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# Fishing Port Douglas News

with Heff



This year for the Port Douglas Marlin Challenge to be held 1st to 4th October tournament will have a few rule changes. They mainly are in the form of acquiring a tagged fish and video proof considering it is a significant cash tournament with over 40K up for grabs. It is also a with a focus for better fish releases, not to be reminded of a tragic death in the Port Stephens recent tournament where a well seasoned fisherman lost his life due to getting entangled with the leader in an attempt to complete a traditional set a tag via a pole. The rules are outlined below with the changes highlighted. This approach will mean we will not be a sanctioned tournament according to the QGFA and we will run independently as a Club. This may change if the QGFA can qualify us as an exemption to their tradition rules.

## Rules and Regulations

Tournament Fishing Zone: Between top of Ribbon Reef No.5 and the bottom of the Jeny Louise Shoals.

Eligible Species: Black Marlin (*ISTIOMPAX indica*); Blue Marlin (*Makaira nigricans*); Striped Marlin (*Tetrapturus audax*).

Eligible Tackle: As published in GFAA angling rules and equipment regulations.

Eligible Line Class: 37kg and 60kg line may be used.

**TAG & RELEASE ONLY EVENT: No fish will be weighed in the Tournament and this year a deckhand or crew member that touches the leader will be deemed a tagged fish. This allows for quicker release. IMPORTANTLY**

**the leader may not exceed 30ft or 9.14m, the combined length of the double line and leader shall be limited to 40ft or 12.19m**  
**IMPORTANTLY: All Hooked fish must be radioed to Tournament Base immediately. Upon this communication the skipper will receive a 3 digit code (each different hookup will receive a random code). This must be recorded clearly on the equivalent of an A4 page (we recommended a small white board that won't get water damaged). This code must be shown recorded on video footage from the beginning of the hookup and once again at the end if a tag is recorded - uninterrupted. Stop/ Start Footage will be not be considered. So be organised in this regard. By day's end this video footage must be sent to tournament base via or phone or email to be eligible for cash prizes. These exact details will emailed to skippers in the briefing prior to the tournament.**

Continued next page ...



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# Fishing On the Daintree

with **Jamie Beitzel**



**Sorry no Report this month**  
**Still on the road to recovery from a Broken Leg**  
**The plan is to resume Charter work 7th April**



#### **MARLIN CHALLENGE cont ....**

**Point Score:** One (1) point per live marlin tagged & released in accordance with the Rules, irrespective of whether 37 or 60kg line was used.

**Number of Days Fished:** Competitors may elect to fish all or any number of competition days within the Tournament dates. There is no reduction in fees for fishing less than 4 days.

**Judges:** Port Douglas Fishing Club shall appoint Tournament Judges whose decision shall be final and binding and no correspondence will be entered into relating to the Judges decisions.

**Start Fishing:** No Tournament fishing or chumming shall commence before starting time each day. Any fish hooked after the final radio sched but before stop fishing **MUST** be reported to the Radio Boat and acknowledged to be eligible. The fish may then be played out subject to the conditions of Rule 6.

**Radio Scheds:** All hook-ups, fish lost, tags & releases must be immediately reported to the Radio Ship. The time of the tag & release is deemed to be the time at which the tag & release is reported to the Radio Ship. Details of Radio Scheds will be emailed prior to the tournament.

**Protests:** A Protest must be submitted in writing to the Judges by 1900 hours on the last day of fishing.

**Tackle Inspection:** Equipment and tackle used by competitors may be inspected at random by the Tournament Judges.

The committee reserve the right to cancel or postpone the tournament if conditions are deemed to be too dangerous for the boats and crew.

**DISCLAIMER OF LIABILITY:** THE PORT DOUGLAS FISHING CLUB (THE CLUB) AND ITS OFFICERS ARE THE ORGANISERS OF THE PORT DOUGLAS MARLIN CHALLENGE (THE TOURNAMENT) AND ALL BOAT OWNERS, BOAT CAPTAINS, CREW AND ANGLERS INVOLVED IN THE TOURNAMENT ACKNOWLEDGE THAT THE CLUB AND ITS OFFICERS DO NOT ACCEPT ANY LIABILITY FOR LOSS, DAMAGE, INJURY OR DEATH TO ANY BOAT ENTERED IN THE TOURNAMENT OR ANY PERSON ONBOARD A BOAT ENTERED IN THE TOURNAMENT. ON THE REGISTRATION FORM THERE WILL BE BOX TO TICK WITH ABILITY OF PROOF ATTAINING TO SELF BOAT INSURANCE WHICH IS MANDATORY.



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# Akula Sportfishing



## with Jason Knack

Well that proved to be a rather uneventful month for obvious reasons. We barely raised half a dozen charters due to some very ordinary weather and a big drop in tourist numbers. At the end of the day you have to expect and pre-prepare for this sudden turn down in business. It's a hard pill to swallow but that's reality in FNQ.

So it has been mostly a month of completing maintenance, re-assessing websites, pricing and future marketing. It's not overly exciting work but very necessary to set up for the year ahead.

It looks like a reprieve in the weather for the start of March which is very welcomed. We've already picked up some business at this early stage. Let's hope that the trade winds don't get too serious this year and give us a decent run at things. Also with a looming election we desperately need a change of government to give us a glimmer of hope to keep the incentive alive to run a small charter business such as ours.

I promise next month to have a better report at hand with more scheduled charters coming up.

### Reef Health Update 27 February 2025

The Great Barrier Reef's water quality continues to be impacted by the heavy rainfall and flooding across north Queensland earlier this month.

Satellite images show flood plumes continue from flood waters, predominately in the Central region — this may impact the health of coral and seagrass.

We have seen cooling in sea surface temperatures across most of the Reef. The Central and Southern regions have cooled to near average temperatures. In the Northern and Far North of the Reef sea surface temperatures remain above the long term average.

Tropical Cyclone Alfred has formed in the Coral Sea, we will continue to monitor this system and the potential impacts to the Reef. As this stage the Bureau of Meteorology advice indicates that the Category 2 system will continue on a slow, southward track, well offshore from the Queensland Coast until late this week.

## Great Barrier Reef Port Douglas



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### Temperatures

The forecast for March indicates sea surface temperatures will be slightly reduced from previous forecasts in the Far Northern and Northern regions, but above average in the Central and Southern regions. However, local and regional weather patterns, particularly the presence of Tropical Cyclone Alfred will influence actual sea surface temperatures.

### Rainfall

Rainfall is likely to continue to be above average across much of Northern Australia from March to May.

### Reef Health

Over the past fortnight, 214 Reef Health Impact Surveys (RHIS) were conducted across the Marine Park. From the 19 sites surveyed, 17 had some level of coral bleaching recorded. In the Northern, Central and Southern regions, most surveys showed low levels of coral bleaching — 1 to 10% bleaching prevalence. No data was available for reefs in the Far Northern region.

# Saltaire Charters



## with Craig Newbold

It's been a massive month for us without necessarily conducting much charter work. February is the time to get boat maintenance done and improve our vessels. With weather against our side we have managed to get our Saltaire & Peicies vessels down to Cairns from Lizard Island which took longer than expected with prevailing winds. Anyway they are up on the hard slip at the Big Boat Shed and we are hooking into the mundane work of bringing them up to scratch. Any boat operator will tell you that you get pretty much one window to get everything right for the next 12 months. So it is intense and critical.

In regards to our Mothership Escapade, she too is now down in Cairns for maintenance but not before performing a 3 day extended charter. This trip had been in the making for over 6 months with the Make a Wish Foundation. We'll keep the family details private but we were scheduled to spend the time on the Great Barrier Reef. But due to 25-30 knot forecasts we delivered the boat to Cairns Inlet just prior and came up with a revised program.

The wonderful family were treated to barra fishing, mud crabbing and exploring the inlet. It was also value added with a private tour aboard the Indigenous Local charter to exclusive privileged water ways and land marks. Further more Cairns Tackle World via Rob Erskine was more than happy to donate a Barra Combo and additional apparel to the main person in mind during a most difficult time for all.

We are glad to say that in 2025 we will also be operating the 50ft Duyfken Riviera for extended trips. The plan is to extend our efforts between Port Douglas to Lizard Island and also Princess Charlotte Bay. It is a luxury comfortable boat with the ability to sleep 6 pax which is already proving popular with future bookings. Please call Heff on 0409610869 for any enquiries.

Other than this there is a lot planning going on behind the scenes which also includes a strong interest from the American market. Let's hope for a much needed change in government for small businesses to prosper.



Ph 0409 610 869



**SALTAIRE**  
PORT DOUGLAS, AUSTRALIA

