

# After success of "Vanishing Ocean City", author releases "Ghosts in the Surf" with many memories of fishing in OC.

Local author, Hunter "Bunk" Mann released his second book of Ocean City memories,



"Ghosts in the Surf". The book is outstanding and contains memories and pictures of Ocean City from the Post War Years through today and includes many related to fishing in Ocean City. Following is the chapter on the White Marlin Open. Enjoy!



## GHOSTS IN THE SURF

More Memories From Ocean City, Maryland

BY HUNTER "BUNK" MANN

The White Marlin Open is the world's largest and richest billfish tournament. Now in its 45th year, it brings anglers from all over the world to participate for prize money; in 2018, over five million dollars were awarded in several different classifications. In addition to the namesake white marlin, anglers can compete in categories such as blue marlin, tuna, wahoo, shark, and mahi-mahi.

(dolphin fish).

The tournament began in 1974 with 20,000 dollars in prize money and a top award of 5,000 dollars. That year 57 boats with 150 anglers took the challenge. Founded and still overseen by local resident Jim Motsko and his family, the White Marlin Open has grown to become one of the premier challenge. Founded and still overseen by local resident Jim Motsko and his family, the White Marlin Open has grown to become one of the premier

events of the summer season. It definitely contributes to Ocean City's title as "The White Marlin Capital of the World." Held the first week of August each year, the tournament brings thousands of visitors to town. Many of them gather at the Inlet in the pre-dawn darkness to watch the boats head out to sea. tournament brings thousands of visitors to town. Many of them gather at the Inlet in the pre-dawn darkness to watch the boats head out to sea. Hundreds of others assemble at the weigh-in area on Harbour Island to watch each afternoon as potential trophy fish are hauled up on the scales. The anticipation of seeing a potential million-dollar winner can leave memories that few are unlikely ever to forget.

The White Marlin Open is truly an "Open;" there are no age, sex, or skill level restrictions. In 1993 the first-place white marlin was caught by a 14-year-old boy, and in 2016 the winning angler won over \$1.5 million for his catch; the first white marlin that he had ever caught. Records are kept and have become part of the mystique of the competition. The largest white marlin weighed was caught by Steve Bass in 1980 and weighed 99 pounds; the biggest fish ever caught during the tournament was a 1062-pound blue marlin caught in 2009 by angler Robert Farris. The most money awarded for a single

fish was \$2,584,260 dollars which was won in 2018 for the 83-pound white marlin caught by Pascual Jimenez of Puerto Aventuras, Mexico.

The White Marlin Open has become one of Ocean City's most famous and popular events. Thousands of people look forward to it each year, and many even plan their vacation around it. With the continued growth of the tournament and the national publicity it brings to Maryland's seaside resort there is little doubt that Ocean City will retain the title of "The White Marlin Capital of the World" for many years to come.

*"The White Marlin Open began in 1974 with 57 boats entered in the tournament and a top prize of \$20,000 dollars. In 2018 we had 382 boats entered and paid out over \$5,450,000 dollars in prize money. It's entered in the tournament and a top prize of \$20,000 dollars. In 2018 we had 382 boats entered and paid out over \$5,450,000 dollars in prize money. It's grown a lot since the beginning."*

- Jim Motsko

*"The White Marlin Open is the biggest game fishing tournament in the world and brings people from all over to Ocean City, MD. It's worth a lot to the town and is the biggest single event in Ocean City every year."*

- Steve Pappas

*"Each boat chooses which day they plan to fish. The tournament runs five days, and they can fish any three of the five days. A lot of time and effort goes into checking weather conditions because it might be beautiful in Ocean City but 75 miles of offshore where the fishing actually takes place it can be four to six-foot seas and raining."*

- Mike Hannon

*"The biggest year at the White Marlin Open we had 449 boats entered. We were going crazy as we had prepared for 400 boats at the most and it looked like we were going to run out of*