

## The 50-marlin milestone

**WHEN** Mike Rowe planned his recent trip to fish for baby black marlin aboard *Reel Chase* off Townsville, the idea of achieving his 50th marlin capture was little more than a thought at the back of his mind.

Mike, who hails from Sydney, began marlin fishing in the mid-1980s and has been a member of Port Hacking GFC since the mid-1990s. Four years ago, he achieved a much sought after Grand Slam, releasing each of the three local marlin species – a black, blue and striped marlin – in the one day with Capt Ross Hunter at Port Stephens.



*Mike Rowe, centre, about to release his 50th marlin.*

After a quiet first day (where he released just one fish), Mike's count

stood at 46 and the milestone looked out of reach. The second

day started slowly, but suddenly, around 10am, the switch was flicked and Mike released three small blacks in quick succession.

Scott Taunton, who had been with Mike for his very first marlin (as well as a number of his subsequent ones, as either deckie or skipper), was showing some nerves as another frisky black was switch-baited to a livey, but failed to hook-up. Then, finally, another shot, and Mike was on!

After the fish was tagged, he came out of the water for a quick photo and kiss before being sent on his way with some new jewellery. ■

**– Kelly Dalling**