

A lot of people ask what I do in my spare time, and when I respond with something along the lines of “chase blue marlin out beyond the edge of the continental shelf...” I might just as well have said that I climb Everest. Everyone has heard of big game fishing, but very few people ever expect to do it, and even less people have spent time catching that most prized game fish, the blue marlin.

And yet, right here off the Coffs Coast are some of the best blue marlin fishing grounds in Australia.

In any normal year - which sadly excludes the horrible 2016/17 season - a day spent cruising the cobalt blue water on the deep edge of the continental shelf will almost certainly treat anglers to the sight of a blue marlin exploding in a burst of white water and blue neon stripes to hammer a lure towed in the wake of a boat.



*A blue marlin in full flight behind a game boat - Photo courtesy Sea Fly Sportfishing*

What happens after that will depend on skipper, crew, the marlin itself, and more than a small amount of good luck, but even if the sight of that huge fish coming out of the water like a Polaris missile only a few metres behind the boat with the lure in its jaws is as close as you ever get, it's probably something that will stay with you as long as you live.

And yet, game fishing clubs are struggling with a lack of new members, and there are usually more game boats tied up in the marina for lack of keen crew than there are out on the water on any given weekend day in summer.

It boils down to the fact that while this great open ocean sport makes for awe-inspiring armchair video viewing, and reading the marlin fishing books of Zane Grey, Ernest Hemingway, and Steve Campbell is always motivating, there's one more step that needs to be taken. It's only by going out on a game fishing charter or joining a game fishing club that encourages new members and gives them a chance to learn about this sensational sport that would-be anglers will discover what that blue water world just over the horizon is really like.