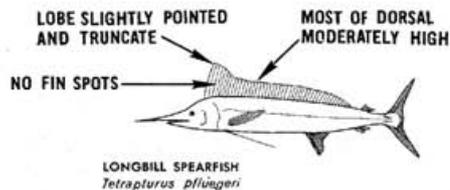
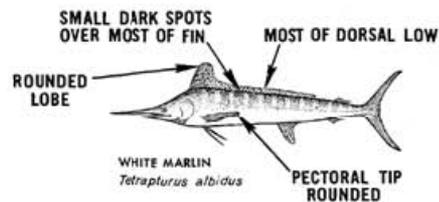
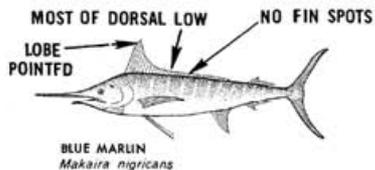
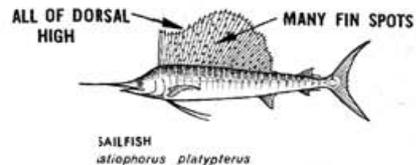
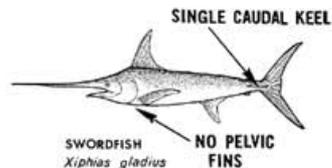


Southeast Fisheries Science Center  
Pelagic Observer Program

Billfish Identification

# BILLFISHES OFF THE ATLANTIC U.S.

THESE CHARACTERS ARE FOR FISH LARGER THAN  
15 to 20 LBS. (SMALLER BILLFISH MAY DIFFER)

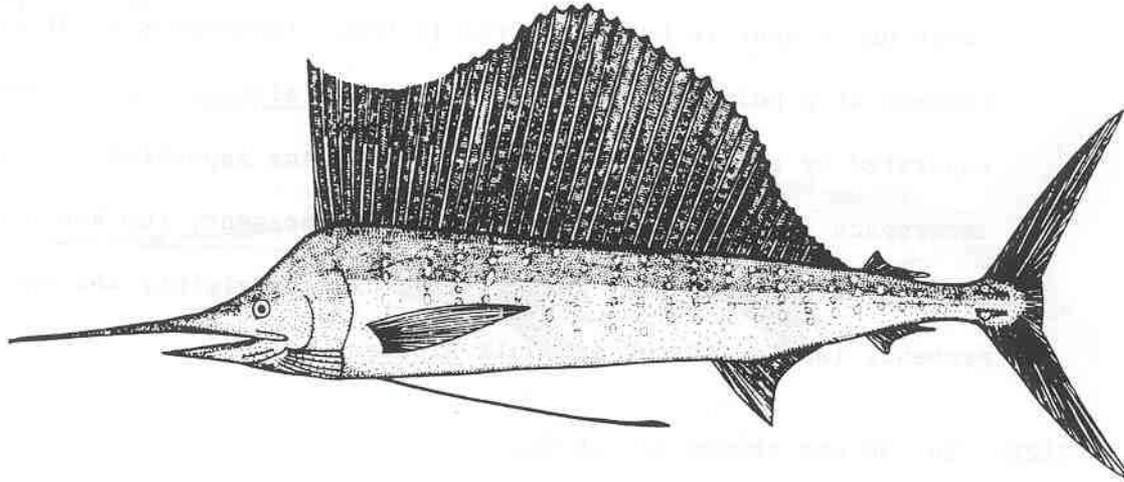


PAIRED CAUDAL KEELS ON EACH SIDE OF TAIL AND PELVIC FINS  
PRESENT ON ALL BILLFISH EXCEPT SWORDFISH

FIGURE 1

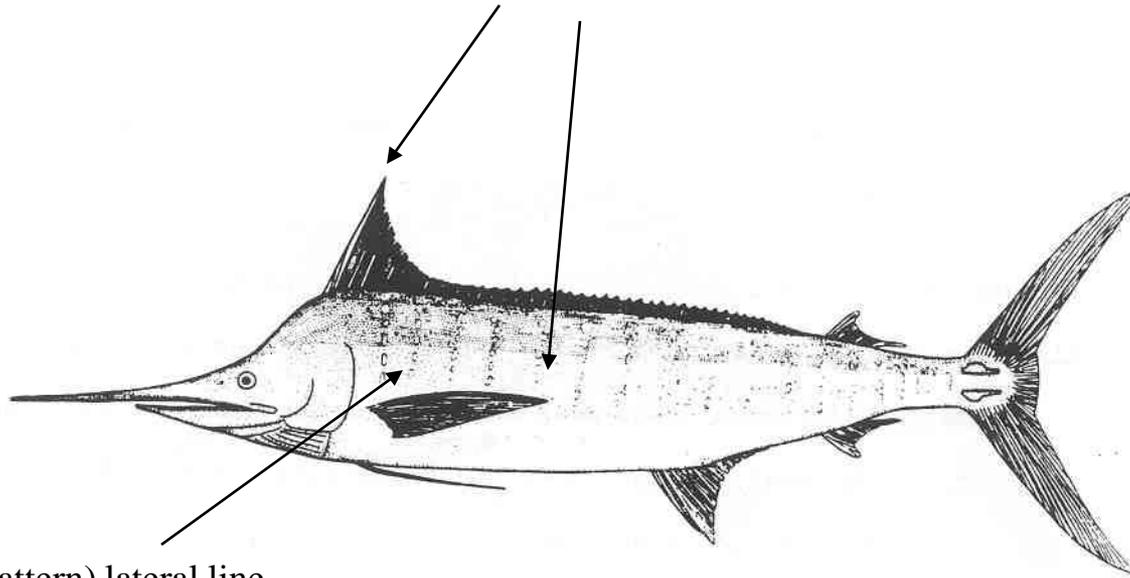
# SAILFISH

High, sail-like dorsal with dark spots, may be folded back



# BLUE MARLIN

Dorsal and pectoral fins pointed

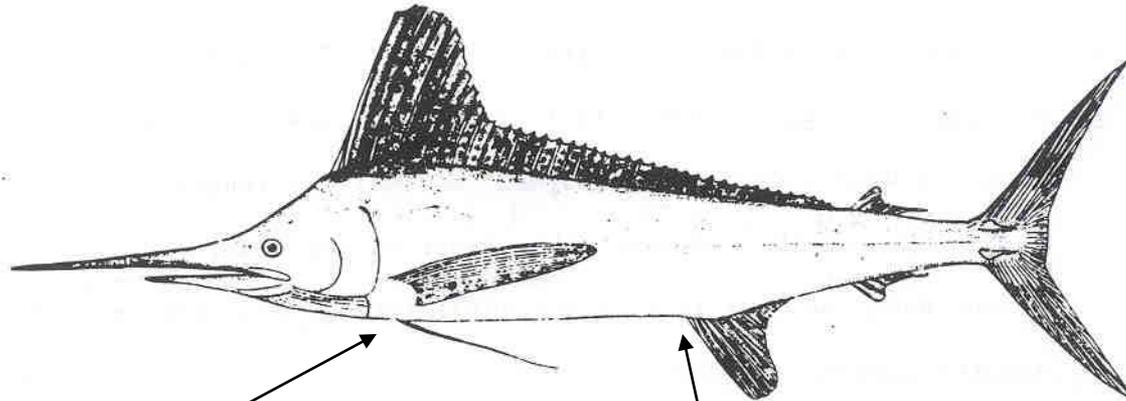


Reticulate (chain pattern) lateral line

Body robust, may grow very large

# WHITE MARLIN

Dorsal fin rounded with many dark spots. Posterior portion of dorsal fin relatively close to body.

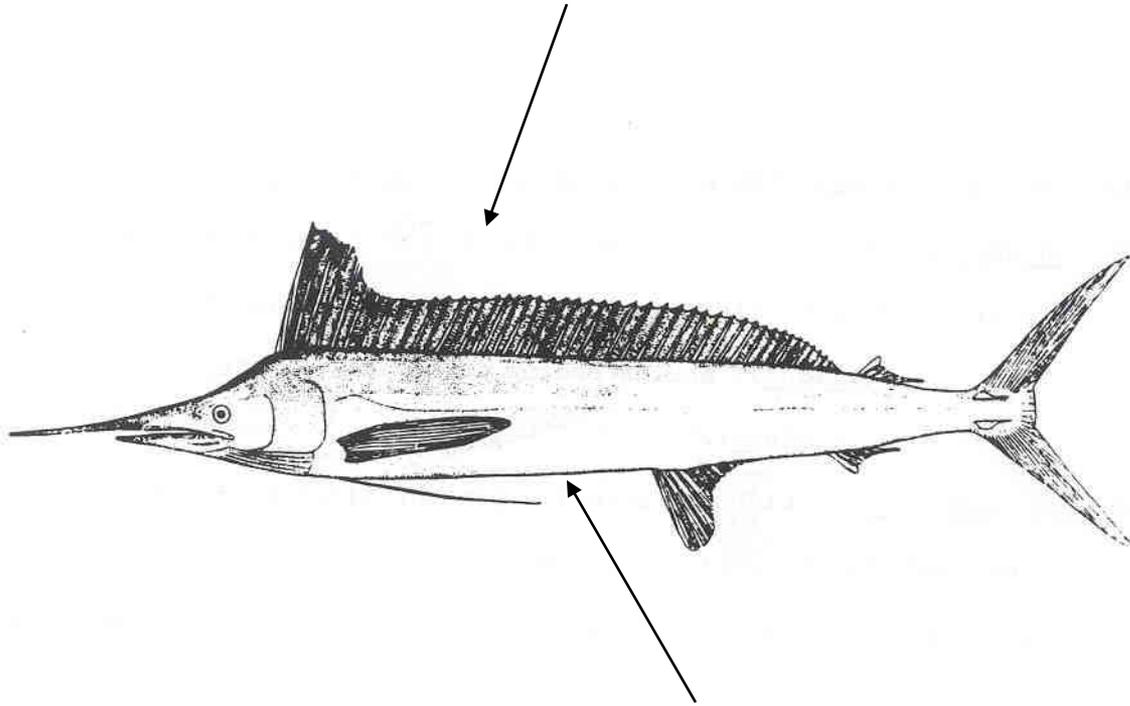


Pectoral fins rounded

Anal opening very close to anal fin

# LONGBILL SPEARFISH

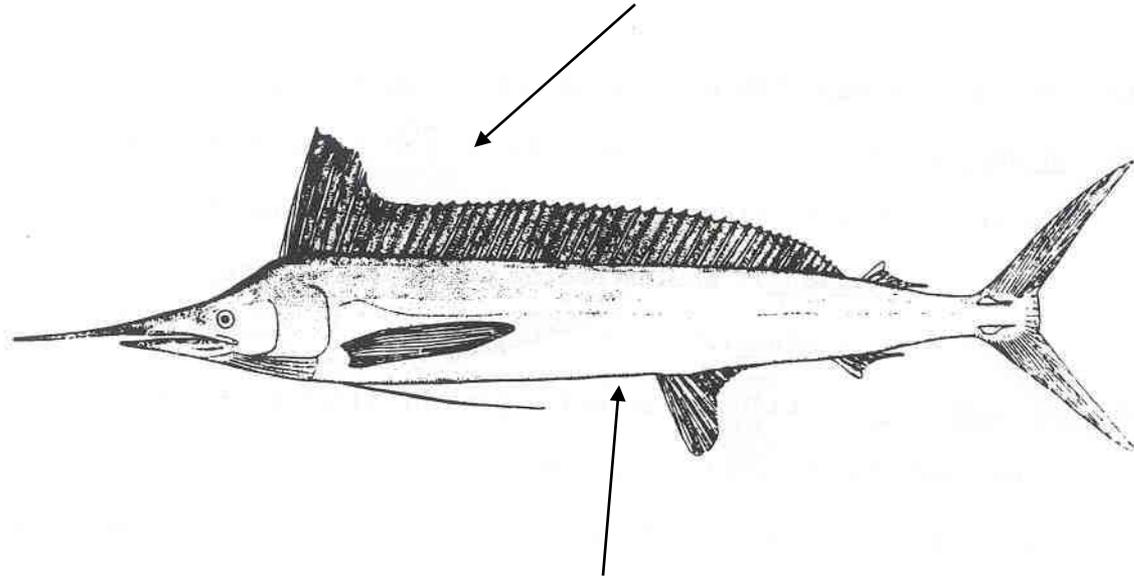
No spots on dorsal fin. Posterior portion relatively high off body.



Anal opening about the same distance as anal fin height

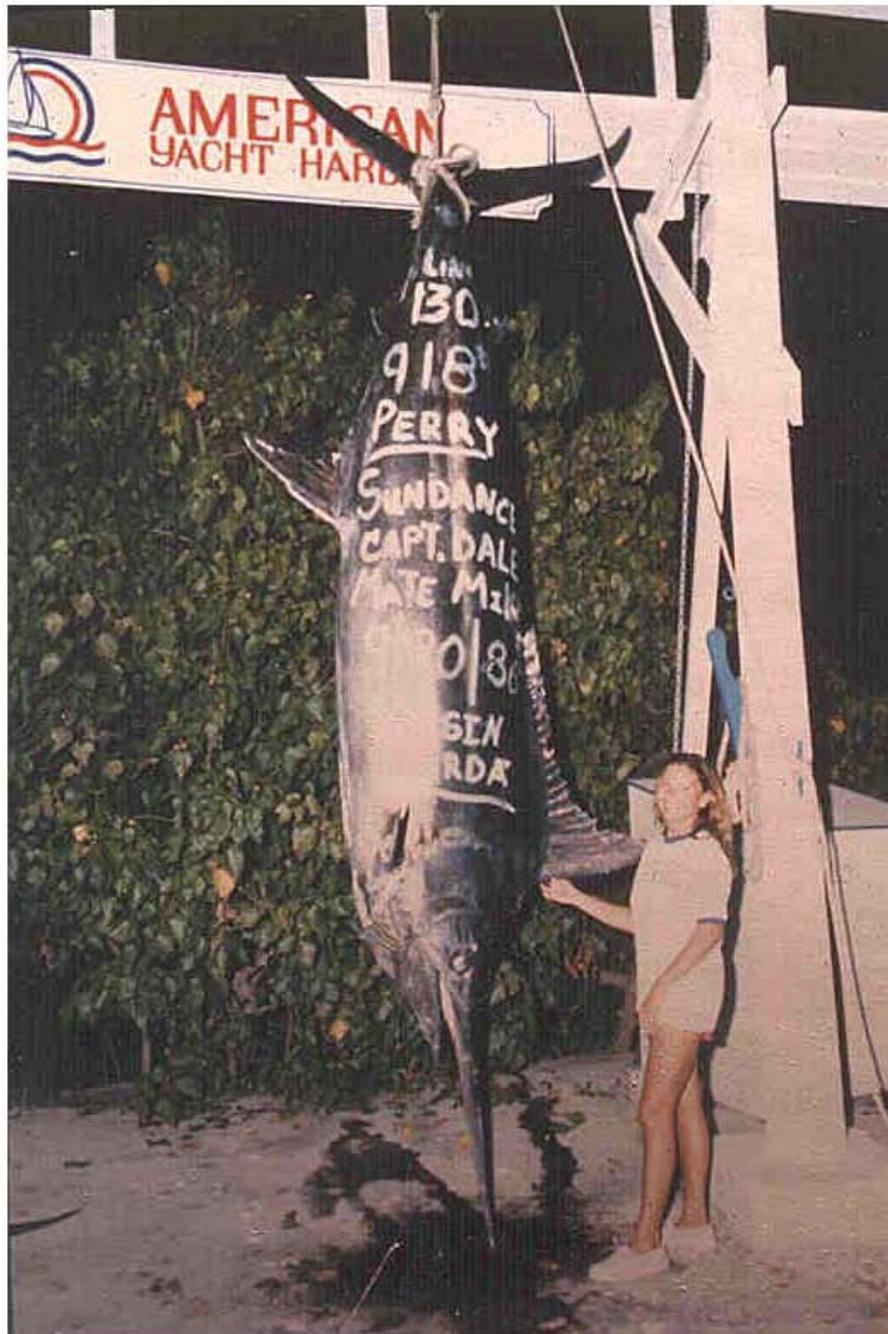
# ROUNDSCALE SPEARFISH

No spots on dorsal fin. Posterior portion relatively high off body.



Anal opening about half the distance of anal fin height



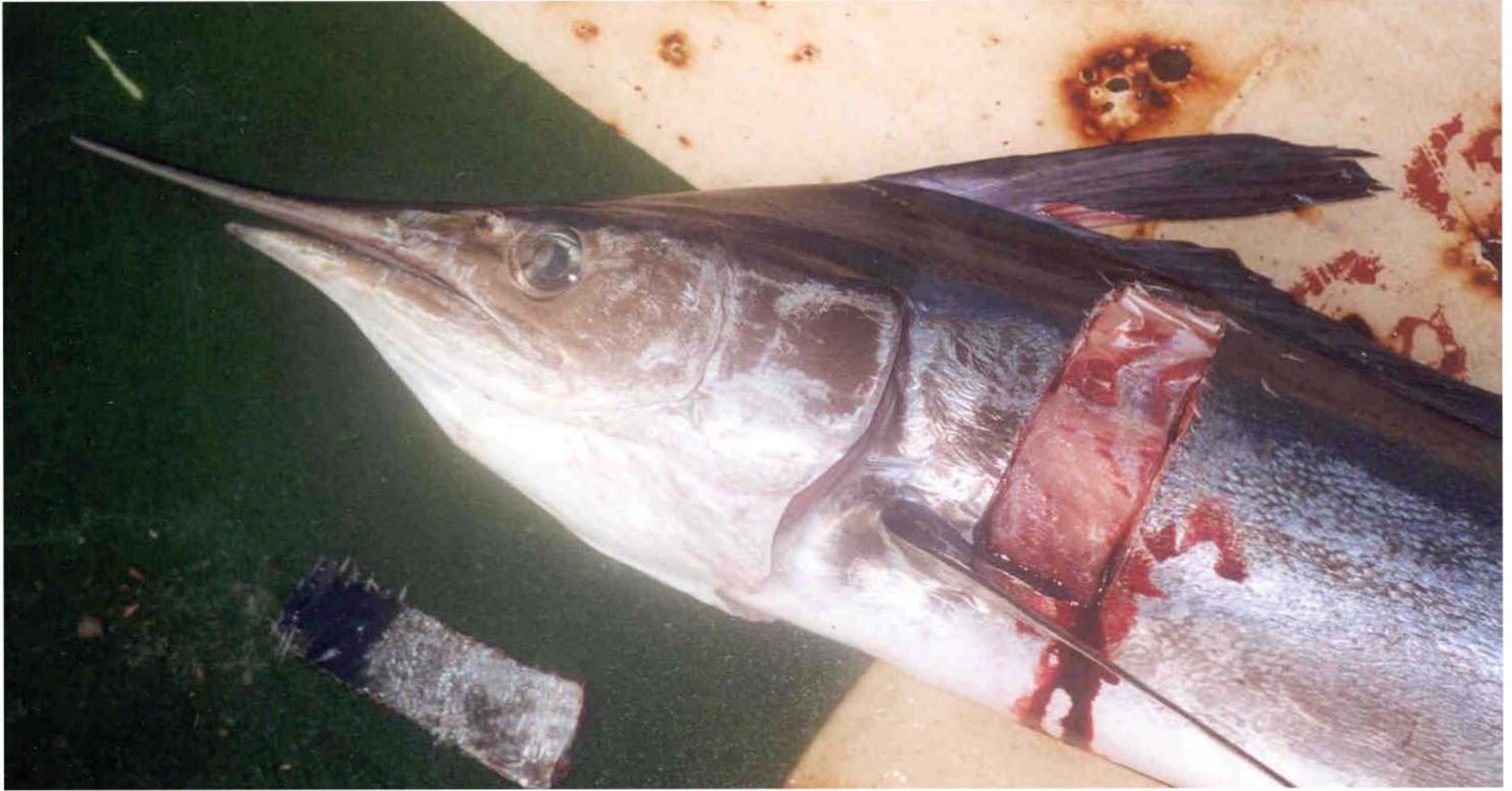












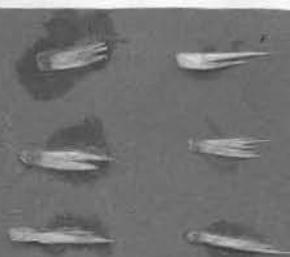
T.

ALBIDUS



T.

PFLUEGERI



T.

GEORGETI



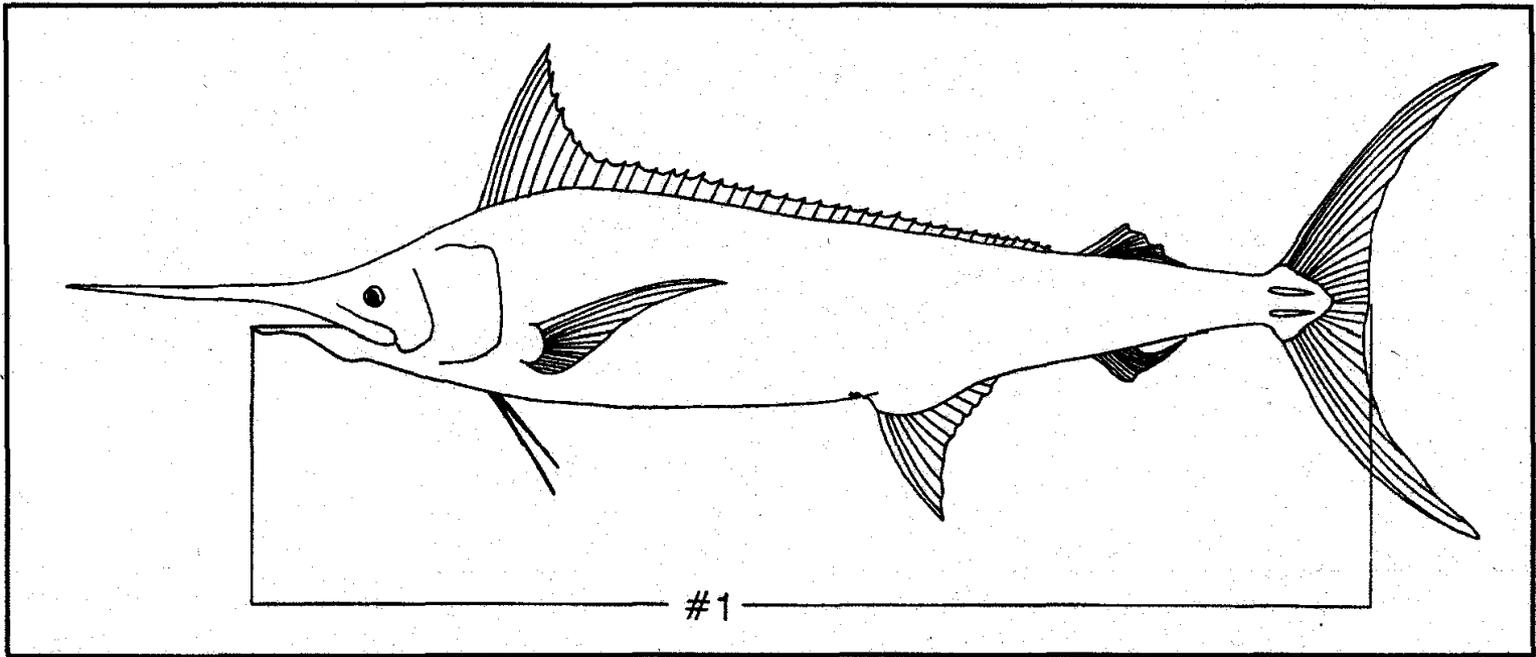
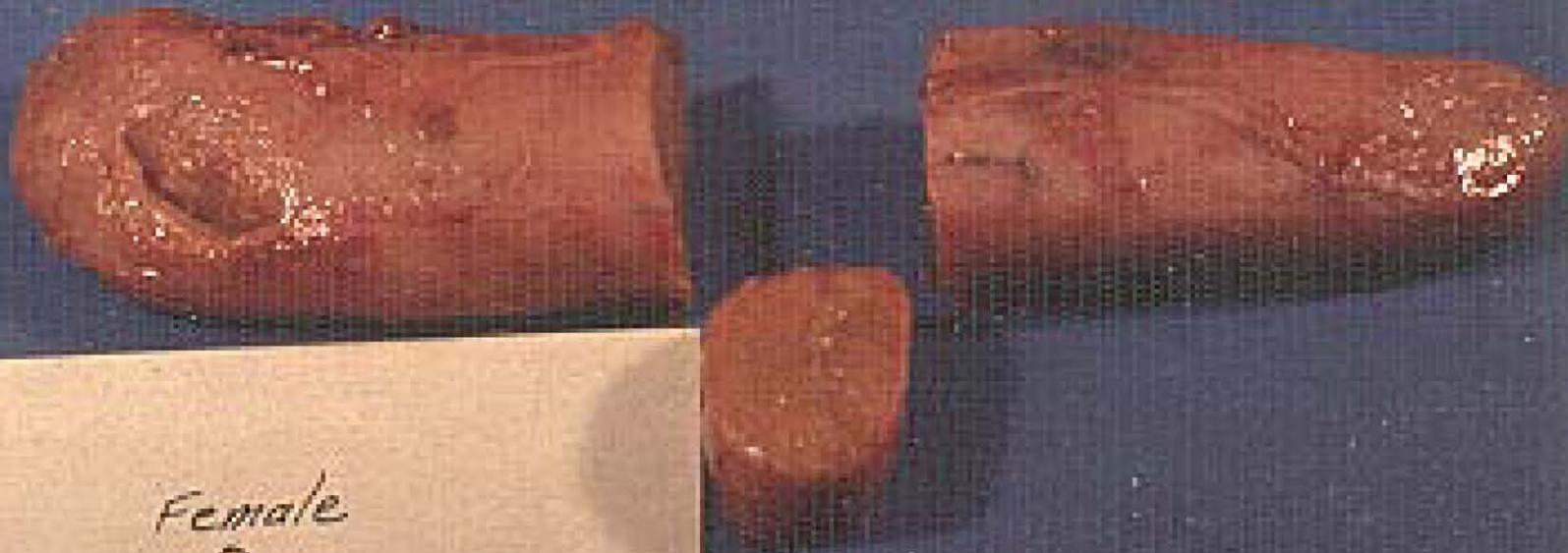


Figure 3. Billfish measurement: #1 Tip of lower jaw to fork (curved)



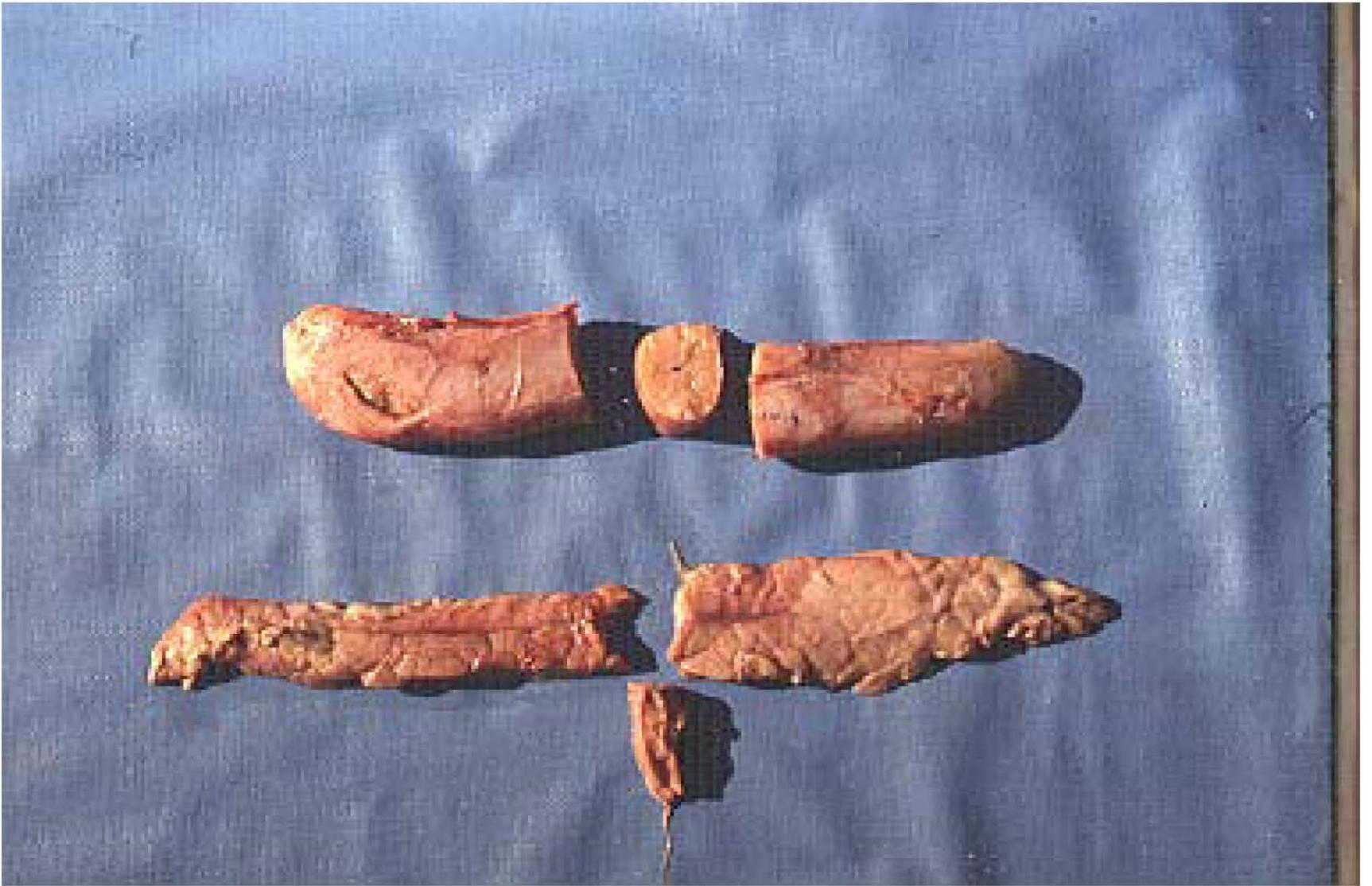






Female  
♀

190 lb. / 86.4 kg



# Regulations

- Retention or sale of any billfish is prohibited
- Vessels are required to release live billfish at boatside

# Spearfish ID

- Skin patch AND good ID photograph
- Good photographs will show anal opening and have anal fin completely pulled out and visible (use pins, gaff, hook and gangion to do this)
- Any spearfish ID'd in the water (i.e. not brought on board) CANNOT be other than a SPX

