

16th Annual 2004-2019

ARGONAUT
MARINE GROUP



1st-3rd June 2019 Dampier W.A.

**BILLFISH SHOOTOUT
TOURNAMENT GUIDE**

\$35,000 worth of prizes
and sponsor gifts

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“ To ensure that this valuable fishery is maintained, and important research conducted, the tournament will be a tag and release event only.

It doesn't matter if you are an experienced angler or a billfishing novice, as all will be welcomed equally. The rules are simple and easy to follow and you do not need to be a member of a fishing club to enter. ”

“ This tournament is designed for the general fishing public to showcase the superb fishing that is available in the Dampier area ”

Concept / Editorial - James Gorham NBSFC Inc.
Printed by Snap Midland. Design by Greg Allen.
Cover & Inside Photo by Brenton Cartledge NBSFC Inc.



NICKOL BAY SPORTFISHING CLUB Inc
In partnership with Hampton Harbour Boat and Sailing Club (H.H.B.S.C.)



Nickol Bay Sportfishing Club Inc
BILLFISH SHOOTOUT 2019



1st - 3rd June 2019

Proudly Presented by Argonaut Marine Group

Tournament Rules and Regulations

1. All competitors will be fishing within current Gamefishing Association Australia rules, Western Australian Department of Transport, and Department of Fisheries WA rules and regulations.
2. **Registered Anglers:** Only registered anglers may participate in any act, which directly contributes to the tag of a fish. They are, driving the boat during tournament, tagging fish, running out lines, retrieving lines, clearing teasers, taking leader.
3. Anglers will fish only from the boat on which they are registered. Permission to change boats once registered in the competition must be applied for in writing to the Nickol Bay Sportfishing Club Inc (NBSFC Inc) Committee and each request will be adjudged on its merits. The Committee will meet ASAP after receipt of such application. The Committee's decision is final.
4. **Range:** All Tournament competitors must fish within 60 nautical miles of the Hampton Harbour Boat and Sailing Club (HHBSC), from a boat at sea, with a minimum of two anglers on board.
5. The 2019 Argonaut Billfish Shootout [15kg IGFA rated Line Class] is run according to IGFA rules as summarised below with the exception that only single hook rigs are to be used.

Line

1. Monofilament, multifilament and lead core multifilament lines may be used. For line classes, see Australian Record Requirements.
2. Wire lines are prohibited.

Line & Backing

1. The use of backing is permissible.
2. The catch shall be classified under the breaking strength of the first five meters of the line directly preceding the double, leader & hook. This section must be comprised of a single homogenous piece of line.

Double line

The use of a double line is not required. If one 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 to the furthestmost 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 10kg (20lb) the double line shall be limited to 4.57m (15ft). The combined length of the double line and leader shall not exceed 6.1m (20ft). The double line on all classes of tackle over 10kg (20lb) shall be limited to 9.14m (30ft). The combined length of the double line and leader shall not exceed 12.19m (40ft).

Leader

The use of a leader is not required. If one is used, it must meet the following specifications:

1. 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 10kg (20lb) the leader shall be limited to 4.57m (15ft). The combined length of the double line and leader shall not exceed 6.1m (20ft). The leader on all classes of tackle over 10kg (20lb) shall be limited to 9.14m (30ft). The combined length of the double line and leader shall be limited to 12.19m (40ft).

6. **Hooks:** Only single hook rigs are to be used for this competition and this includes live bait, dead bait, artificial bait imitations and lures. **In-line circle hooks must be used when fishing with live bait.** Please see the pictures below for the definition of in-line and off-set circle hooks. (NOTE: Off-set hooks are prohibited).

Some examples of legal in-line circle hooks that may be used are:

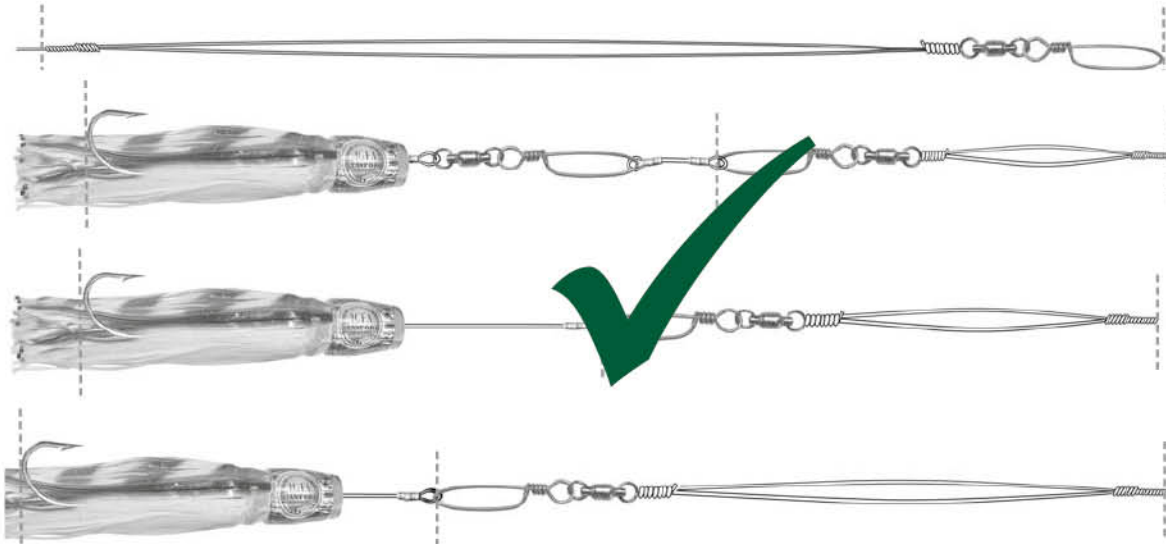
- Mustad Tuna Circle (Code 39960D)
- Gamakatsu In-line Circle Hook (Code 221313)
- VMC Nemesis In-Line Circle Hook (Code 8382)
- Penn International Billfish Circle Hooks (Red)
- Owner SSW In-line Circle Hook (Code 5179)
- Mustad Demon Tuna Circle (Code 39960 BL)
- Quickrig Charlie Brown Octopus Circle Hooks
- Eagle Claw Circle Hook (L2004ELF)



In-Line circle hook



Off-set circle hook (prohibited)



NOT LEGAL as the single hook extends more than its length beyond the skirt.



NOT LEGAL - all two hook rigs.

REMEMBER:
BILLFISH SHOOTOUT IS A SINGLE HOOK RIG ONLY COMPETITION - LURES INCLUDED!
Single hook rigs increase billfish and deckie survival rates.

7. **Junior Angler:** A Junior Angler is a person who has not attained the age of 16 years prior to the commencement of the competition. No purely junior teams will be accepted.





8. **Tag and Release:** See Page 10 when calling in tags to base station 'ARGONAUT BASE'.

NOTE: IN THE EVENT ARGONAUT BASE CANNOT BE REACHED.

If ARGONAUT BASE station cannot be reached then the species, time of capture, angler number, team name and team number must be relayed and acknowledged by at least one other committee vessel. Please write in the comments on the tag cards the name of the team that acknowledged the tag. Tag cards fully completed must be lodged with the daily radio operator/ tag master during the official tournament times (please see below). Tag cards handed in outside these hours or that are **not** fully completed **will not be eligible** towards the days/ overall points for the angler or team totals as well as not being eligible for the lucky angler draw. Tags must be handed in on the same day as the fish capture.

Billfish Shootout Committee Vessels - VHF Channel



THUNDER DOG James Dedman	BLUE MARLIN Ken MacFarlane	SPECTRUM Shannon Dremel	PARTY OF FIVE Hamish McLeod
GORGEOUS GIRL James Gorham	GET LOOSE Jacob Crowhurst	TOP DECK Wade Stenhouse	BLOOD, SWEAT & BEERS Andrew Carpenter

The tags supplied for the 2019 Billfish Shootout are the property of NSW Department of Primary Industries Gamefish Tagging Program and therefore to ensure the long term viability of this and other similar competitions it is the clubs responsibility that any tag that is not used during the competition be returned to NSW Department of Primary Industries Gamefish Tagging Program.

All tags supplied by the NBSFC Inc for the duration of the competition will be the Billfish Foundation Type head tags.

Tags can be obtained from committee members, a \$100 deposit is required that is refundable on return of tags and tag wallets on the Monday after the competition.

**Tag cards must be handed in during the following hours:
Saturday/Sunday 17:00 to 18:30 Monday 14.00 to 16.00**

Tags for the days fishing may also be placed in the locked tag barrel which will be located next to the radio operator or the bar area upstairs at the Hampton Harbour Boat and Sailing Club.

The competition tag wallet and all used and unused competition tags must be returned by 1600 hours Monday. Failure to do so may render the Team and Individuals of the team ineligible for any prizes.

An example of the requirements for completion of a correct tag card is shown below. **It is very important to make a note of the time the fish was tagged as in the event of a tie, a count back will be done on the time the last fish was tagged. Latitude and longitude must be completed to two decimal places.**

NOTE: IF CLARIFICATION OF THE RULES IS REQUIRED THEN PLEASE SEE ANY OF THE NICKOL BAY SPORTFISHING CLUB INC BILLFISH SHOOTOUT TOURNAMENT COMMITTEE MEMBERS



9. **Categories/Sections**

Prizes will be awarded for the following sections:

- First tagged and “called in” Sailfish of the competition
- First tagged and “called in” Marlin of the competition
- Highest Point Scoring Boat Team Daily
- Highest Point Scoring Adult Angler Daily
- Highest Point Scoring Junior Angler Daily
- Champion Female Adult Angler Overall
- Champion Junior Male Angler Overall
- Champion Junior Female Angler Overall
- Champion Male Adult Angler Overall
- Champion Team Overall

Prizes will be awarded according to the following:

- a) Boat/Angler with the **highest total of Tag and Release points.**
- b) In the event of a tie the **Boat/Angler achieving the points first** according to **time of TAG** will be deemed the winner

Points will be awarded as follows:

Tagged and Released Sailfish	750pts
Tagged and Released Marlin or Billfish Other than Sailfish	1000pts

To maximise fish survival after tagging, no additional points will be awarded for those fish tagged and released on line classes lighter than 15 Kg.

A major lucky angler prize will be awarded by random draw of tag cards. **See page 13.** All eligible tag cards submitted by anglers during the competition will go into the lucky angler draw (i.e. multiple tag cards equal multiple entries). A tag card will be drawn at random and this person will be deemed the winner. If the individual is not present for this draw then arrangements will be made to present the prize to the winner at a later date.

A RE-DRAW FOR THE LUCKY ANGLER PRIZE SHOULD THE INDIVIDUAL NOT BE PRESENT WILL NOT OCCUR.

Exception - See Rule 12B

10. **Communications:** The tournament will be a VHF only event and all boats competing must be fitted with an operational fixed Marine VHF radio system, hand held VHF radios will not be permitted. The tournament station channel will be Marine VHF channel 21 (157.050MHz sending, 161.650 MHz receiving) and call sign will be “**ARGONAUT BASE**”

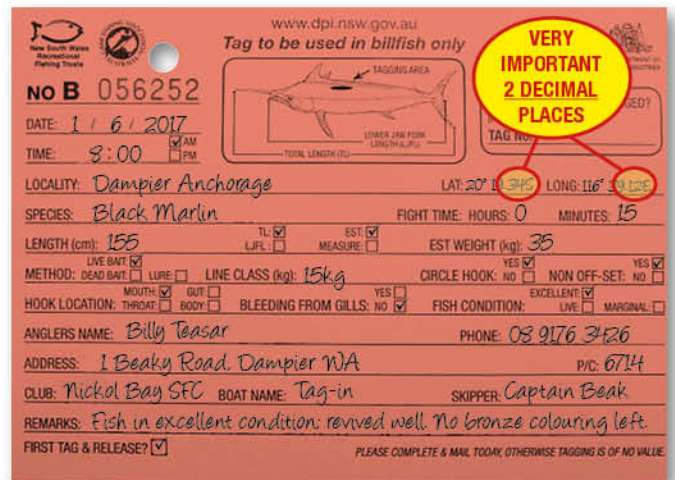
ARGONAUT BASE station will be manned from 0600 on each day of competition. The radio operator will conduct a roll call of all vessels at 0900 on each day.

All vessels will be required to log off on return to the harbour.

PLEASE NOTE: Channel marine VHF 21 must be used for official competition purposes only such as calling skeds, communications to and from ARGONAUT BASE; communications to and from committee vessels; registering tags and the likes. The Woodside NW Joint Venture has kindly permitted the Nickol Bay Sportfishing Club Inc to utilise their VHF repeater station on Channel VHF 21 for competition communications and safety purposes for the duration of this competition providing the use of the channel is not abused.

Entrants may briefly contact other vessels on Channel VHF 21 however general communications and conversations must be diverted to another permitted Channel e.g. Channel VHF 71 or 72.

The Nickol Bay Sportfishing Club Inc takes very seriously the importance of good communications for the viability of the competition and the safety of the entrants and greatly appreciates the assistance of the Woodside NW Joint Venture with the use of their repeater station. Entrants or teams that are confirmed using Channel VHF 21 for other purposes such as extended unauthorised general conversations and horseplay will be penalised at the discretion of the committee which may include but not limited to disqualification of points for the day or disqualification from the competition.





11. **Lines in and out:** Lines in and out will be as follows:

Lines in Saturday, Sunday and Monday: 06:00
Lines out Saturday and Sunday: 17:00
Lines out Monday: 14:00

A radio call will be made with fifteen minutes to lines out each day by ARGONAUT BASE. At this time any vessel that is hooked up, or hooks up before lines out, must notify ARGONAUT BASE and be acknowledged by either ARGONAUT BASE or a committee boat. In this situation fish may be fought until a tag is placed or the fish is lost even if this means that the fight goes past the lines out time for that day. **Please be aware that tags must be handed in before the cut off times stipulated in Section 8 - See page 5.**

A call will also be made at lines in and out each day at which time anglers are permitted to set/ remove lines, teasers etc. from the water.

A presentation will be conducted on Saturday, Sunday 19.00 hrs. and on Monday 17.00hrs at the Hampton Harbour Boat and Sailing Club to award the daily and overall winners.

12. **Bad Weather/Environmental Hazards:** the committee reserves the right to suspend the fishing competition should it be anticipated that the weather or environmental conditions will likely to be an unacceptable hazard to the majority of participating vessels and to the personal safety of those aboard. The following are examples where the committee is likely to suspend the competition.

Gale winds or near gale wind warnings or stronger winds as issued by the Australian Bureau of Meteorology for local waters.
Storms
Tsunami warning
Earthquake

If it is anticipated that adverse conditions will suspend the competition or if a competition suspension is in force, the committee will notify competitors in the following ways.

- Internet web advice at the clubs Billfish Shootout page http://www.ansa.karratha.com/billfish_shootout.html
- Via SMS message to the vessels contact number.
- Via the Argonaut Billfish Shootout Facebook Page.
- On VHF marine channel 21 contacting ARGONAUT BASE.

Disclaimer: Please note that the suspension of the competition due to adverse weather or environmental conditions is not to be interpreted as an endorsement of the safety of the vessel and crew during other times of the competition (i.e. during permitted competition times). It is ultimately the discretion of the skipper of the vessel to determine the relative safety of the vessel and those aboard at any day. It is not possible for the committee to determine the relative risks taken for vessels in the competition due to the many variables such as vessel seaworthiness, skipper experience, sea handling capabilities of the particular boat, boat maintenance etc... Should you have any questions on this matter please speak to a committee member for clarification.

12b. **The fine print:** In the event of the BFS competition being suspended or cancelled* no monies will be refunded as all monies have been allocated and spent. If the BFS 2019 is suspended during the day then current angler and team standings apply, if fish have been tagged they will count. The remainder of the vacant prize categories will be drawn from the competitor's entry pool and awarded to competitors present on the night. Redraw will occur in the event a competitor is not present. The awarding of prizes process will be conducted in a similar manner as above* each night until all prizes are awarded. BFS Committee decisions in regards to this process and the awarding of prizes are final. Daily NBSFC Inc raffle prizes are held for winners and not redrawn. NBSFC Inc BFS Committee Chair: K. MacFarlane.

13. **Protests:** A verbal intention to protest must be made to the tournament committee as soon as possible by the protester. This is to enable the committee to preserve any evidence that may be needed by the Committee before the protester can attend the gantry. All protests must be lodged with the committee in writing with a \$100 deposit, which will be refunded, if the protest is upheld. Protests must be lodged before the close of tournament hours on the day which the complaint occurred. No protests will be accepted after completion of the tournament on the final day. The Committee will consider all protests as soon as possible after receipt. The Committee's decision is final and the affected parties will be notified ASAP.

14. **Conduct:** All competitors will participate in a sporting like manner and embrace the ethics of game fishing. The Committee reserves the right to penalise any Boat or Angler by deduction of points or disqualification for part of, or the whole competition for conduct they consider detrimental to the competition or the NBSFC Inc.

15. **Entry:** Each entry form will be required to be filled in completely to be eligible to register for the competition.

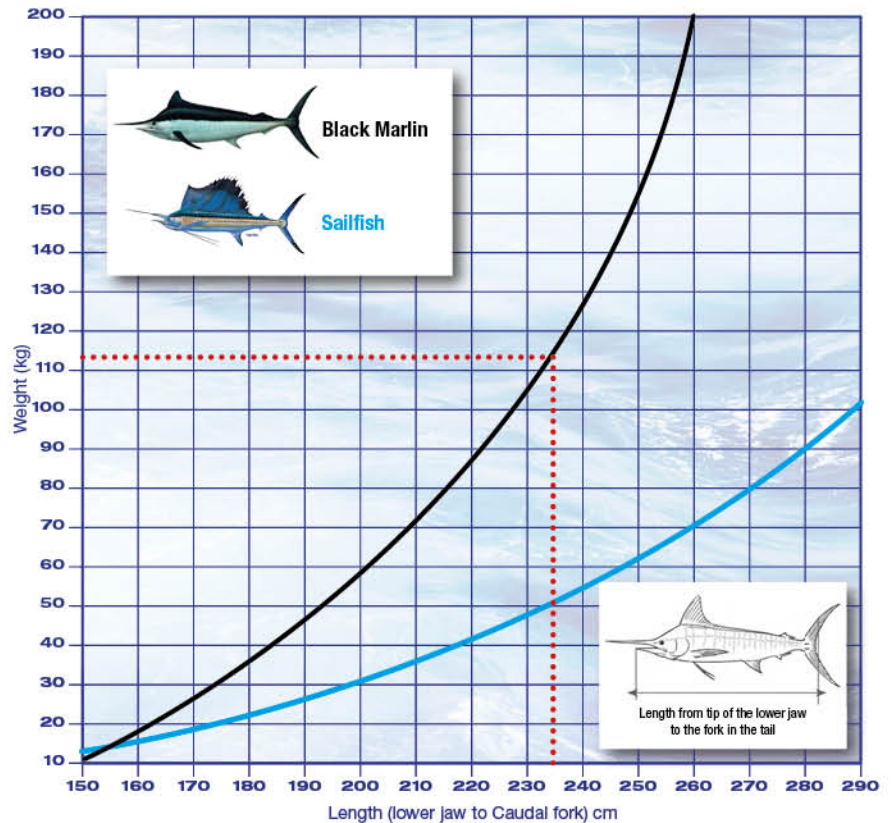
16. **Disclaimer:** The NBSFC Inc Committee reserves the right to amend any rule, regulation or section which it believes will enhance the Tournament. The NBSFC Inc takes no responsibility for loss or damage to competitor's person, personal effects or vessel and competitors fish the tournament at their own risk.

2019 Committee Member Contacts

Name	Call Sign VHF Ch 21	Mobile
Ken MacFarlane (BFS Committee Chair)	Blue Marlin	0427 639 861
Jacob Crowhurst (NBSFC Inc President)	Get Loose	0439 283 868
James Dedman (NBSFC Inc Vice President)	Thunder Dog	0408 914 884
Hamish McLeod	Party of Five	0428 945 961
James Gorham	Gorgeous Girl	0437 293 212
Andrew Carpenter	Blood Sweat and Beers	0417 175 327
Scott Medling		0417 453 028
Shannon Dremel	Spectrum	0408 052 246
Wade Stenhouse	Top Deck	0418 899 494

BILLFISH FORMULA - LENGTH - WEIGHT FREQUENCIES

BLACK MARLIN		SAILFISH	
cm	kg	cm	kg
90	10	250	150
120	15	255	160
135	20	260	170
140	25	265	180
145	30	270	200
150	35	275	212
155	40	280	225
160	45	285	237
165	50	290	250
170	53	295	262
175	57	300	275
180	60	305	287
185	64	310	300
190	67	315	316
195	71	320	322
200	75	325	350
205	80	330	375
210	85	335	400
215	90	340	416
220	95	345	432
225	100	350	450
230	110	355	466
235	120	360	482
240	130	365	500
245	140		





BILLFISH SHOOTOUT PHOTO COMPETITION



1st-3rd June 2019 - Dampier W.A.

FOLLOW ALL THE 2019 ARGONAUT BILLFISH SHOOTOUT ACTION AS IT HAPPENS



POST ALL YOUR PICS AND VIDEOS TO THE
2019 ARGONAUT BILLFISH SHOOTOUT
FACEBOOK PAGE TO BE ELIGIBLE



Everyone who enters also has a chance to see their pic included in the:
2020 Argonaut Billfish Shootout Tourney Guide!



First Billfish called in
caught on a Richter Lure
with photo proof
will win a Richter lure roll
& Richter Lures

richterlures.com



2018 Competition Winner:
Brenton Cartledge

Rules:


1. All pics must be **family friendly** 
2. Pics must be uploaded to the  "2019 Argonaut Billfish Shootout" Facebook page
3. Winner will be the photo with the most  by Monday night's presentation.
4. Judges decisions are final - no sooking.

\$600
IN PRIZES FOR BEST
PICTURE AND/OR BEST
VIDEO UPLOADED TO
THE BFS FACEBOOK
SITE

Pictures of billfish taken out of the water are ineligible

How to call in a Tagged Billfish

① To Call in a Tagged Billfish within one hour of capture:

 Hold down the mic button and say the following message **slowly** in a calm voice:
ARGONAUT BASE, ARGONAUT BASE, ARGONAUT BASE"- (wait 1 second)

Then: "This is _____"
SAY YOUR BOAT'S NAME THREE (3) TIMES OR YOUR CALL SIGN

 "WE WOULD LIKE TO REPORT A TAGGED BILLFISH, OVER "


(release mic wait 60 seconds) - If no response repeat the above process.

② Reply

ARGONAUT BASE will say "Go ahead -- YOUR BOATS NAME --, Over"

③ Details

Now, in a slow and clear voice, say:

 "SPECIES: _____,
 ANGLER NUMBER: _____,
 TEAM NAME: _____,
 TEAM NUMBER _____,
 OVER"



Please Refer to the 'SAFETY EQUIPMENT MARINE RADIOS' Brochure supplied in your Team Showbag and call in your SKED at the end of the day.

④ Reply 2

ARGONAUT BASE may ask you to repeat or will say:

"Thank you -- YOUR BOATS NAME --, ARGONAUT BASE standing by"

⑤ At the end of the day when you log off, call in your team's SKED : Raised, Hooked, Tagged

Example: Sailfish (5 , 3 , 1)
 Black Marlin (2 , 1 , 1)



Special thanks go to the hardworking 2018 Billfish Shootout Committee and special guest Glen Jakovich, West Coast Eagles FC legend.



NBSFC Inc Celebrates 16 years of Billfish Conservation in Partnership with the NSW Dept' of Primary Industries



Department of
 Primary Industries

Game Fish Tagging Program

THE LARGEST SALTWATER TAGGING PROGRAM OF ITS KIND IN THE WORLD

dpi.nsw.gov.au



The NSW DPI Game fish Tagging Program of Australia is the largest saltwater tagging program of its kind in the world and has been in operation since 1973. It is used to obtain information on the biology (distribution, movement, growth, exploitation) of billfish, tunas, sharks and sport fish and encourages game fishers to participate in the management of the fishery.

How the program works

Tags are issued to anglers, and when an angler catches, tags and releases a fish, the details of the capture are recorded on a tag card with the corresponding tag number. The card is returned to NSW DPI in Nowra, Australia. When a tagged fish is recaptured, catch information is linked to the original tag and release, and compared to the recapture information. Details of the distance that the fish travelled and its growth are sent to the anglers who first tagged the fish and later recaptured it. A recapture certificate is also issued.

The tagging data is used by scientists to study the lives and habits of these highly mobile fish species. The migratory habits of the tagged fish are observed by measuring the distance and direction travelled between tagging and recapture, and this can be linked with environmental factors. Growth patterns are also monitored. The observations also enable scientists to study the structure of fish stocks and assess whether there is any mixing between populations that are geographically distant from one another. This information is vital to improve the understanding and management of valuable game and sport fish species.



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NICKOL BAY SPORTFISHING CLUB Inc

In partnership with Hampton Harbour Boat and Sailing Club (H.H.B.S.C.)



2019 Argonaut Billfish Shootout Prize, Raffle and Sponsor Gift List:

Wednesday May 8th Billfish Demo Rigging Night Raffle	Shimano Talica 16 /Shimano Tag-Em TAG15RUN	\$800
Friday 31st May Compulsory Briefing Night Raffle	Shimano TwinpowerSW 14000 / Shimano Tag-Em TAG1524SP	\$1000
Saturday 1st June - Evening Meal raffle	Shimano Talica 25II / Shimano Tag-Em TAG15RUN	\$1000
Sunday 2nd June - Evening Meal raffle	Shimano Talica 25II / Shimano Tag-Em TAG15RUN	\$1000
Monday 3rd June - Awards night raffle	Shimano Stella14000SWB / Headleys Rods Custom 15Kg Rod in custom 2019 Argonaut BillFish Shootout colours and medallion	\$1700
First Tagged Marlin	Top Shot 8' Premium BillFish Tag Pole	\$180
First Tagged Sailfish	Top Shot 8' Premium BillFish Tag Pole	\$180
Saturday 1st June - Champion Adult	Shimano Talica 25II / Shimano Tag-Em TAG15RUN	\$1000
Saturday 1st June - Champion Junior	Shimano Sustain FI 5000 / Shimano Zodius ZOD268M Combo	\$700
Saturday 1st June - Champion Team	GETAWAY Outdoors Premium Esky + Carton of Iron Jack	\$500
Sunday 2nd June - Champion Adult	Shimano Talica 25II / Shimano Tag-Em TAG15RUN	\$1000
Sunday 2nd June - Champion Junior	Shimano Sustain FI 5000 / Shimano Zodius ZOD268M Combo	\$700
Sunday 2nd June - Champion Team	GETAWAY Outdoors Premium Esky + Carton of Iron Jack	\$500
Mon 3rd June - Champion Adult	Shimano Talica 25II / Shimano Tag-Em TAG15RUN	\$1000
Mon 3rd June - Champion Junior	Shimano Sustain FI 5000 / Shimano Zodius ZOD268M Combo	\$700
Mon 3rd June - Champion Team	GETAWAY Outdoors Premium Esky + Carton of Iron Jack	\$500
Overall 2019 - Argonaut BillFish Shootout Champion Male Angler	Shimano Stella14000SWB / Headleys Rods Custom 15Kg Rod in custom 2019 Argonaut BillFish Shootout colours and medallion	\$1700
Overall 2019 - Argonaut BillFish Shootout Champion Female Angler	Shimano Stella14000SWB / Headleys Rods Custom 15Kg Rod in custom 2019 Argonaut BillFish Shootout colours and medallion	\$1700
Overall 2019 - Argonaut BillFish Shootout Champion Junior Male Angler	Shimano Talica 16 /Shimano Tag-Em TAG15RUN and medallion	\$750
Overall 2019 - Argonaut BillFish Shootout Champion - Junior Female Angler	Shimano Talica 16 /Shimano Tag-Em TAG15RUN and medallion	\$750
Overall 2019 - Argonaut Billfish Shootout Champion Team	Team name engraved on the Argonaut Billfish Shootout Perpetual Trophy; Commemorative cheque for Three Thousand Dollars; Individual medallions and Bragging Rights for the next 12months.	\$3000
Lucky Angler Prize 1	Shimano Talica 8, 10, 12, 16, 20II & 25II	\$3800
Lucky Angler Prize 2	Shimano Talica 8, 10, 12, 16, 20II & 25II	\$3800
Sponsor Gifts	Fantastic gifts from our sponsors included in Team Show Bags and Daily Radio prizes	\$8000+
Total Prize Pool		\$35,000+

2018 Argonaut Billfish Shootout Overall Standings



“All anglers who tagged a billfish will go into the draw to win the **LUCKY ANGLER PRIZES worth thousands of dollars!!”**



J. Gorham



B. Cartledge

2018 ARGONAUT BFS TOP 10 TEAMS		
Rank	Name	Score
1	Blood Sweat and Beers	9250
2	Blue Stuff	8250
3	Thunder Dog	4000
4	Pandamonium	3750
5	White Wash	3750
6	Big Daddy	3250
7	Get Loose	3250
8	Salt and Pepper	3250
9	Hard Rock	3000
10	Party of Five	3000

2018 ARGONAUT BFS TOP 10 MALE COMPETITORS		
Rank	Name	Score
1	Scott Medling	4000
2	Andrew Carpenter	3750
3	Simon Ryder	3000
4	Ryan Turner	3000
5	Jason Strange	2750
6	Luke Leech	2250
7	Jaques Miller	2000
8	Ryan Sewell	1750
9	Graham Furgurson	1750
10	Brock Crowhurst	1750

2018 ARGONAUT BFS TOP FEMALE COMPETITORS		
Rank	Name	Score
1	Tameeka Dodd	3000
2	Kate McCleod	2250

2018 ARGONAUT BFS TOP JUNIOR MALE COMPETITORS		
Rank	Name	Score
1	Cooper Hinchcliffe	2500

CONGRATS TO ALL OUR WINNERS AND GREAT FISHING BY ALL WITH 220 RAISED, 146 HOOKED AND 72 TAGGED FISH!

Not bad, just unthinking

The way some among us are releasing marlin is disgusting, going about it in a way that seriously jeopardises their fish's survival. Although most of these people care a great deal about billfish, they're just not thinking of the ramifications – something that must change.

Trish and I were recently disheartened while watching videos on Facebook showing large black marlin off Cairns being cut off in an obviously exhausted state, often with long lengths of heavy leader still attached.

The Cairns fishery has been thriving for more than 50 years now, and for much of that it was unusual for a marlin to be sharked. I first fished Cairns in 1977, followed by many more trips over the following two decades. Until 2004 I also worked six seasons as a pro deckie, taking leave from my Sydney tackle shop business. Throughout all those years I only ever saw one hooked marlin eaten by sharks. These days, however, the boats are facing an extreme shark problem, with sharks now filmed on tow cameras actually following the boats, waiting for them to hook-up. Shark attacks on hooked fish also became a problem on the famed 'Car Park' ground off Port Stephens last season, an area where this was extremely rare in the past. Both areas are now suffering a problem that I believe was likely caused by the very fishermen now affected.

Even between Cairns and Lizard Island, most marlin are caught on a small number of hotspots, the same fish-rich grounds where sharks naturally aggregate. By continually releasing exhausted marlin in the vicinity, the sharks have become trained to expect an easy feed behind the boats criss-crossing the surface above them, especially when their engine vibrations change and they start backing-up. Debilitated marlin released on these hotspots are now faced with a barrage of teeth, and only those able to recover quickly are likely to get through. It's a sad waste of prime black marlin breeding stock, particularly as it's happening at the very time they're spawning!

Most released marlin survive, but let's increase that percentage further by ensuring that all are swimming upright, looking normal and revived sufficiently to outrun the sharks.

I believe there are two reasons fish get released without adequate revival. One is simply a lack of thought. I am sure the people involved care about the fish they catch. Whether pro or private, most of these guys are passionate about the sport, the fish and the health and sustainability of the fishery. If so, the cure is simply education, pointing out what should be obvious, but is perhaps overlooked in the excitement of the end-game.

The other reason – particularly in charter and tournament situations – is the perceived pressure to get rid of caught fish quickly so the anglers can get on to catching their next one. I believe this is a misguided approach since every experienced angler I know, myself included, will happily devote 10, 20 or more minutes to ensure each marlin we release has the maximum chance of survival. If you agree, make your feelings known. Don't let the crew simply cut the fish free and drive away at the first opportunity, thinking they are doing you a favour. Let them know you want to spend the time for a more caring and effective release – and without leaving a long length of leader attached. This means you'll also get to see your fish at close range and appreciate more of the experience.

Don't feed your marlin to the sharks. These fish are special. We need to respect them, and we need them to survive.



Editorial by Tim Simpson
Editor/Publisher 'Bluewater Boats & Game Fishing' Magazine
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2018 BILLFISH SHOOTOUT COMPETITION WINNER : BLOOD SWEAT & BEERS



**NBSFC Inc recommends
 all billfish are left in
 the water for tagging
 and photography to
 maximise survival rates.**



STOCK PHOTO

*Snap Midland are proud to supply
 Graphic Design and Printing services
 for the Argonaut Billfish Shootout 2019.*

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- ▶ Websites & Digital Marketing
- ▶ Graphic Design & Branding
- ▶ Large Format Posters



print design websites

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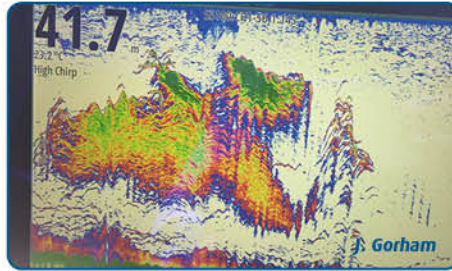
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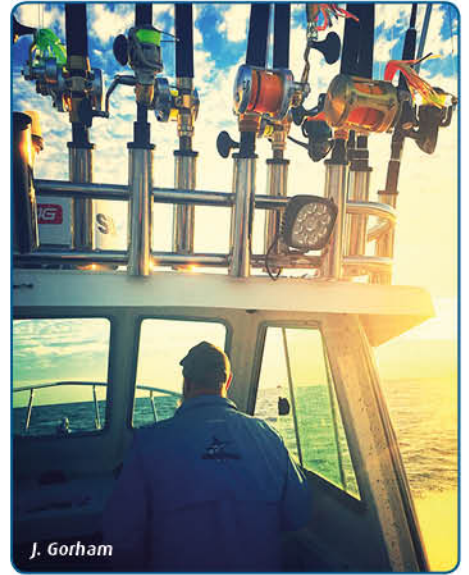
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Emily N Elliot



J. Gorham



J. Gorham



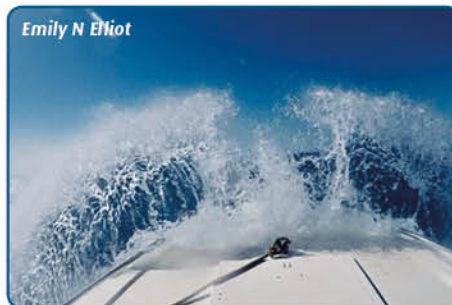
B. Poynter



B. Poynter



B. Cartledge



Emily N Elliot



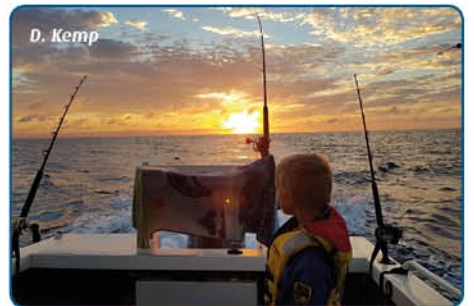
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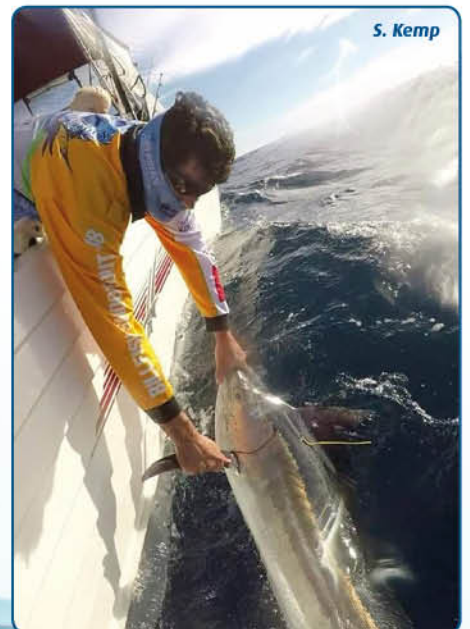
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