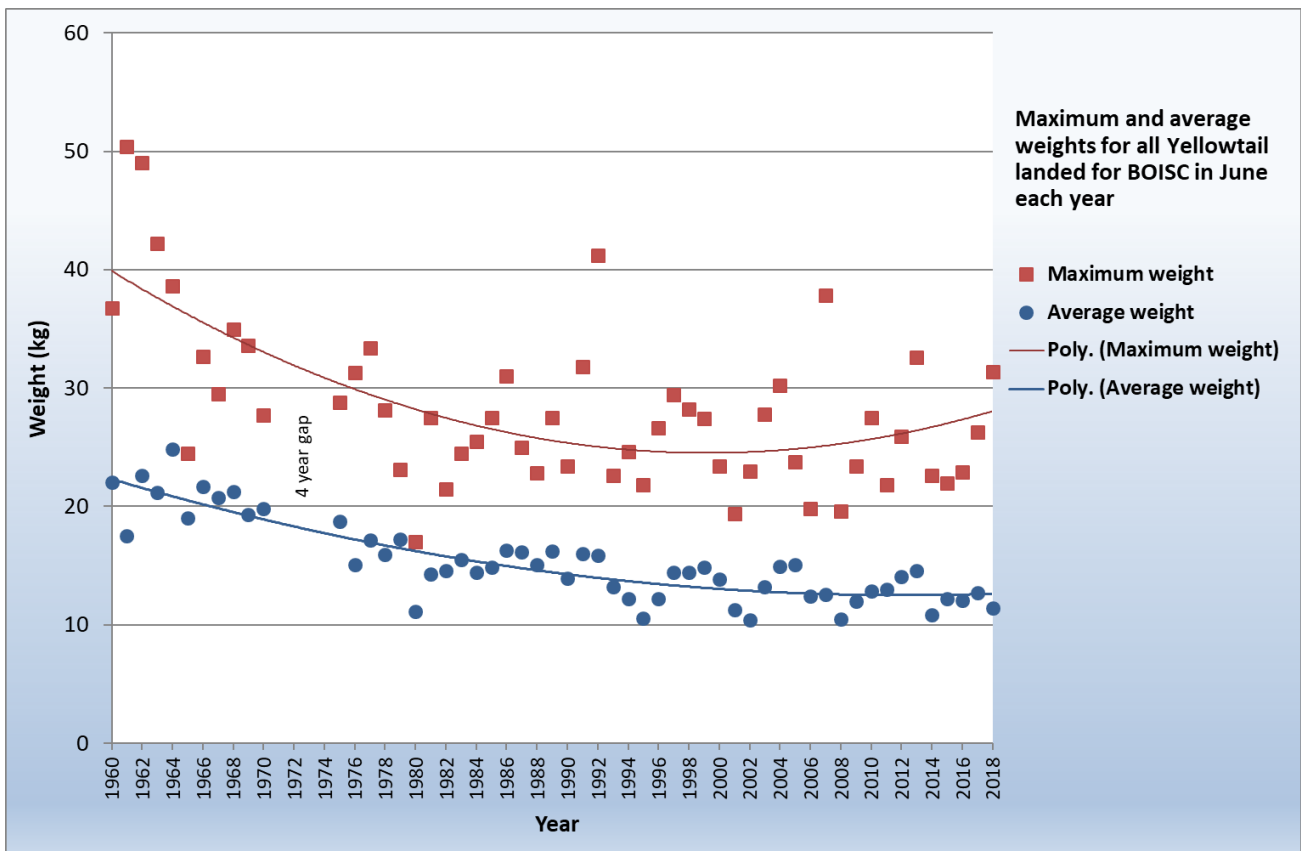


## Yellowtail Kingfish Monitoring Report

The catch records kept by the Bay of Islands Swordfish Club go back to the 1920s. They include individual fish weights that can be summarised in various ways. Figure 1 below shows the average weight kingfish caught in June and the heaviest yellowtail kingfish that month since 1960. There were definitely some large fish caught in the early years, including a 50.4 kg yellowtail in 1961, but most of those fish were caught on heavier line and would have to exceed line weight to qualify for the club. So, the overall trend in average weight (blue line) will be affected by changes in gear and which fish anglers select to weigh.

There appears to be a regular cycle in average weight with a low point about 10 kg, every 6 or 7 years since 1995. Some catches from those years may have been affected by bad weather which limited fishing areas, but there is also evidence of a pulse of small fish entering the fishery followed by increases in average weight over the following years. This is what is expected following a particularly successful spawning year and good survival of young fish. The ageing work undertaken in 2015 showed kingfish entering the East Northland fishery as 4 or 5 year olds, with few fish over 11 years old. This fits with a 6 to 7 year cycle, but maximum age is about 30 years.



**Figure 1: The heaviest and average weight of yellowtail kingfish caught in June from the Bay of Islands Swordfish Club records by year since 1960. The lines show the overall trend across years.**

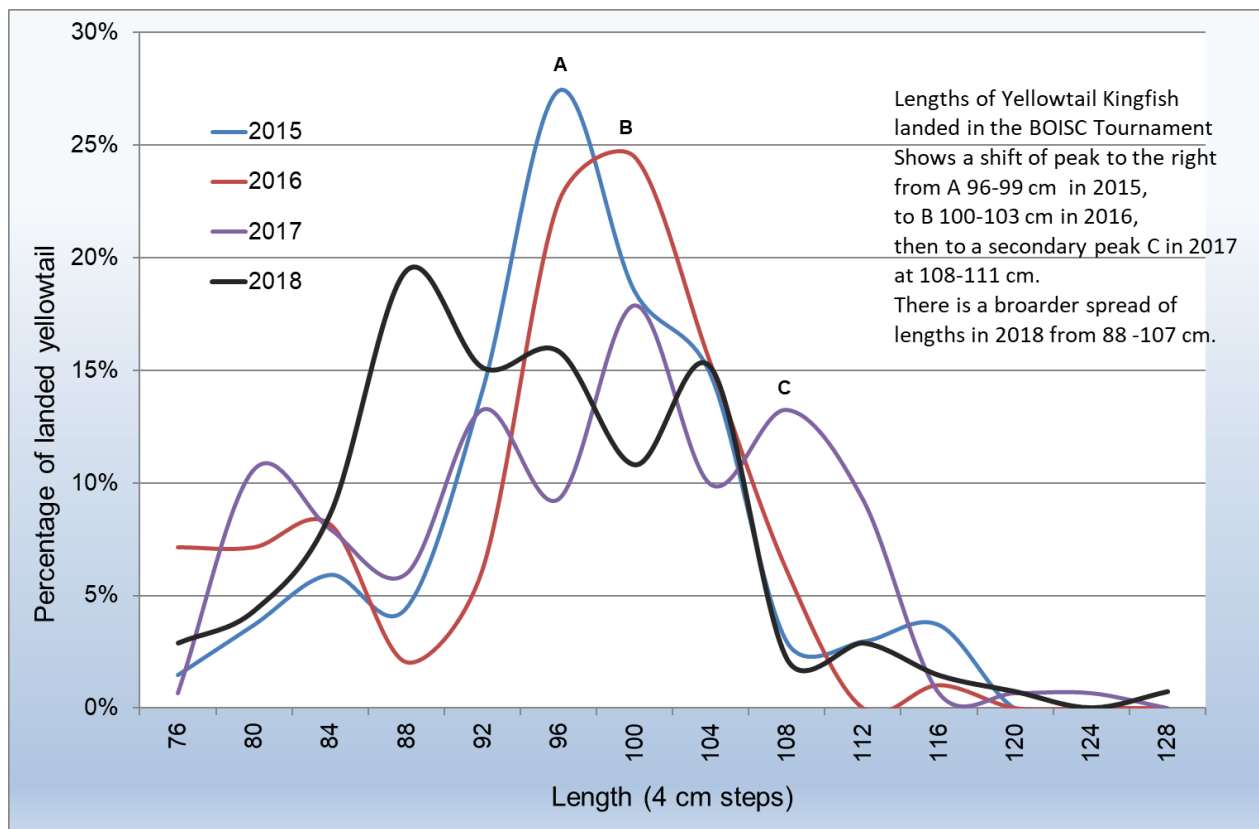
## Results from 2018 Bay of Islands Yellowtail Tournament catch sampling

In 2018 there were 139 yellowtail kingfish measured at the BOI International Yellowtail Tournament. Again this is a large enough sample to compare with previous years.

The average length of yellowtail in 2018 was 96 cm, 2 cm smaller than 2017, with a good numbers of fish around 90 cm bringing the average down.

The longest and heaviest fish was 130 cm weighing 31.4 kg, caught on Altezza.

In 2018 there was a broad spread of lengths from 88 cm to 107 cm (black line) while the peak in the plot from 2015 (blue line) around 96 cm moved to 108 cm by 2017 (Figure 1). This cohort of fish did not show up in the Tournament lengths in 2018, but they could return.



**Figure 2. The length distribution of yellowtail kingfish measured during the BOI International Yellowtail Tournament by year. Does not include fish tagged and released.**

### Become a Legend

The on-going collection of kingfish lengths is supported by the Bay of Islands Swordfish Club, New Zealand Sport Fishing Council, and LegaSea to enable recreational fishers to gather useful information to help monitor kingfish stocks.

Become a LegaSea Legend now and help maintain our world class yellowtail kingfish fishery

[www.legasea.co.nz/legend](http://www.legasea.co.nz/legend)

*Thank-you for your support.*