

Jupiter boat takes top honors in Reef Builder Tournament

By Ed Killer

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STUART — A light south current and a coldwater upwelling made for slow fishing conditions during Saturday's third annual Reef Builder fishing tournament. But anglers aboard the fleet of 31 boats enjoyed festivities in the family-level event all in an effort to create more underwater habitat for marine sea life off the coast of Martin County.

Jeff Platz, Rick Platz, Jimmy Barry and Hunter Beall, all of Jupiter, collected top boat honors, \$1,500 cash and a custom Crowder Rod thanks to the midday strike of a 25.1-pound king mackerel and a 5.7-pound mutton snapper.

"We had very little action to begin with, but got that king bite about 15 seconds after we put out a live sardine on a flat line," Jeff Platz said. After checking out of Jupiter Inlet, his day began off the Juno Pier in 127 feet of water where he discovered that a light south current would be his team's greatest challenge.

Kerry Dillon, a commercial diver from Stuart, said conditions all week have been fascinating offshore, if not the best conditions for productive local fishing.

John Burke, tournament chairman, said the turnout was a little less than was hoped for, but the contributions will go a long way to a greater good.

"The money raised will help pay for what we hope will be an end of summer deployment for the Big Al steel tug boat," Burke said. Proceeds from the entry fees and raffle will benefit the Martin County Artificial Reef Foundation.

RESULTS

Dolphin:

1. 17.0, Sea Boss, Mike Pallock, \$1,000.
2. 14.9, Beltane, Bill Fay, \$500.
3. 13.2, Alone Again, Barry Berrhoff, \$250

Kingfish:

1. 25.1, Commander, Jeff Platz, \$1,000.
2. 25.0, Alone Again, Barry Berrhoff, \$500.
3. 22.9, Mako, Chris Blakeslee, \$250

Cobia: None weighed

Snapper:

1. 7.0, Cowboy Up, Travis Johnson, \$1,000.
2. 5.7, Commander, Jimmy Barry, \$500.
3. 4.7, No Name, Brian Williams, \$250

Grouper:

1. 16.2, Sunseeker Too, Bob Bouthlourer, \$1,000.
2. 11.6, Cowboy Up, Shane Dixon, \$500.
3. none

