



Date: January 14, 2010

From: Sandy Moret

Subject: 10th Annual Islamorada Sailfly Championship

Twenty teams of passionate saltwater flyrod anglers came together from seven states across the US and Canada to compete in the Tenth Annual Islamorada Sailfly Championship in the Florida Keys on January 13th and 14th, 2010. A record year for the tournament brought 35 hook ups and 18 releases to 13 of the 20 teams during frigid weather and red hot Sailfishing.

Florida Keys' native skiff guide brothers Tim and Robert Klein fishing aboard Captain Mel Walker's "Gotcha" took top honors with four sailfish. Robert Klein caught the first fish early on Wednesday morning. As the day went on Bob Rich and Sandy Moret each released one with Capt Rusty Albury on "Esperanza" as did father and son team John and John David Eaton of Canada aboard "Sally Margaret" placing both teams ahead of "Gotcha." With 5 minutes until lines out Tim Klein landed "Gotcha's" second fish placing them third on time.

Thursday a few minutes before 9:00am, the Klein's hooked a Flyrod double header with Capt. Walker. Each fish chose a different direction forcing the brothers to the boats pulpit as they pursued. One fish took Tim to the arbor knot on his flyreel and Robert was down to four turns of backing when both fish finally turned. Meanwhile "Esperanza" jumped into the lead with a third release at 10:26 am. Not to be denied, the Klein brothers landed both their fish twenty minutes later to reclaim and maintain the tournament lead with four sailfish.

Second Place went to Islamorada's Bob Rich and Sandy Moret with substitute angler John Latella of Pittsburgh as each released one sailfish with Capt Rusty Albury on "Esperanza." Third place went to John and John David Eaton of Canada aboard "Sally Margaret" with Captain Billy Bishop and one sailfish each.

A 36 ½ inch dolphin won "Best Other Fish" and was landed by John Beal with team mate Esteban Neely both of Dallas. They were fishing with Captain Mark Houghtailing of Miami aboard "Magic Fingers."

Tournament Director Sandy Moret said, "Atlantic Sailfish are rarely fished for with fly rod in the US. Our event attracts some very devoted and hard core fly fishers with a tremendous amount of talent. In our first year, 14 teams competed catching zero fish and a 14 way tie for first place was declared. The event has gained in popularity ever since. I believe this may be the most difficult fishing tournament in the Florida Keys. Because the fishery is primarily live bait oriented, transferring a teased sailfish to a feathered fly is very difficult. It just went crazy out there for us this year! At times four boats had fish hooked up. Everyone on every boat was cheering everyone else at every hookup and catch. The mood was just electrifying for all involved."

The invitational tournament is an all release team event using 16 pound class (8 kg) tippet supplied by the tournament. Each team is allowed two anglers who may cast, hook and fight the fish and anyone on board can tease the fish with live or dead hookless teasers making the "bait and switch." A release is accomplished when the connection of fly line to leader is brought into the tip top of the fly rod. If that occurs in more than 60 seconds after hook up then 50 points are earned. Leaders must be less than 12 feet in length. If the fish is billed and the fly retrieved the catch then counts for 150 points. Because of the blue water/backcountry cross

over mix of anglers captains, we are a Qualifying Event for the 2010 Florida Keys Outfitters/IGFA Inshore World Championship” which will take place in Islamorada during July of 2011.

The Islamorada Sailfly Championship is sponsored by Florida Keys Outfitters, Rich Products Corporation, The Green Turtle Inn, Craig Reagor of Riverwood Art Farms, Kaiyo’s, Sage Rods, Tibor Reels, Ocean Reef Rentals, and Pasta Pantaleo of the Keys to Life Gallery.



Sail on Blue& White Popper Fly



Bob Rich removes fly for “Esperanza”
Mate Mike Kozma to release sail



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