

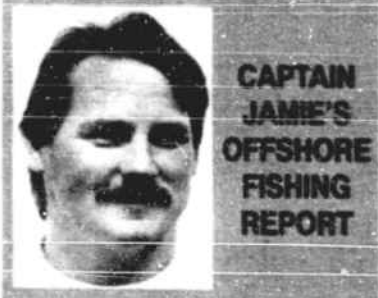


BILLY MELTON of Clover, S.C., landed this 15-pound grouper last week aboard the *Intimidator* out of Holden Beach.

Weather Rule Holds True In Champions' Tourney

BY JAMIE MILLIKEN

Some things never change. Believe me, this held true again concerning the horrible weather that follows king mackerel tournaments. For this year's Southern Kingfish Association Tournament of Champions, the weather forecast called for southeast winds, 20 to 25 knots, and 6-foot seas through the period. Oh well, this will be just like fishing at home—no problem!



CAPTAIN JAMIE'S OFFSHORE FISHING REPORT

Seventy-seven teams had qualified for this prestigious event. Chip Marce, Kyle White and I felt confident as we rolled the *Caribbean Soul* toward Fort Pierce, Florida. All we needed was a little luck.

The tournament was structured in aggregate form. Each team was allowed to weigh one fish on each of the event's two days. This made it a little tough—in other words, you didn't need one good one. You had to have a good one each day.

The first day proved to be good for the *Caribbean Soul* team. We landed six mackerel, one 35-pound cobia and raised one sailfish. Our largest king was 27.5 pounds, which placed us solidly on the leader board. At that point, we were 7.5 pounds away from the first day lead, Selby Lewis. Selby had landed a 35-pounder.

Jack Wood of Rolesville, N.C., a proven winner in this business, was sitting right behind us with a 27.3-pound king. There were a couple of fish in the 30-pound range. Man, this was a "barn-burner." It looked as if it would come down to a finish just like the last lap at Talladega.

The second day, the weather was worse. The palm tree next to our dock was bowed like a watermelon rind in the 30-knot wind. We were greeted by 6-to-8-foot seas that had a good one-foot breaking cap on them.

Our fishing area was 12 miles offshore, and everyone knew that this was not going to be fun. Once I pulled back on the throttles at our destination, we knew it was just too rough to slow-troll, so we went into a "drift" procedure. Fishing that day was much slower than the first. Our VHF radio confirmed that most of the tournament competitors were having a tough time as well.

By midday we had picked up a couple of kings in the 12-to-13-pound range, but we needed one better. It was shortly after 2 p.m. when the down-rigger reel screamed. Kyle picked up the rod and we all crossed our fingers that maybe this could be the one. Fifteen minutes later, Chip gaffed this one, and he was fair. He proved to be our last fish of the day.

The tournament was drawing to a close. Back at the scales, a large crowd had assembled. Once our fish was placed on the scales and recorded as an 18.4-pounder, I knew we were going to make it in the top ten.

Our two-day total was 45.9 pounds and placed us sixth in the Tournament of Champions. We were tickled. My friend Jack Wood won it all with a 35-pounder on the last day. Congratulations, Jack! One other local team, Gary Whitman and Grace Ann Monroe Whitman of Ocean Isle Beach placed in the top 20. Congratulations, *Never Satisfied!*

Shallotte Point never looked so good as we arrived back Sunday night. I went to my knees and kissed the sand. "Isn't it nice to be home again?" Good fishin' and good luck, Jolly Mon!

Waters Open For Crab Shrimp, Eel, Fish Pots

Most Brunswick County waters opened Sunday for the use of crab, eel, fish and shrimp pots will remain open until Oct. 31.

Opened were all designated nursery areas, all coastal fishing waters closed to shrimping or crab trawling and all shellfish management areas that have been planted and posted by the state also have been opened for pots.

The N.C. Division of Marine Fisheries also allows pots in Bonaparte Creek from waterway marker 111 to Little River Inlet, Shallotte River Inlet from marker 75 to the ocean and Eastern Channel from marker 36 to Lockwood Folly Inlet.

Also opened Sunday were Elizabeth River, Middle Bay, Buzzard's Bay, Bay Creek, Cape Creek, Bald Head Creek and the portion of Cape Fear River between the Fort Fisher Ferry, the north end of Horseshoe Shoal spoil island and the western shore of the river south of Sunny Point.

Another section of the Cape Fear River, roughly between Snow's Cut and Old Brunswick Town, will remain open to fishing pots until June 15.

Pots may not be set in any marked navigation channel, in the middle third of any other channel or in any other location where they may constitute a hazard to navigation.

Holden Pier Angler Hooks 38-Pound King

BY DOUG RUTTER

A 38-pound king mackerel landed at Holden Beach Fishing Pier highlighted a pretty good week of fishing across the South Brunswick Islands.

Mike Hilton of Louisa, Va., caught the big king around 5 p.m. Saturday, said pier manager Gil Bass.

"That was a nice king, especially for this time of year," Bass said. "Other than that they've been picking up whiting more than anything."

Anglers also caught flounder, spots and Spanish mackerel last week at Holden Beach Pier.

"It's been a fair week. It hasn't been a total loss," Bass said.

The 38-pound king was the second this spring at Holden Beach. No kings have been reported yet from Ocean Isle Beach Fishing Pier or Sunset Beach Fishing Pier.

"This weekend the spots, croakers and whiting were biting real good," Milton Williams of Ocean Isle Beach Pier said Monday. "It was the best weekend we've had so far."

The seawater temperature has risen 4 degrees in the past week and was 73 degrees on Monday.

"The water temperature's getting right and it should be good fishing for a while," Williams said.

Fishermen landed mostly spots and bluefish last week at Sunset Beach Fishing Pier.

Sheffield's

"We had some pretty good fishing over the weekend," John Sheffield of Sheffield's store at Ocean Isle Beach said Monday.

Anglers caught dolphin, tuna and king mackerel in the Gulf Stream. Tom Gressette of Florence, S.C., landed a 31½-pound dolphin.

Size Limit Changed For Ocean Flounder

The minimum size limit for flounder caught by hook-and-line in the ocean has been increased from 13 inches to 14 inches effective May 1.

The N.C. Division of Marine Fisheries also has set a daily creel limit of eight for ocean flounder taken by hook-and-line, according to an April 18 proclamation.

The hook-and-line season for ocean flounder will close at midnight, Monday, Oct. 31.

The action was taken to bring North Carolina into compliance with the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission's fishery management plan for summer flounder.

FISHING REPORT



MIKE HILTON of Louisa, Va., landed this 38-pound king mackerel Saturday at Holden Beach Fishing Pier.

"There's a lot of nice flounder showing up out here in the waterway," Sheffield added.

There was a run of spots in the waterway Friday night, and anglers have been catching blues in the surf.

"For this time of year the Spanish have shown up good. Not real thick, but people are catching their limit," Sheffield said.

Holden Beach Marina

"The fishing is real good right now," Gary Carr of Holden Beach Marina said Monday. "The big thing is the Spanish are in and the kings are in."

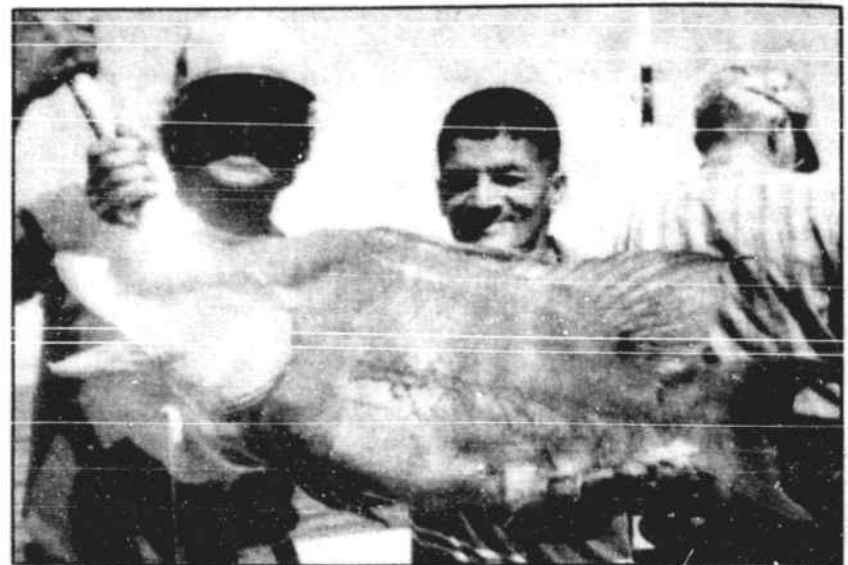
Carr said fishermen caught their limit in kings two miles from Fryling Pan Shoals Light Tower.

"They're catching Spanish in 20 feet of water right off the beach," he added.

Fishermen also have been catching black sea bass offshore and yellowfin tuna, wahoo and dolphin 60 miles outside.

Tripp's Fishing Center

Fishermen out of Tripp's Fishing Center at Shallotte Point caught flounder and small spots last week, according to spokesperson Joyce Land.



THIS HOG SNAPPER landed by Dozier Tadlock of Rowland (right) was part of last Wednesday's catch on the *Alice E.* Also pictured is mate Lynn Hunt.

Ocean catches included bluefish and Spanish mackerel, while kings, tuna, grouper and other bottom fish were caught 40 to 45 miles offshore.

William Usher of Fayetteville

landed a 27-inch speckled trout on Monday, Land said.

This year's Shallotte Point Volunteer Fire Department Flounder Tournament will be June 10-11, she said.

This Week's Tide Table

		HIGH		LOW	
Day	Date	A.M.	P.M.	A.M.	P.M.
Thursday	5	5:01	5:28	11:05	11:38
Friday	6	5:50	6:15	11:52	—
Saturday	7	6:36	6:58	12:26	12:35
Sunday	8	7:19	7:38	1:11	1:17
Monday	9	7:59	8:16	1:53	1:56
Tuesday	10	8:37	8:53	2:33	2:35
Wednesday	11	9:13	9:28	3:12	3:13

ADJUSTMENTS
 SHALLOTTE INLET—add 17 min. high tide, add 32 min. low tide.
 LOCKWOOD FOLLY—subtract 22 min. high tide, subtract 5 min. low tide.
 BALD HEAD ISLAND—subtract 10 min. high tide, subtract 7 min. low tide.
 SOUTHPORT—add 7 min. high tide, add 15 min. low tide.
 LITTLE RIVER—subtract 11 min. high tide, add 18 min. low tide.



ANTHONY DEMERY of Rowland caught this king mackerel during a trip last week on the *Alice E.* out of Holden Beach.

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