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VOLUME 252 PRICELESS

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Features

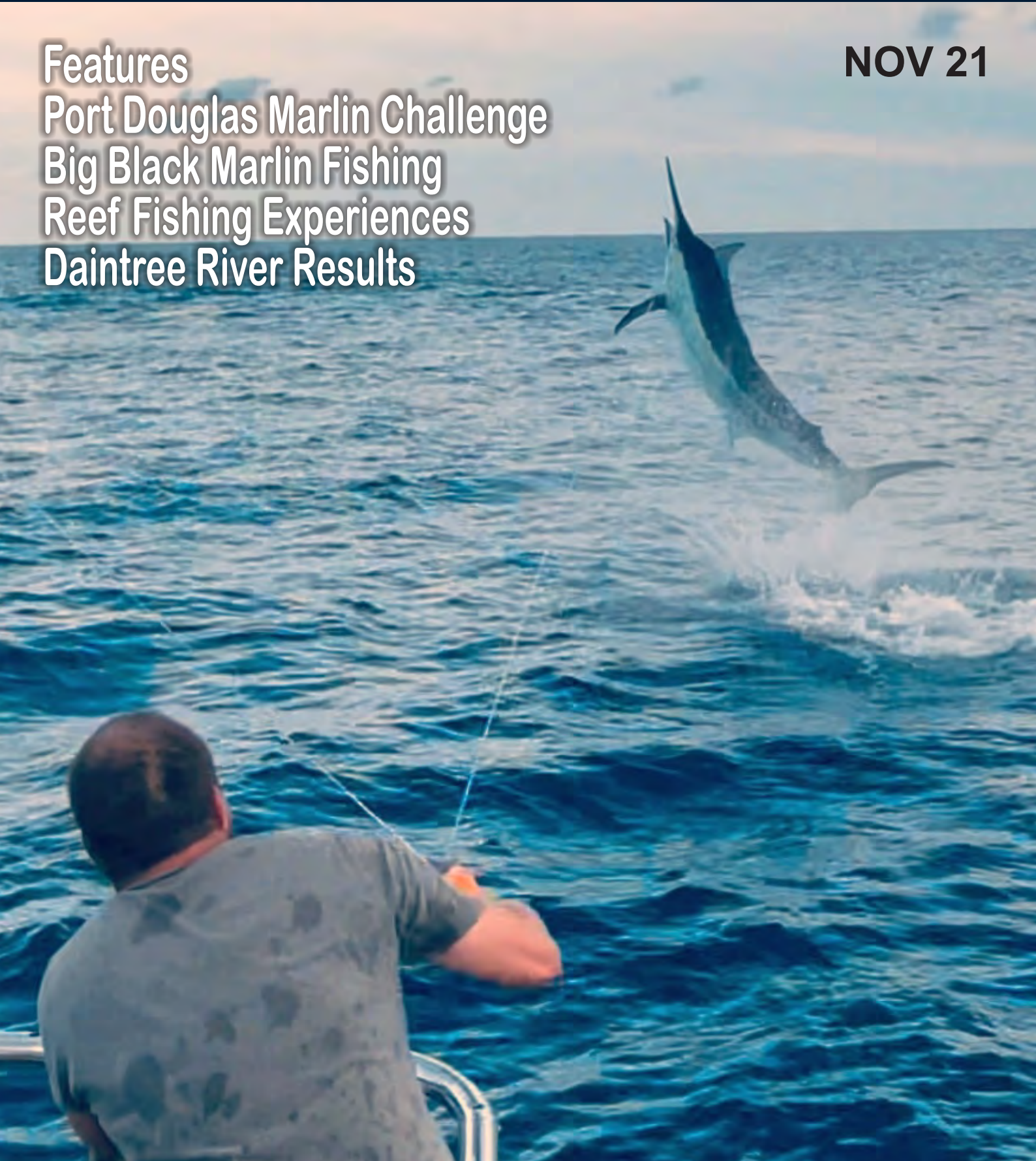
Port Douglas Marlin Challenge

Big Black Marlin Fishing

Reef Fishing Experiences

Daintree River Results

NOV 21



Our Valued Contributors:



'Sharky' Shane Down
Local Expert



Steve Adamson
Dragon Lady Charters



Damian Collete
Saltaire & Allure Charters



Jake Wyatt
Exceed Sportfishing



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Magazine Chef



Fraser Allen
Local Deckhand



Keith Graham
Bransfords Tackle



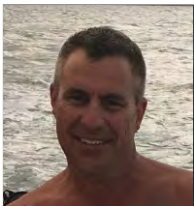
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Bruce Belcher
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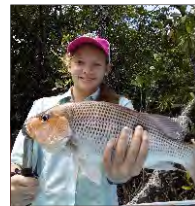
Jake Collete
Master V Skipper



Jamie Beitzel
Fishing On the Daintree



Ethan 'Choppa' Scott
Junior Reporter



Contact Us if you'd like to
Contribute - Most Welcome

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Front Cover:
Pictured an estimated 800lb Black Marlin hooked up to by Skipper Damian Collete at Linden Bank off Port Douglas



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PORT DOUGLAS COAST GUARD

VMR 410 Channel 16, 72, 81

PD Marlin Challenge 2021

By Heff



The 12th Annual Port Douglas Marlin Challenge took place just recently over the 4 day Heavy Tackle tournament. With the way of the world at the moment, it is the only dedicated heavy tackle tournament remaining in Australia which is testimony to the committee behind the scenes. Nine of the best boats in the State participated this year with a few boats late withdrawing due to Covid travel plans. Still a great result considering the current circumstances.

Results from Day 1, Thursday 11th November.

There were 4 fish tagged today (provisional results):

Freedom Shores was first to tag a nice 600lb fish for angler Jon Moon. Wildcard tagged next with a 200lb fish for Jack Hogan. Port Douglas local Lucas Agrums, fishing on Levante tagged a 450lb and Nick Milford's team on Scutes tagged a 200lb for angler Julian Harrold.

There were a few other fish hooked and lost including a couple of big ones.

Results from Day 2, Friday 12th November.

There were 5 fish tagged today (provisional results):

Scutes tagged 2 fish for the day followed by Wild Card, Rehab and Gorilla tagging one fish each.

This puts Scutes at the top of the leader board followed by Wildcard.

The biggest fish tagged was put at 700lb for angler Toby Denneen on Gorilla and Freedom Shores unfortunately lost a good size fish after a big fight.

Results from Day 3, Saturday 13th November.

The wind arrived today, but it didn't stop Scutes, the smallest boat in the fleet, from tagging another fish and extending their lead a little further.

There were 5 fish tagged today, one each for Freedom Shores, Bounty Hunter, Scutes, Iluka and Rehab.

So at the end of day 3 Scutes leads the fleet with 4 tags. Wildcard has 2, followed by Freedom Shores with 2 and then Rehab with 2 and a whole bunch of boats sitting on 1 tag.

*Results provisional

Results from Day 4, Sunday 14th November.

After a rough night at sea day 4 was a slow fishing day with only a couple of boats finding a bite and the day ended with just 1 fish tagged for angler Mark Hogan on Wildcard which put the final results as follows:

Official Results

Day 1 Champion Boat - Freedom Shores (1 tag)

Day 2 Champion Boat - Scutes (2 tags)

Day 3 Champion Boat - Freedom Shores (1 tag)

Day 4 Champion Boat - Wildcard (1 tag)

Champion Female Angler - Lily Sims (Bounty Hunter)

Champion Male Angler - Julian Harrold (Scutes)

Champion Boat - Scutes, captained by Nick Milford

Champion Angler Overall - Julian Harrold on Scutes

Runner-up Boat - Wildcard captained by Jackson Boric

A huge congratulations to Scutes with champion angler Julian Harrold, captain Nick Milford and his crew - a well deserved win for the smallest boat in the fleet!

The boys took home some awesome prizes - including a Penn 130 rod and reel, Costa Sunglasses, Tackleworld Cairns merchandise, lure roll with a heap of Blue Dog lures and a little over \$8000 in cash.

It was also fantastic to welcome back Lily Sims, female angler on board Bounty Hunter who took out the Champion Female Angler award with a nice 700lb fish against some tough conditions. Congratulations!

Thank you to our very valued sponsors this year who helped to make the tournament a success - Tackleworld Cairns, Above Grade Marine Services, Costa, Port Douglas Crystalbrook Superyacht Marina, Penn Reels, Big Boat Shed and our fantastic venue and club house the Tin Shed!

And a BIG thank you to everyone - all the boats, anglers and crews that took part this year. We hope to see you all again next year! ■



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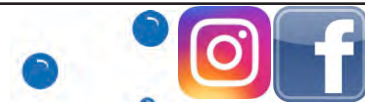


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Sustainable Charter Fishers

Working Group

By Tara Bennett - CEO Tourism Port Douglas Daintree



Hello Douglas Fishing Operators,
Thank you for attending one of the recent
formation meetings for the proposed
Douglas Sustainable Fishing Working
Group and to those who have expressed
interest.

Following the two meetings and
discussions to date we have landed on the
following;

Willingness to form a working group that
will be administered by Tourism Port
Douglas Daintree

Objective/goal

To unify the Douglas charter fishing
industry through collaboration and a
commitment to sustainable practices, to
elevate the industry in destination
marketing and global reputation.

Purpose

The inclusive group will provide a platform
for the charter fishing industry to advocate
and collaborate on industry opportunities
and all of region marketing.

Steps from here

4 meetings in 2022.

All other discussion via email
acknowledging the seasonality of the
industry and time constraints of owner
operators.

Group members will need to agree on the
proposed code of practice.

Next meeting appoint Chair & Vice Chair.

Decide on group name - Douglas Fishing
Operators or Douglas Charter
Fishers?????

What else?

Expectations of members.

Actively participate through meeting
attendance and replying to emails.

Sign up and adhere to code of practice.

Actions for TPDD

Develop fishing blog for Visit Port Douglas
Daintree website.

Source new promotional images.

Survey operators to estimate size and
contribution of industry beyond what has
previously been done by Heff (thanks
Heff).

Reach out to operators to sign up to

Tourism Tribe (free) and formally apply to
be in the working group.

Next meeting – early February 2022

Please feel free to send through
comments, feedback etc and thank you
again for your participation in the process
to date.

Can I ask you to share this with any
companies I've missed in the attached list?

With thanks,

Tara Bennett

Chief Executive Officer

Sustainable Fishing Charter Group

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The Dragon's Den

By Steve Adamson

We started off November with the last set of reef closures which took up our first week with no activity. It wasn't bad timing because from memory it blew a gale for the most of it and we wouldn't have run anyway. From that point on it was a matter trying to get sufficient numbers to run, especially during the week. Anyone living around town would have seen tumble weed rolling down the streets on some days. Just to reinforce my point here, down at the marina there were numerous days where the conglomerate Quicksilver operation left 4 boats left idle in the docks. I can't recall anything like it in all my time over 35yrs of living here. That's how quiet the town has been. Luckily for us we made up some business on the weekends with staff Christmas parties and also mixed trips from the locals. This trend is set to continue right up till Christmas. Unfortunately there's the odd tourist who will miss out due to a severe lack of travelers coming here for the moment. We'd be lucky to offer a couple of trips a week to cater for them.

Following the closure and the wind blow the weather pattern really settled back into a calm situation and looks to be the outlook on the horizon. There's been a bit of rain about at times but we are only deterred by strong winds if they pop up.

The fishing to be honest has been fair overall which is often the case at this time of year. There's the odd blinder about but it has been more about scratching picking up bits and bobs during the course of the day. Coral trout have been okay, the nannygai have had their moments as well with some nice red emperor thrown in on occasions. Other than this there's been a supply of long nosed emperor, occasional spanish mackerel and cobia plus other bread and butter species. As can often be the case at this time of



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year the gold spot trevally have taken over our deeper haunts where we normally target our reds. There's been plenty of them around in big schools and they provide an abundance of fun for the punters. They pull hard and there's a bit of dancing around the deck to get them up. There's some that dismiss them as a table fish and I'll disagree here. Obviously they are best eaten fresh but they also can be frozen to use later. There's nothing too wrong with their overall texture and taste. There's a thousand recipe's and different methods out there nowadays to make a tasty meal out of this species.

Moving ahead we are coming into the hottest time of year in my opinion and we are going to have to be proactive to reap our rewards. There will be a bit of searching but we always find somewhere that will provide the goods. Keeping well hydrated and sun smart will be mandatory for all.

We still have a few spots left before the New Year but that will likely change in a blink of an eye. The beginning of January looks super busy so be quick to secure a spot. Till then basically every Friday, Saturday and Sunday are close to capacity leading into the festive season. Naturally there are weekly spots depending on our numbers till the borders open the flood gates. In between that there's always a job or two in maintaining a charter to do. ■

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Breathing in the Saltaire

By Damian Collete



Our November trade period never really recovered from all the cancellations made prior when hard lock down borders were introduced. It is near impossible to replace all the NSW and VIC clients that unfortunately weren't able to make the journey. The Qld government are oblivious to the damage they have caused to the tourism sector in the past few months as there's been barely an olive branch offered out to assist their decision. Still we ran quite a few trips covering all bases from family fishing and snorkelling days, up to bonifide light and heavy tackle trips. Just enough business to keep treading water but barely. Our reef days were conducted in some great weather nailing some nice fish including coral trout and large mouth nannygai from off the bottom. Our popper and light tackle fishing justified the effort with some decent spanish mackerel and Gt's coming over the side as well. With temperatures on the rise our clients enjoyed, at their will snorkelling on their own private reefs and was a refreshing way to break up the day.

When it came to game fishing we had the company of some eager clients wanting to take it to a new level. In a nutshell we caught a few smaller black marlin around 200lb and jumped off a few big models in the process. The big fish weren't overly committed in their manner when coming into the spread of baits and thus their ability to jump off early in the fight. Still we saw some beauties and at least the clients got to see them in the raw despite not collecting

the chocolate lollies. From other boat reports around the same period it was a similar result. A lot of hookups and strikes but the conversion was down.

Light tackle fishing on the shelf was quite reasonable and we hooked into some hot yellowfin tuna bites. Not overly big fish but around 10kg which turned the reels over consistently enough.

I personally did a bit of work on a 80ft private game boat for a week or so and on this we caught and tagged a couple of good sized marlin. The biggest would have been close to 900lb and the next best around 850lb. You wait around all year to sink your teeth into this form of fishing and getting up close and personal to these big girls is why we do, what we do! I never tire of it and for the clients it's an absolute thrill of a lifetime.

There's been a common theme when the bigger fish decide to play the game this season, an incoming afternoon tide and at least an easterly or south easterly breeze. The northerly winds, no matter how light seem to make them more finicky. We'll still have opportunity to tap into the big black marlin for at least a couple of weeks before it fizzles right down. The weather looks like hanging on but please no northerly winds. The likes of yellowfin tuna will remain and there hasn't been to many wahoo or dolphin fish reported. They may make a late run this year which will add to our efforts.

Christmas looks promising from a booking point of view and the start of the New Year. I suspect there will be a mad rush as the borders re-open. Book Now !! ■



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On the Daintree Charters

By Jamie Beitzel - The Local Huckleberry Finn



Hi to all reading my November report this month. We've remained okay charter wise recently ticking over a few trips to keep the wolves off our backs for the moment. We could certainly do with some more visitors as there a lot of businesses really, really hurting up around the Daintree region. A few more weeks and this should resolve itself or help ease the pain when the borders open.

The past few weeks have proven this time around to be a bit harder on the fishing front. Sourcing live bait has become a challenge with the water temperatures rising to almost peak levels and activity overall on the Daintree has become less productive. What we require is one really solid dose of rain to re-stir the system and things will pick up immediately. There was a decent rain patch a little while ago but the several inches that fell in the region were just south of our mountain water catchment. It is what it is and we have still been able to provide some exciting moments for our clients.

Fingermark have remained my best friend for me still nattering away most times along the banks with associated heavy timber and also in the main channel with isolated structure lodged into the river bed. It might be as simple as a old tree stump washed downstream and it always seems to hold this particular species.

Across the flats I've been able to rustle up some really handy javelin fish at times along with the occasional flathead or river trevally coming up from the depths to

explore the shallows on a run in tide. Still there's plenty of water to explore and with a bit of persistence I have been able to produce fish on every occasion.

To value add, recently I've had the crab pots out on most trips and surprisingly been able to secure some nice bucks for my clients. It is not their season to seriously pursue but the river gods have looked favourably upon me in regards to this.

Spotting a crocodile has become really challenging and for those that really wanted to see one it took a few miles to cover at times. We fished as we went and spotting a crocodile became a real highlight for some. They are nowadays tucked right up in the shade along the banks and you need a real keen eye to spot them. It's all part of the Eco tour we provide with all of our trips.

I suspect the weather appears to remain hot and calm for the immediate future and much will remain the same. My refreshing mountain stream creek on my property has been getting a serious work out at the end of each day's work. It's just one of the perks of living in the Daintree Rainforest.

Looking ahead as I've mentioned we just need a good flush out to really reignite this river into some really good action. The Christmas and New Year period are already very solidly booked with only a small handful of openings left. Give Heff a call on 0409610869 pretty quickly to snivel up these remaining bookings.

Catch you next month for the next report. ■



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Locally Port Douglas

Top 6 Ranking

Dated 17th November By Google Business - Fishing Port Douglas
Our 501 photos posted got 31,253 total views in the last month



Reel Cooking with Mick Hart Curry Baked Nannygai



Ingredients

4 fillets of Large Mouth Nannygai
1 fennel bulb, sliced
1 large red onion, cut into 8 wedges
4 Gold potatoes, halved if large
3 Tbsp. extra-virgin olive oil
Sea salt
4 Tbsp. unsalted butter
2 garlic cloves, crushed
1½" piece ginger, peeled, finely chopped
1 tsp. curry powder



Method

Preheat oven to 250°. Toss fennel, onion, potatoes, and oil in a 3-qt. baking dish to coat; season with salt. Roast, tossing once, until vegetables are browned and softened, 35–40 minutes.
Meanwhile, melt butter in a small saucepan over medium heat. Mix in garlic, ginger, curry powder, and a pinch of salt. Simmer until colour intensifies, about 1 minute. Remove from heat. Season fish with salt and lay on top of cooked vegetables. Drizzle fish with curry butter. Reduce oven temperature to 180° and bake fish until flesh easily flakes apart with a fork, 12–15 minutes.
Serve when ready with crusty bread. A nice change of eating fish this way !!

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