



**CARL DIAL** of Maxton caught a 16-pound king mackerel Saturday on the Alice E.

# Oh, September!

BY JAMIE MILLIKEN

Oh, September... September is so special. She signals that time all fishermen live for—fall fishing!

I know God was in a good mood when He made her. She brings us the first run of spots, croaker and those September mullets. Oh, boy, fat mullets on the charcoal grill drowned in Carolina Treet barbecue sauce. Man, it don't get no better than this!

September also brings the kingfish tournament season in with a bang. This is the beginning of what I call our stretch run. All the big tournaments are just one right after another.

Here's the line-up: Labor Day, the Frantic Atlantic, Little River, S.C.; followed by Hardee's, Atlantic Beach, N.C.; followed by the South Brunswick Islands, Holden Beach; followed by Wrightsville Beach, followed by the U.S. Open in Southport. Folks, if the same team were to win each of these they could walk away with \$170,000. That's not chicken feed, Bubba.

What we've talked about so far is the glory side—winning. But only one team can win and allow me to give you a little insight into a tournament competitor who also has to work a regular job. (There are some who have no job, just tournament fishing!)

You begin, four days before the event, in the late afternoon locating bait, catching bait and gring them into the wee hours, preparing your chum. Chum is a most important ingredient when trying to entice a "mule" kingfish into striking.

The next day (after work) you begin tying rigs. Pogie rigs, mullet rigs, cigar minnow rigs, ribbonfish rigs...and the list goes on.

This is also when Maw Bell comes into play. All during rig-tying you are calling anyone from Murrell's Inlet to Wrightsville Beach gaining insight into where some nice fish may be coming from. You're calling and you're being called.

Fishermen have a way about giving small amounts of information, and nobody expects anyone to just open up and spill their guts. This information has been learned through long hours of hard work and years of learning the business, so you have to be a good listener and place the pieces of the puzzle in the right order.

This goes on right up until the captains' meeting the night before the tournament. By then it's "Show Time" and you'd better have developed your game plan.

The night before the tournament is always a back-breaker. You've got to get the boat prepared. This includes a trip to the grocery store, fueling the boat, icing down the boat (usually 150 pounds of ice per day) and, finally, placing everything on the boat and crawling into bed around 11 p.m. and setting the clock for that 4:30 get-up!

Tournament day comes real early, and if you are like me, it begins with throwing up from a case of the nerves before you ever get on the boat. By now the stage is set and your plan had better be a good one.

Go find the bait—the faster you've got bait in your tank, the more confidence you've got.

For me and the crew of the *Caribbean Soul*, we have traditionally been a second-day team. Usually these tournaments are two-day events. We usually do the wrong thing the first day and try to get on track the second day.

The first day usually ends with getting to the dock by 6 p.m., refueling, icing, food, etc., in bed by 10. The following morning you're really dragging and the case of nerves has usually passed. It's now time to fish. This is it—you've got to produce today. The fat lady is about to sing.

For us it means going with your instincts and sticking with the gut feeling. It has been the gut feeling of someone on the team that has always put us on the leader board. Mr. Hap Maree says that fishing is 90 percent luck and 10 percent skill, but you make your luck. That is so true.

Most tournaments end with your sitting around the dock trying to figure out your expenses. But sometimes, when it is your time and you've done everything right, it's celebration time!

I can also let you in on a secret—the high is so much higher than the low! Think about that...

So here I go. I've got to make chum, make rigs and talk on the phone. Good fishing and good luck, "Jolly Mon!"

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**CHUCK MELTON** landed this 18-pound bull dolphin last Friday aboard the Alice E out of Holden Beach.



**JOHN ELSWICK** of Monroe landed this 19-pound grouper during a recent fishing trip aboard the Seahorse out of Holden Beach.

## FISHING REPORT

# Anglers Catch King Mackerel In Calm Seas

BY DOUG RUTTER

Last week was an encouraging one for local fishermen, who finally enjoyed stable fishing conditions offshore and started seeing early signs of fall.

After several weeks of rough ocean conditions, winds diminished last week and anglers took advantage with catches of good-sized king mackerel about 50 miles offshore.

"The sea was real pretty this weekend," said Jesse Hayes of Captain Pete's Seafood at Holden Beach. "This was a good start to our fall season. I hope this weekend was a good preview of the rest of the fall."

Hayes said most of the king mackerel caught last week weighed 20 to 25 pounds. "There were some nice kings caught. Not many but the ones caught were nice," he said.

The kings should start moving closer to the beach over the next few weeks now that mullet are showing up inshore.

Hayes said offshore anglers also



**RED SNAPPER AND GROUPE** were caught Sunday aboard the *Intimidator* out of Holden Beach. Pictured (from left) are Donald Gheen, Jim Calhoun and Mike Irelan.

caught large grouper last week, and more black sea bass than they've seen since April or May.

Closer to shore, Hayes said fishermen caught Spanish mackerel weighing 2 to 3 pounds apiece and some drum in Lockwood Folly Inlet.

"Everybody that went fishing seemed to catch spots. Croaker, whiting and a few flounder were caught," Hayes said.

"There are a few mullet minnows out in the waterway. If people can get a few of those they can get some drum," he added.

**Sheffield's Seafood & Grocery**  
The weather finally cooperated last week, giving area anglers their first good offshore fishing conditions in weeks.

John Sheffield of Sheffield's Seafood & Grocery said fishermen caught king mackerel, dolphin and wahoo 50 to 60 miles outside.

"It was pretty good. Saturday was the first good fishable day we've had offshore in a long time," he said. Sheffield said he's starting to see signs of fall. "Mullet are showing up now so that's a pretty good sign

ing flounder in crab traps, that's a good sign there's a lot of them out there."

**Sea Mist Camping Resort**  
"People are catching a few mullet and a few spots, some drum, trout and flounder," said Nellie Harrell of Sea Mist Camping Resort at Brick Landing.

"I haven't heard of any extraordinary catches," she added.

**Pier Fishing**  
Pier fishing across the South Brunswick Islands continued to show gradual improvement last week as anglers prepare for the rush of fall spots.

"It has picked up a little bit," Gil Bass of Holden Beach Fishing Pier said Monday. "There still catching quite a few flounders."

Fishermen also pulled in Spanish mackerel, spots, whiting and croaker last week at Holden Beach.

A.J. Hammill of Sunset Beach Fishing Pier reported catches of sea trout, drum, pompano, whiting, flounder, Spanish mackerel and spots.

"We're not catching much quantity but there's a good variety," he said.

Fishermen have reported seeing large spots from the pier, swimming in groups of two or three, but the fish aren't biting.

At Ocean Isle Beach Fishing Pier, anglers have been catching lots of flounder and a few spots, trout and drum.

## This Week's Tide Table SEPTEMBER

Day	Date	HIGH		LOW	
		A.M.	P.M.	A.M.	P.M.
Thursday	1	4:46	5:19	11:01	11:45
Friday	2	5:42	6:10	11:55	—
Saturday	3	6:34	6:58	12:34	12:46
Sunday	4	7:23	7:44	1:20	1:35
Monday	5	8:11	8:29	2:04	2:23
Tuesday	6	8:58	9:14	2:47	3:10
Wednesday	7	9:46	10:01	3:31	3:59

**ADJUSTMENTS**

**SHALLOTTE INLET**—add 17 min. high tide, add 32 min. low tide.

**LOCKWOOD FOLLY**—subtract 22 min. high tide, subtract 8 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.

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