly practice catch and release, are persecuted for taking a single fish?

Based on the above, it has to be said that the social media outrage over the Exmouth blue marlin does seem somewhat excessive, especially when you take into consideration the benefits this fish will provide to the Exmouth economy.

So while that particular marlin is gone, it certainly won't be forgotten. The fish is currently being moulded and will be on permanent display at the Exmouth Game Fishing Club, where its sheer size will doubtless inspire generations of awestruck anglers and non-anglers alike.

Perhaps more importantly, its body will provide fisheries scientists with valuable research data, particularly relating to age and reproductive capacity.

From a game fishing perspective, Hilbert and Lawler have proven there are still giants out there to be caught (and more than likely released) by keen and dedicated anglers.

As an interesting aside, Eddy Lawler is a leading tag-and-release angler, with more than 1000 billfish tagged.

Recaptures of tagged fish, including those tagged by Lawler, provide fisheries managers and scientists with important data on fish movement patterns and growth rates.

The take-home message here isn't the demise of one big fish, no matter its economic worth or the hysteria surrounding its capture — rather the challenge lies with doing what's needed to ensure that these giant fish continue prowl the deep blue currents.

That means focusing on the big picture, which is all about managing fish stocks and marine environments for diversity and abundance.

Overfishing (mostly by international industrial fishing fleets), pollution, destruction of marine habitat and climate change are recognised as the major problems facing top order pelagic predators like marlin.

Consider the good game fishers do

Inspired and motivated by the mighty catches of the past and the present, modern anglers are in a unique position of influence when it comes ensuring a positive future for fish and for fishing.

Anglers and angling groups such as The Billfish Foundation, the International Game Fishing Association and the Game Fishing Association of Australia lobby and work behind the scenes to try and convince governments to do what is needed to ensure our marine environments remain sustainable.

Limiting long lining and gill netting are just two of the various international fishing industry and environmental issues in which key angling bodies like TBF and the IGFA are heavily involved. These groups operate via support from anglers and the angling industry. Anglers support these organisations because they want clean oceans filled with fish.

The fact is most anglers will never have the opportunity — or even the desire — to target 1000lb+ marlin. But we all feel good knowing those fish are still there.

And that knowledge — exemplified by the amazing grander blue caught by Hilbert and Lawler in Exmouth this week — inspires the vital work of dedicated, conservation-minded anglers and angling organisations around the globe in doing what is possible to make sure those fish stay there, now and into the future.

Jim Harnwell worked as a fishing magazine editor and publisher for 20 years. He is now employed in the fisheries management sector.

TagTimes

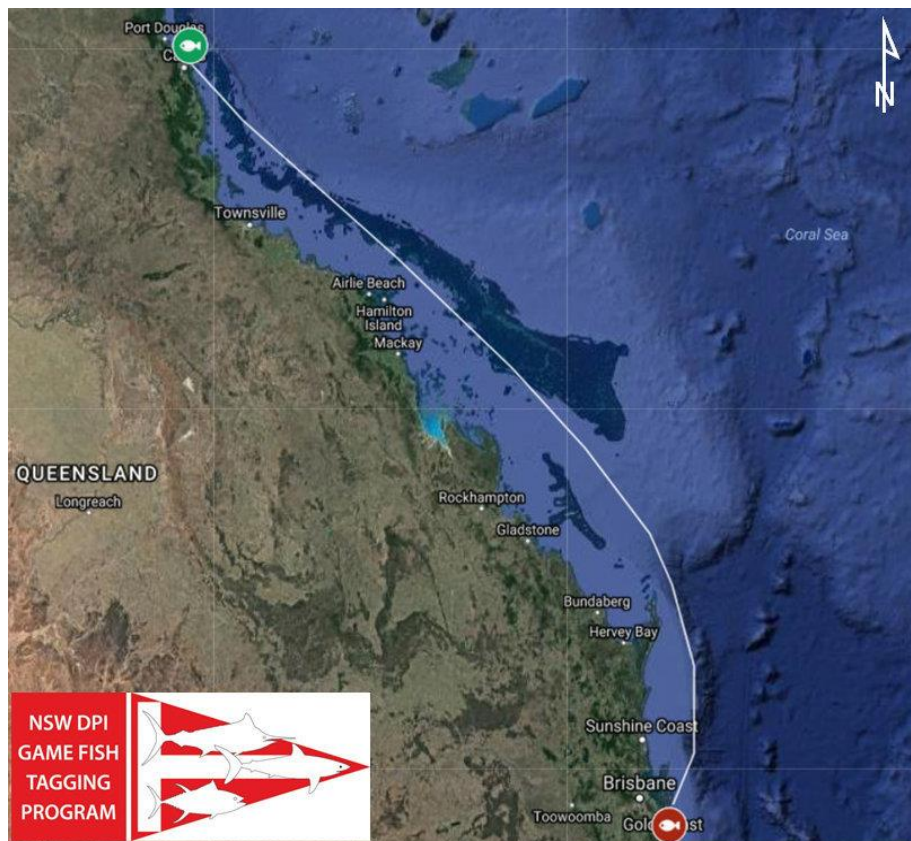
February 2018



First Marlin Recapture of 2018!

The first billfish recapture was reported on New Years Day by Daniel Hatfield fishing aboard *Sparx* off South Stradbroke Island, QLD. Daniel hooked the black marlin at 10am and noticed the tag as they brought the fish close to the boat. The fish was initially released by Sharon Poulter on Cairns Bluewater GFC boat *Think Big* (who was lucky enough to recapture a black marlin on Oyster Reef, QLD, that she had let go 17 days earlier last September). Sharon had tagged Daniel's marlin 142 days prior off Pixie Reef, QLD, almost 800 nautical miles from where it was recaptured! The marlin had grown from an estimated 125cm to 150cm in length and 10kg in weight to approximately 25kg.

Congratulations Daniel on the first billfish recapture for 2018!



24 Hours at Large

A black marlin tagged and released by Newcastle & Port Stephens GFC boat ***Rarely In*** during the Port Macquarie Golden Lure Tournament has been recaptured, approximately 24 hours after it was released. Unfortunately the marlin became tail wrapped during the fight and was in poor condition when it was brought to the boat. The ***Rarely In*** crew chose to tag the marlin and revive it boat side prior to releasing it, however its condition was noted as being poor on release. The following day around the same time (12pm) the marlin ate another bait presented by Sydney GFC boat ***Compton***. ***Compton*** re-released the marlin for the second time in 24 hours, when it was reported to be in good condition, very close to where it was first tagged.



This recapture highlights the importance of reviving billfish that appear to be exhausted or are struggling to remain upright in the water. A commonly used approach for billfish is to hold the fish firmly by its submerged bill, holding the fish upright, whilst the boat moves forwards at 2–3 knots. This ensures a good flow of water over the fish's gills. Only release the fish when they are breathing well, can stay upright, and are starting to actively swim. This can take up to 10 to 15 minutes in some cases.

Ambition's Blue Marlin

A blue marlin tagged during the 2017 Interclub Tournament off Port Stephens in February 2017 has recently been recaptured off Southern Queensland. Popular Sydney Charter boat *Ambition* released the estimated 120kg lure caught blue whilst fishing wide, off Port Stephens and released it in excellent condition after a quick ten minute fight. 250 days later and 296 nautical miles north, the marlin was recaptured by Peter Iliuk aboard *Subpoenaed*, whilst fishing the Gold Coast Kink. There was little change in weight recorded but it was the angler's first ever blue marlin and was a lively fish released again in excellent condition.



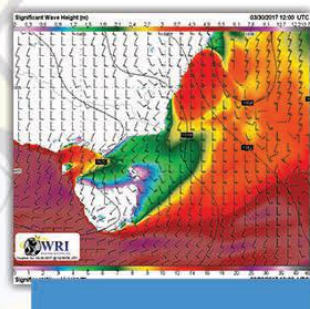
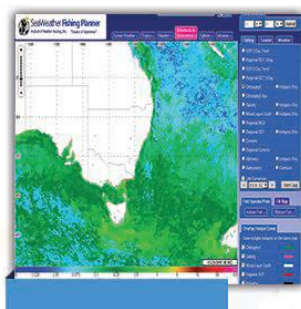
Blue marlin have the lowest recapture rate of the three marlin species tagged under the Program, this is likely to be because they're highly migratory and spend significant time away from fishing pressure way offshore. Of the 10,500 blue marlin released since the program's beginnings in 1973, only 35 have been recaptured, with the first recapture reported in 1996.



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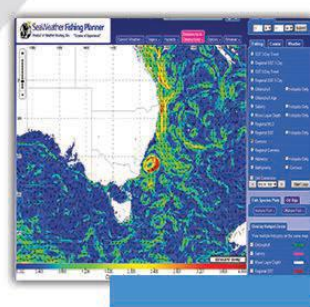
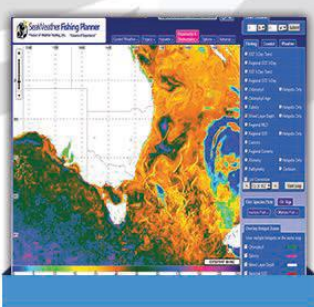
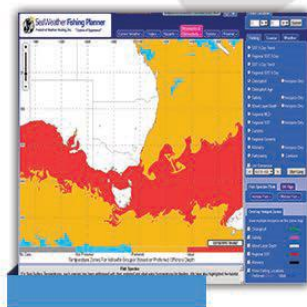
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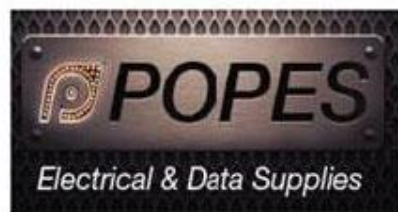
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