

February Newsletter No.3/2009 courtesy of Capt Andy's

Marlin keep on coming

The fishing just seems to get better as the weeks go by, with February, and it's reputation as the best single month for all billfish, living up to this.

At Watamu, Tarka must take pride of place with five striped marlin last Monday, one double header and three singles, and adding in a couple of sailfish this must be a day to keep tongues wagging round the bar and arms extended to their limit! While striped marlin are not as big as their cousins the black and the blue, they probably fight harder for their weight and are totally spectacular with their aerial performances and their vivid colouration in the water.

Simba, fished by Mark Smith a regular angler from the UK, has had a amazing run this last week with thirteen marlin and twelve sail, plus three yellowfin tuna over 25kgs in seven days consecutive fishing. Two of the marlin were blacks, with cameraman Ross Samuels getting spectacular footage of one of these jumping close to the boat before eventually being tagged and released. A blue and ten striped marlin completed the tally – it can hardly get better than this!

Alleycat released four stripies and five sail, also on Monday, while a couple of days earlier B's Nest found three stripies and a sail for Ken Halberry and J. Hunt to rival two stripies, a blue and two sail for Ian and Cindy Duncan on Ol Jogi. Perhaps the best day was Friday, when sixteen marlin flags were flying on eight boats, while White Bear took Peter Fox to Malindi waters where he caught eight sailfish, three of these on fly tackle.

So probably about a hundred marlin caught from Malindi and Watamu in the first eleven days of February, almost all of these released – the sort of figures one might expect with sailfish!

Plenty of sail also, with the boats chasing marlin in the Rips catching some most days, and those boats fishing Malindi waters also doing well, Snark took a party of young Austrians out for their final day and recorded eighteen sailfish, with both Snowgoose and Snark getting eight each the previous day.

Good to hear favourable reports of Kenya fishing, when regular visitors Kevin Nally and Steve Broddel wrote from Nottingham England to say they with their party of friends had had the best fishing ever out in the Rodwell's Delta and Centa from Mtwapa, with half a dozen marlin and a dozen sailfish caught, and many more lost, while plenty of dorado over 10 kgs were also brought in. We expect they'll be back next year!

At Shimoni, there have been some bigger marlin caught and others fought, so as March approaches we might see some records tumbling as this is when the monster blues and blacks traditionally arrive. Broadbill hooked into a blue marlin estimated over 200 kgs on 24 kg line, but when the big fish got wrapped up in the line it was too heavy to pump up

from the depths and the line broke. The same day, however, John Carr-Hartley on Kamara II hooked and fought another blue of 165 kgs, also on 24 kg line, sadly the fish died and had to be boated.

A couple of days earlier, Broadbill recorded a grand slam with John, releasing a blue estimated at 160kgs on 24kg line, a stripey of 75kgs on 15kg line and a sail – this followed a catch by Jan Baand of a black marlin of 120 kgs on 15kg line the previous day, so several 5:1 catches here, good fishing.

With Malindi fishing their International on 21st-22nd Feb, Kilifi their Classic on 28th Feb-1st March, and Watamu their Festival on 7th-8th March, followed by Hemingways 'Friends of Kenya' overnight tournament three days later, a wealth of tournaments for keen anglers, and hopefully a wealth of fish too!