



IGFA Great Marlin Race



STANFORD
UNIVERSITY

On May 13, 2015, the IGFA Great Marlin Race (IGMR) returned to Abaco Beach Resort & Marina in the Bahamas for the 2015 Custom Shootout where fifty-two custom built sport-fishing yachts entered the 14th annual fund-raising catch and release tournament. The weather was beautiful and the fishing was hot during the three day event where five satellite tags were generously sponsored for deployment on some healthy blues!

On the morning of the second fishing day, May 14, 2015, tag sponsor Jim Jensen fought an estimated 57 kg (125 lb) blue marlin for about a half hour aboard his boat *Plane Simple* before deckhand Noah Beaman released the fish with the first satellite tag of the race.

In the afternoon of the second fishing day, May 14, 2015, tag sponsor Todd Reaves quickly reeled in an estimated 45 kg (100 lb) blue while fishing from his boat *Soul Candy* before deckhand Heath Brown released the fish with the second satellite tag of the race. According to *Soul Candy* Captain Brian Speedy, "the fish was small, the fight was quick, and the release was healthy!"

The next and final day of the tournament, on May 15, 2015, *Sweet Thing* owner and tag sponsor Keith Beaty tagged an estimated 45 kg (100 lb) blue marlin after a 15 minute bout with angler Mike Ivancevic. Keith described the fish as "healthy" as it swam away with the third sat tag deployed in the race.

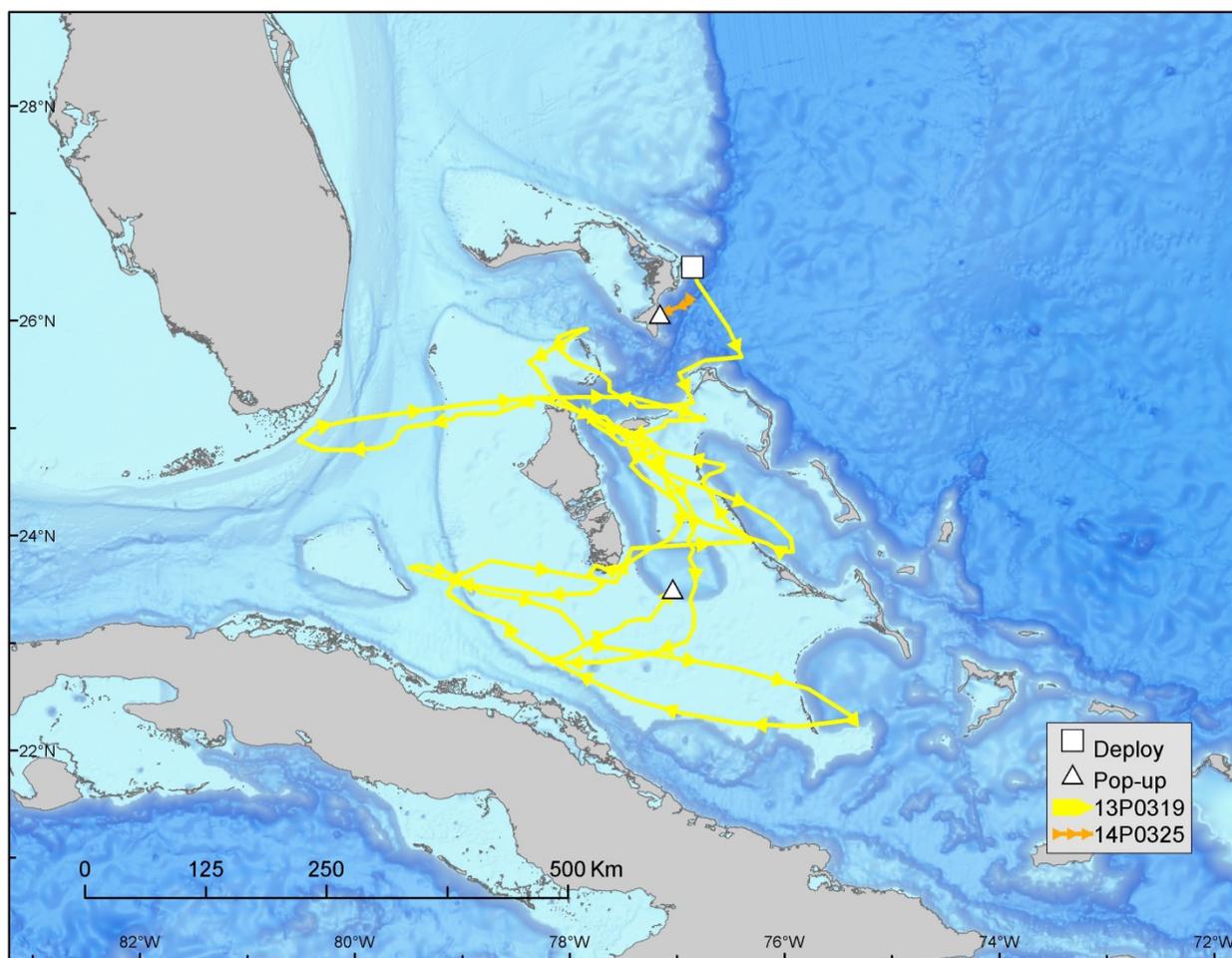
On June 4, 2015, three weeks after the tournament concluded, *Committed* owner and tag sponsor John Lee deployed the fourth satellite tag of the race on an estimated 91 kg (200 lb) blue marlin after angler John Kazaros fought the fish for about 45 minutes.

Two days later, on June 6, 2015, IGFA Trustee Roy Cronacher Jr. deployed the fifth and final tag in the Bahamas IGMR on an estimated 32 kg (70 lb) blue marlin after reeling in the fish aboard his boat *Gladiator*.

*The total estimated distance is based on the length of a "best-guess" track calculated using light and sea surface temperature measurements from the tag and a complex mathematical algorithm. Since each location along the track potentially has significant error associated with it, the IGMR instead uses the reliable and more precise linear distance (the point of tag deployment determined by GPS to the point of tag pop-up determined by Argos satellites) to establish IGMR results and winners

Abaco Islands, Bahamas 2015 Deployments

Tag	Boat	Fish	Species	Tagged	Reported	Days at Large	Distance (nm)	Est. Wt. (lbs)	Est. Wt. (kg)	Angler	Tagger
14P0530	Plane Simple	1	Blue Marlin	5/14/2015	5/19/2015	5	8	125	57	Jim Jensen	Noah Beaman
13P0319	Soul Candy	2	Blue Marlin	5/14/2015	12/3/2015	203	180	100	45	Todd Reaves	Heath Brown
14P0460	Sweet Thing	3	Blue Marlin	5/15/2015	Did Not Report			100	45	Mike Ivancevic	Keith Beaty
14P0501	Committed	4	Blue Marlin	6/4/2015	Did Not Report			200	91	John Kazaros	John Lee
14P0325	Gladiator	5	Blue Marlin	6/6/2015	6/13/2015	7	19	70	32	Roy W. Cronacher Jr.	Roy W. Cronacher Jr.



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The tag on Fish 1 Team *Plane Simple* (Tag 14P0530) was the first to surface on May 19, 2015, just five days after it was deployed to earn third place in the race. The fish traveled a point to point distance of 8 nautical miles (nm) northwest of the tagging location. Unfortunately, there was not enough data to create a track for this fish. However, the data from this deployment indicates that the fish spent most of its time at the surface in water temperatures ranging from 26°C – 28°C (79°F - 82°F). The deepest dive was to 232 m (761 ft) where the coldest temperature of 19.6°C (67°F) was encountered. This tag appears to have pulled out during or shortly after a dive to 100 m (328 ft).

One month later, the tag on Fish 5 Team *Gladiator* (Tag 14P0325) popped up on June 13, 2015, just seven days after it was deployed to claim second place in the race. Over the course of the week, the blue traveled a point to point distance of 19 nm and an estimated total distance of 24 nm* southwest of the tagging location. This fish also spent the majority of its time in water temperatures ranging from 26°C – 28°C (79°F - 82°F), but dove to shallower depths (184 m, 603 ft max depth) and experienced warmer temperatures while diving (21°C, 70°F minimum temperature). The tag appears to have pulled out during or shortly after a dive to 90 m (295 ft).

The tag on Fish 2 Team *Soul Candy* (Tag 13P0319) surfaced on December 3, 2015 after 203 days on the blue marlin. The tag popped off at the southern tip of the "Tongue of the Ocean", 180 nm from where it was tagged in the Abacos. While the point of deployment to the point of popup distance was only 180 nm, we estimate the total track length to be 2,340 nm! This fish took a meandering route through the Bahamas, spending some time off the northeast coast of Cuba in August and September and passing by the Florida Keys in October. The majority of its time was spent between the surface and 100 m (328 ft) in water temperatures ranging from 26°C - 30°C (79°F - 86°F). However, deeper dives frequently occurred, with the deepest dive to 512 m (1,680 ft) where the water temperature was 12.8°C (55°F). Congratulations to Todd Reaves and Team *Soul Candy* for winning the 2015 Abaco Islands, Bahamas, IGMR!

Unfortunately, the tags on Fish 3 Team *Sweet Thing* (Tag 14P0460) and Fish 4 Team *Committed* (Tag 14P0501) did not report. Although the IGMR has a very high reporting rate of 83% and we hope to hear back from every tag we deploy, there is always a chance that a tag will not report. We can speculate a few reasons this might happen: Although each tag is painted with anti-fouling paint, biofouling can become an issue, especially during long deployments. If the antenna becomes encrusted with organisms or is physically damaged, the tag's ability to transmit data can be impeded. It's also possible, although a very rare occurrence, for the tag to malfunction.

Over the course of two years of tagging during the 2014 and 2015 Custom Shootout, 11 tags have been deployed on blue marlin. Although there was only one substantial track generated from this event in 2015, it provides a very interesting data point in comparison to the 2014 event. In 2014, all of the tracks show the marlin moving significant distances away from the Bahamas, whereas Fish 2 Team *Soul Candy* (Tag 13P0319) in this event remained relatively close to the Bahamas for the entire duration of the deployment. While it is difficult to infer the reason for this observed anomaly due to the small number of tagged animals,

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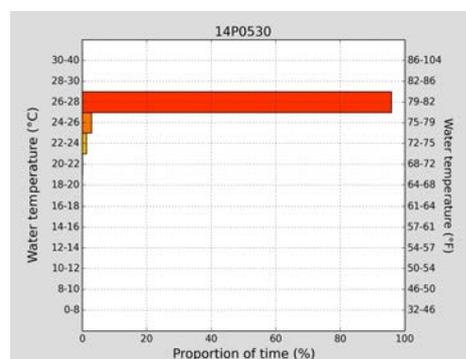
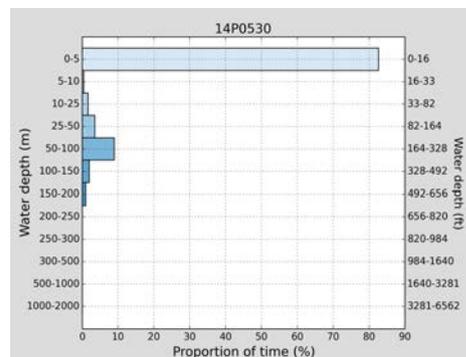
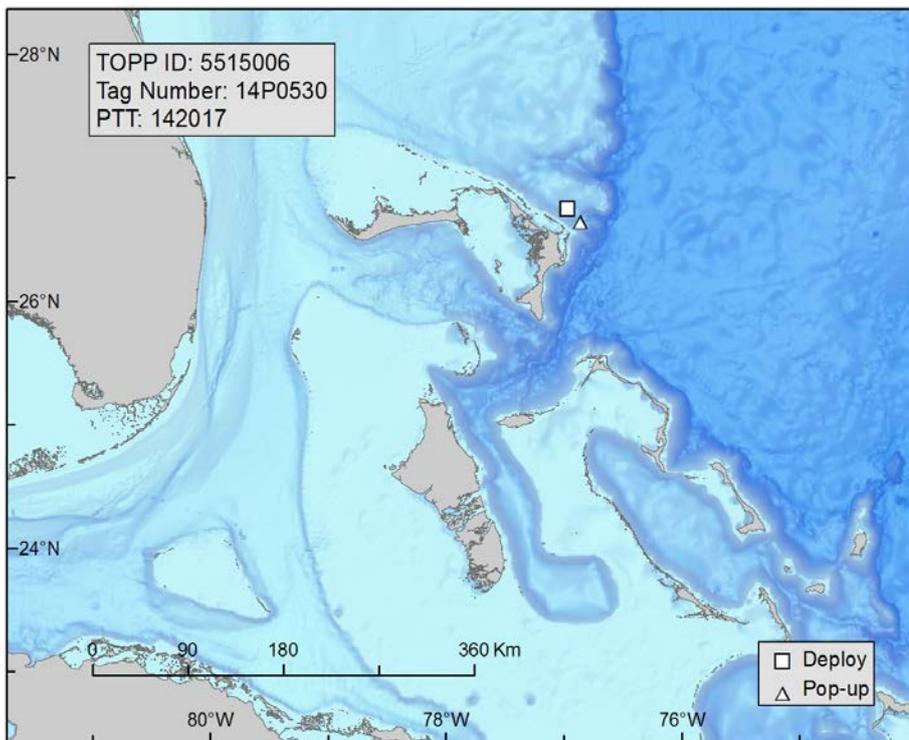
potential explanations include environmental differences between the two years, differences in the amount of localized prey available, or biological differences such as whether the fish were reproductively active.

We are very excited to add data from Atlantic blue marlin to the IGMR database and hope to increase this data set in the future. Our thanks and gratitude goes out to the tag sponsors, captains, anglers, crew, and participants in the 2015 Custom Shootout IGMR. These datasets help us to learn about billfish behavior in an effort to increase their conservation and protect the sport we love for future generations of fishing!

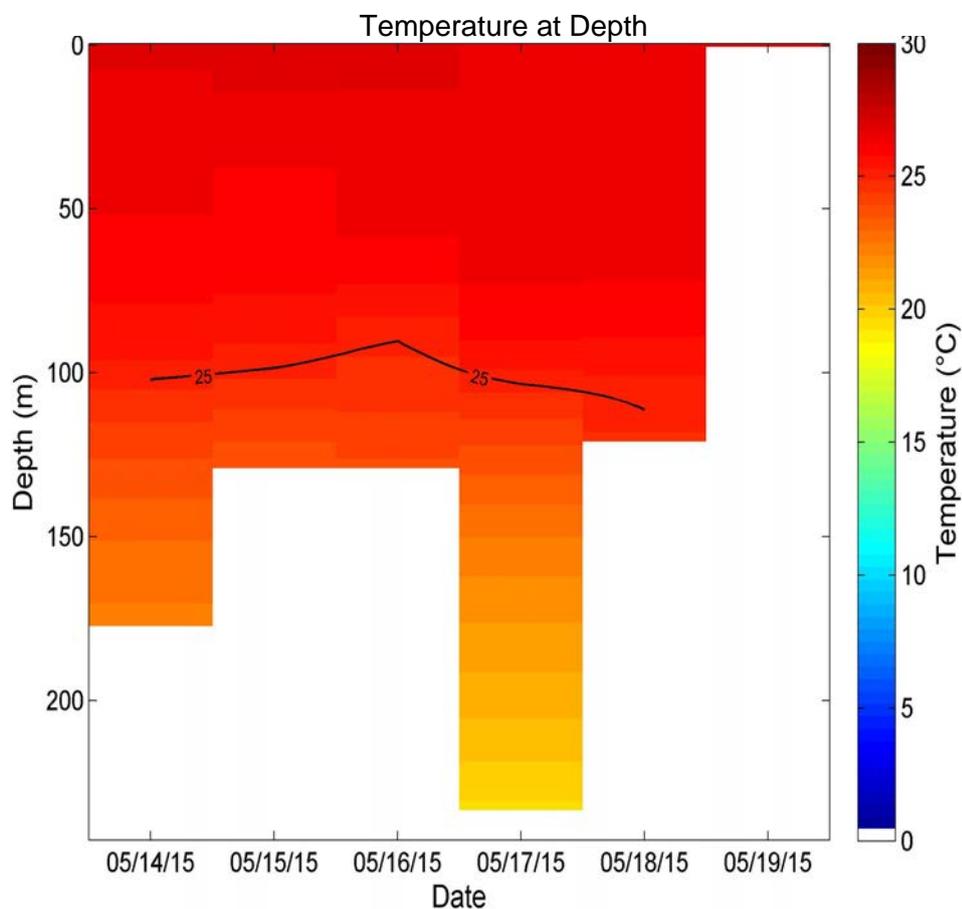
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Tag 14P0530

Fish 1

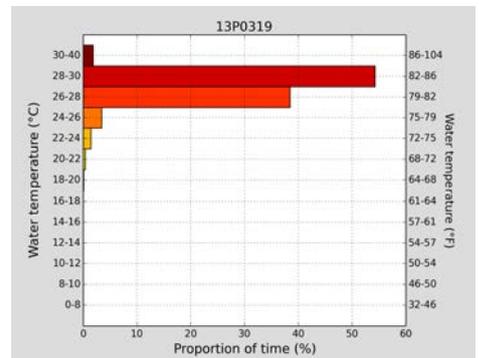
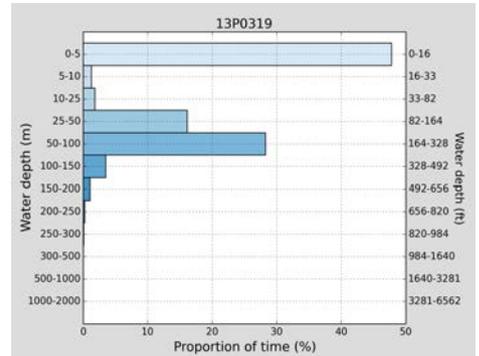
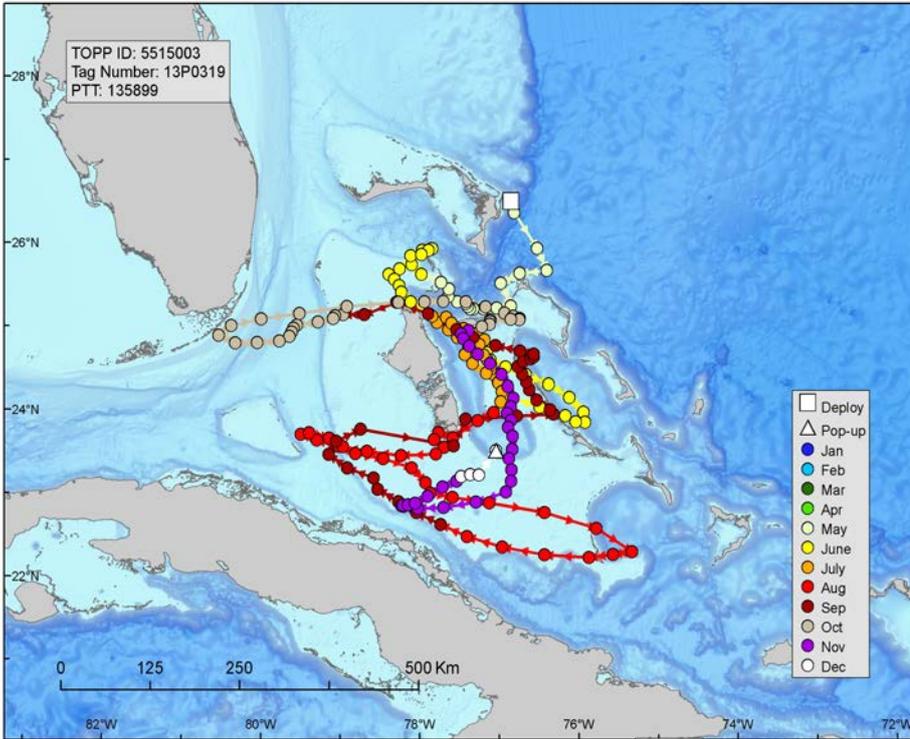


Tag number: 14P0530
 Sponsor: Jim Jensen
 Angler: Jim Jensen
 Tagger: Noah Beaman
 Boat: *Plane Simple*
 Species: Blue Marlin
 Estimated weight: 57 kg
 Deployed: 05/14/2015
 Reported: 05/19/2015
 Days at large: 5
 Distance traveled: 8 nm
 Maximum depth: 232 m
 Minimum temp: 19.6°C
 Maximum temp: 27.4°C

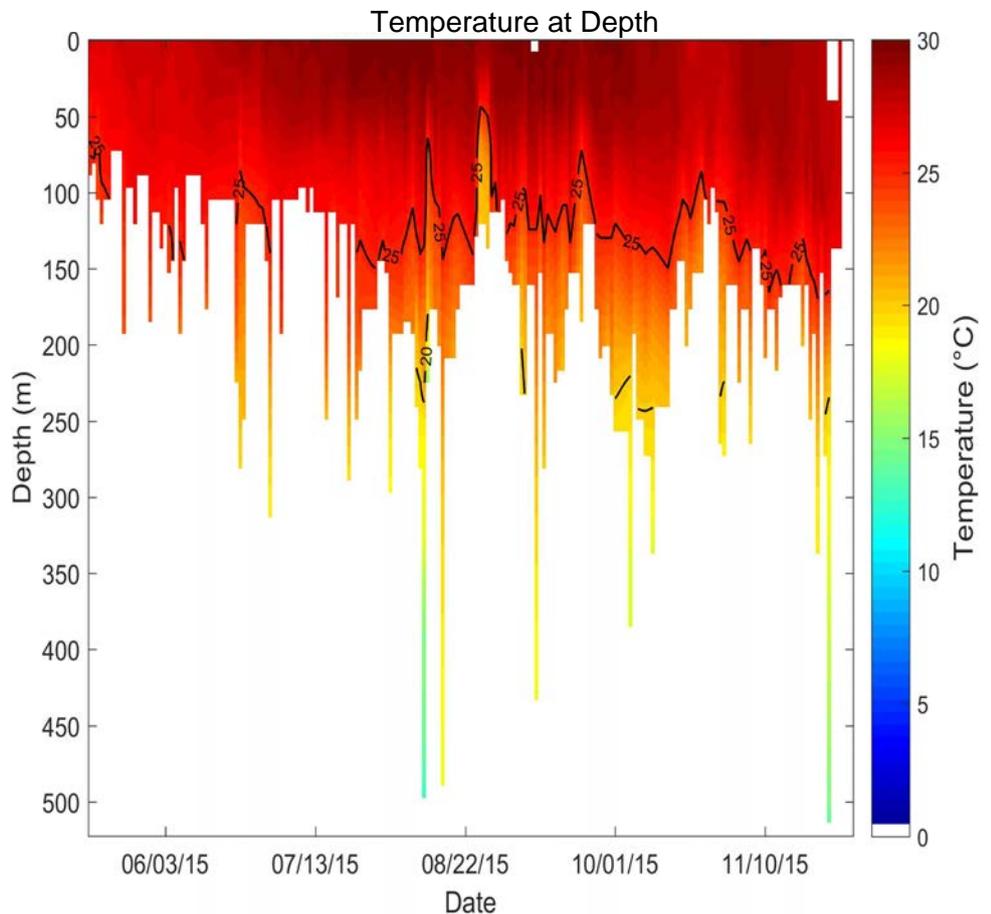


Tag 13P0319

Fish 2

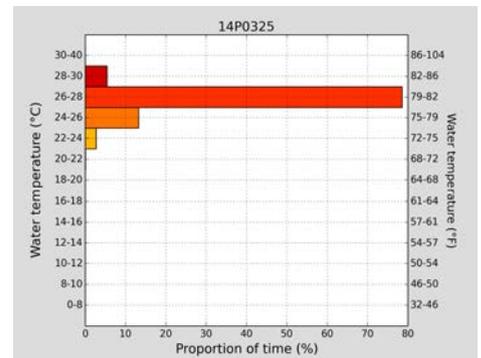
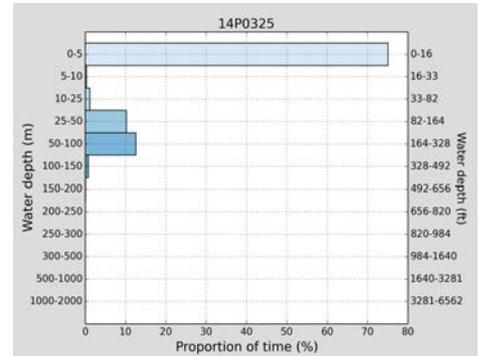
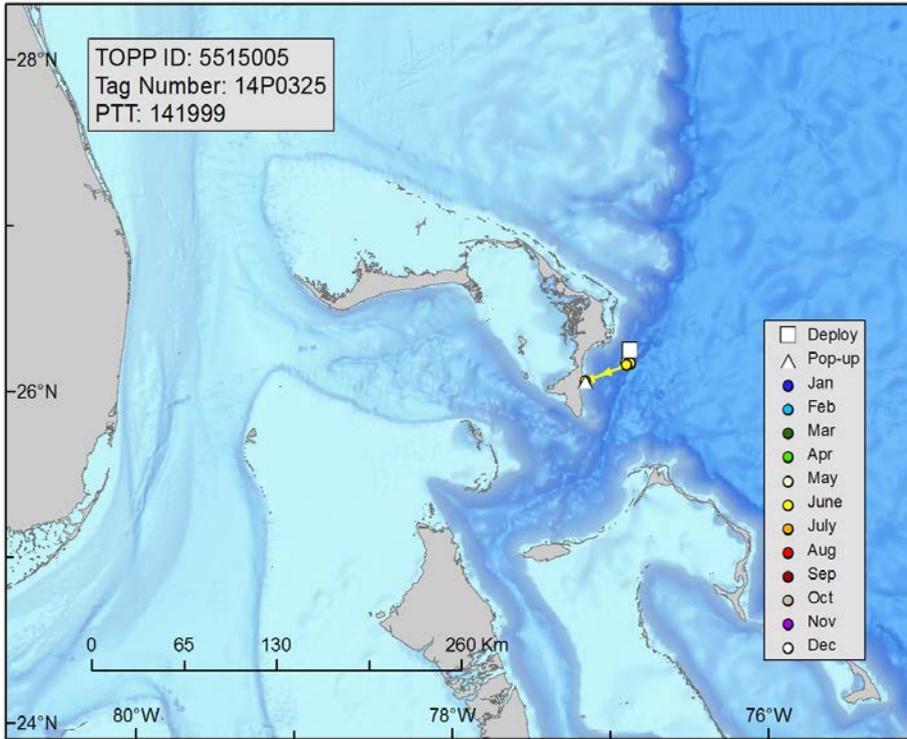


Tag number: 13P0319
 Sponsor: Todd Reaves
 Angler: Todd Reaves
 Tagger: Heath Brown
 Boat: *Soul Candy*
 Species: Blue Marlin
 Estimated weight: 45 kg
 Deployed: 05/14/2015
 Reported: 12/03/2015
 Days at large: 203
 Distance traveled: 180 nm
 Maximum depth: 512 m
 Minimum temp: 12.8°C
 Maximum temp: 32°C



Tag 14P0325

Fish 5



Tag number: 14P0325
 Sponsor: Roy W. Cronacher Jr.
 Angler: Roy W. Cronacher Jr.
 Tagger: Roy W. Cronacher Jr.
 Boat: *Gladiator*
 Species: Blue Marlin
 Estimated weight: 32 kg
 Deployed: 06/06/2015
 Reported: 06/13/2015
 Days at large: 7
 Distance traveled: 19 nm
 Maximum depth: 184 m
 Minimum temp: 21.2°C
 Maximum temp: 28.2°C

