



June 25, 2004

Mr. Joe H. Bell.

[REDACTED]
Statesboro, Georgia 30461

Dear Mr. Bell:

I wish to personally congratulate you on your exceptional catch of a 75 ³/₄ - pound king mackerel, which has been accepted as a Men's Georgia Saltwater Gamefish Record. Enclosed is a certificate that serves not only to recognize the size of the catch, but also the angler's skill and the sportsmanship displayed in the landing of a gamefish record.

Again, congratulations on your achievement, and thank you for your participation in Georgia's Saltwater Gamefish Records Program.

Sincerely,

Susan Shipman
Director

Enclosure

cc: Records Review Committee

APPLICATION FORM

STATE OF GEORGIA
SALTWATER GAMEFISH RECORDS ENTRY FORM
FOR
GAMEFISH RECORDS AND OUTSTANDING CATCHES

Read all angling rules Georgia Saltwater Gamefish Record requirements before completing and signing this application. This application must be accompanied by photographs as specified in the State record requirements.

1. DIVISION _____ Women's _____ X Men's

2. SPECIES (Common name): King Mackerel

3. MEASUREMENTS

Weight 75 lbs. 12 oz. 34.36 Kg

Fork Length¹: 63" inches Total length²: 65 1/2" inches Girth³: 28 1/2 inches

¹ Tip of snout to the inner fork of the tail. ² Tip of snout to end of tail - maximum length. ³ Distance around thickest part of body.

4. DATE OF CATCH: JUNE 13, 2004

5. PLACE OF CATCH (Be specific as possible): GRAYS REEF

6. METHOD OF CATCH (trolling, casting, fly fishing, etc.): TROLLING

7. ANGLER (print name as you wish it to appear on certificate): Joe H. Bell

Permanent address (include Zip code): _____

STATESBORO, GA 30461

Phone: _____

Fishing Club Affiliation: CCA, SKA Angler's Age (not required): 60

8. EQUIPMENT

Rod: Penn Power STICK Reel: Shamino Speed MASTER

(make & length)

(make)

Line (make & test): Cajun 30lb Name of lure or bait: LIVE - greeny

Terminal rig description (include hook number, types, & arrangement): #6 treble - 2

live leader

9. BOAT (if used)

Name: Playin' To Win

Captain's Name: Joe Bell

Signature: Joe Bell

Address: _____

STATESBORO, GA 30461

Georgia Saltwater Gamefish Records (June 1, 1986)
Application Form (continued)

10. SCALES

Location: MASCOT Pecan Co., Glennville, GA Hwy 311 S.
Date last certified: 10/17/2003
Certifying Agency: GA. Ag. Dept.
Weighmaster: KENNY TARVER
Signature: in Red Ink on enclosed Two way entry
Address: [REDACTED]
Glennville, GA 30427 Phone: [REDACTED]

11. WITNESSES

Witness to catch (other than angler or captain): Paul Durham
Phone: [REDACTED]
Witnesses to weighing (other than angler, captain, or weighmaster): Keith Delord
Phone: [REDACTED]

12. ADDITIONAL COMMENTS (fighting time, equipment used, additional witnesses, etc.):

30 min Fight Time, Rich Tutel [REDACTED]

13. AFFIDAVIT

I, the undersigned, hereby take oath and attest that the fish described in this application was hooked, fought, and brought to gaff by me without assistance from anyone, except as specifically provided in the regulations, and that it was caught in accordance with Georgia Saltwater Gamefish Records angling rules. I further declare that all information in this application is true and correct to the best of my knowledge.

Signature: [Signature]
Date: June 17, 2004

When completely filled out and signed, mail this application with photos by quickest means to:

Saltwater Gamefish Records Program
Coastal Resources Division
Georgia Department of Natural Resources
One Conservation Way, Suite 300
Brunswick, Georgia 31520 - 8687
(912) 264 - 7218

**GEORGIA SALTWATER GAMEFISH RECORDS PROGRAM
REVIEW COMMITTEE**

DATE: 6/23/04

SPECIES: King Mackerel

Please find attached for your review, comment, and approval/disapproval an application for consideration as a Georgia Saltwater Gamefish Record, and/or Outstanding Catch. **Return when complete to Henry Ansley.**

DIVISION: WOMEN'S MEN'S X

CURRENT RECORD: 63 LBS. 8 OZ.

WEIGHT NEEDED: 64 LBS. 0 OZ.

ENTRY WEIGHT: 75 LBS. 12 OZ.

DATE ENTRY RECEIVED: 6/22/04

notes

Please find attached for your review an entry for a saltwater record & photos. As background, the existing record had a 61" FL, 64" TL, & 26" girth. Please return to me as soon as possible (news release, if approved). Do not forward to Pat - on leave.

REVIEW COMMITTEE	APPROVED <u>NEW</u> RECORD	APPROVED <u>TIE</u> RECORD	DISAPPROVED RECORD <small>(explain below & back)</small>	APPROVED Outstanding Catch	DISAPPROVED Outstanding Catch <small>(explain below & back)</small>
Susan Shipman, Director Coastal Resources Division	<u>SS</u> <u>6/23/04</u>				
Spud Woodward, Asst. Director Coastal Resources Division	<u>SW</u> <u>6/23/04</u>				
Patrick Geer, Leader Commercial Fisheries Program	 	 	 	 	
John Pafford, Leader Recreational Fisheries Program	<u>JP</u> <u>6/24/04</u>				
Henry Ansley, Leader OCS Program	<u>HA</u> <u>6/23/04</u>				

Jason Bell (left) and father Joe hold the 75-pound, 12-ounce king mackerel they caught June 13. The Georgia state record is 63 pounds, 8 ounces.

The new kings of Georgia

Mackerel swallows state mark

By JOE JULAVITS
Times-Union outdoors editor

It was a Sunday night at Half Moon Marina in Midway, and iced down in the fish box aboard Joe Bell's boat was a possible state-record king mackerel. Only problem was, there wasn't a certified scale anywhere to be found, and the mega-king was slowly but surely losing weight.

The fish had bottomed out a 50-pound scale on Bell's boat, and the marina's scale

was out of commission.

"We called Wal-Mart, but their scale only went up to 50 pounds," Bell said. "We were calling shrimp companies . . . but we couldn't find anyone home."

Then someone mentioned the Mascot Pecan company in Glennville, about 50 miles west of the marina. The owners, Tim and Kenny Tarver, were contacted and agreed to open up the business and weigh the king.

"We took the boat, truck and everything and drove to Glennville," Bell said. "There were about 20 people there waiting with cameras."

At around 9:30 p.m., on the certified scale at the pecan plant, Bell's king weighed 75 pounds, 12 ounces — one of the largest kings to be caught along the East Coast in years.

Bell has submitted the necessary record-catch paperwork to the state. If his king passes muster, as is expected, it would annihilate the present Georgia state record of 63 pounds, 8 ounces set in 1990.

"We knew what the old record was," said Bell, who lives in Statesboro. "I was numb for a couple of days."

"I've gotten a bunch of calls, congratulations from people I don't even know."

The catch sent a buzz through the Northeast Florida-Southeast Georgia offshore trolling community. Earlier this year, a 71.89-pound king caught off Key West during a Southern Kingfish Association tournament created a similar stir. That king turned out to be an SKA record for a fish caught

during a tournament.

Bell, who competes in the Georgia division of the SKA, didn't catch his king during a tournament. He and his son, Jason, had planned to take their Playin' To Win boat to the Gulf Stream on Sunday, June 13, but the ocean was rough. So they decided to troll closer in, around Gray's Reef, about 16 miles off Sapelo Island on the Georgia coast.

"We were just kind of out having a good time," said Bell, who won Senior Angler (over 55) honors in the SKA's Georgia division last year. "We were trying to get something to eat."

The Bells caught a couple of small kings, and then, as Joe was letting out another threadfin herring bait with his reel in freespool, the big

king struck. Bell was using conventional kingfish tackle — Shimano Speedmaster reel, Penn rod, 20-pound-test line and a pair of No. 6 treble hooks.

"I let her run quite a bit, backed off the drag, then flipped it in gear," Bell said. "She ran like a king but never came up and circled. I thought I had a big shark or maybe a wahoo."

After a period of give and take, the fish finally showed itself.

"When she finally came up, I said, 'That's the biggest king I've ever seen.'" Bell said.

After the 30-minute fight, Jason gaffed the king, and it took both anglers to lift it

Mackerel: Fish might have lost about 2 po

Continued from C-18

65 inches long and sporting a girth of 28½ inches, the king wouldn't fit in either of the kingfish tournament bags that Bell carries on the boat. At that point, Bell knew he had captured a huge king, but he wasn't thinking in terms of a state record. So Bell and his son placed the king in the boat's fish locker and went back to trolling.

At around 6 p.m., they idled into Half Moon Marina.

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At around 6 p.m., they idled
into Half Moon Marina.

"I never thought about a state
record till we got back to the
dock," Bell said. "Everybody
there went bananas, and that's
when it sunk in.

"We had some people leave a
wedding to come see it."

Then began the frustrating
effort to locate a certified scale.

"Somebody said it might have
lost a pound or two," Bell said.

Spud Woodward, a marine
biologist with the Georgia
Department of Natural
Resources in Brunswick and a
tournament kingfisherman
himself, theorized it was proba-
bly a combination of factors
that produced such a heavy-
weight specimen.

"We're seeing the manifesta-
tion of good reproduction and
low mortality on that year's

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Joe Bell

on his big catch

class," Woodward said. "It's cer-
tainly exciting."

Bell's previous largest kingfish
was a 37-pounder caught in the
Golden Isles tournament last
year. Had he considered what
might have been had he caught
the potential state record in a
tournament?

"Yeah, I thought about it. I
wish..." Bell said.

"I've been told [the new
record] might not be broken in
my lifetime, but you never
know. It's kind of nice to have
it."

State of Georgia Saltwater Gamefish Record



Imry Perdue

GOVERNOR State of Georgia

Louise Santh

COMMISSIONER Department of Natural Resources

Zusan Shepman

DIRECTOR Coastal Resources Division

Coastal Resources Division

Georgia Department of Natural Resources

JOE H. BELL

holds the

Mens Record

for a

KING MACKEREL

Scomberomorus cavalla

Lbs. 75 Oz. 12

Kg. 34.36

Date: JUNE, 2004



