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Keaton and Eva from Tavernier hold the first Dolphin caught aboard their grandpa's new boat. Way to go guys!

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January 27th, 2010

Volume XII, Issue 10

“UNITED WE FISH” – Fisherman to March on Washington on Feb. 24th . . .

In a historic show of solidarity, recreational and commercial fishermen will gather together on the steps of the Capitol on February 24, 2010 from noon until 3 p.m. in an organized demonstration against the unintended negative impacts of the Magnuson Stevens Conservation and Management Act (MSA), the federal fisheries law which was revised in January of 2007. Coordinating the march under the flag of **United We Fish**, rally organizers are hoping to see a large show of force in defense of coastal communities.

The **Recreational Fishing Alliance** is a national, grassroots political action organization representing recreational fishermen and the recreational fishing industry on marine fisheries issues. RFA’s Mission is to safeguard the rights of saltwater anglers, protect marine, boat and tackle industry jobs, and ensure the long-term sustainability of our nation’s saltwater fisheries.

For more information, call 888-JOIN-RFA.

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Fishing Report

If you would like to book a charter with Capt Luke Kelly in the Lower Florida Keys for fly or light tackle inshore fishing, please call: (305) 304-3152, or e-mail: KeyFlat@mac.com. Visit www.lowerkeysflatsfishing.com for more information.

Capt. Luke Kelly Lower Keys Backcountry



This past week's weather warmed right up and so did the lower Keys flats and backcountry fishing. What a relief it was to see all of our winter fishing come right back to life after what many dubbed as the "big chill", which hit us two weeks back, and broke many cold temperature records. Yet while it looks like more wind and cooler temps will be hitting the Keys by the time this week's issue hits the stands, it appears to be a more typical cold front for this time of year. One can only hope that it will continue to put our fish in their more regular patterns, rather than freezing them to death.


As for last week's fishing, it was good. The best days were by far the 22nd and 23rd of Jan. Wind speed was way down and blowing from the south. Air temps were up, and everything was perfect for winter time

Permit fishing on the flats. I found the best fishing to be in areas west of Key West, as the Gulf Stream seemed to of pushed a portion of it's warmth through the western part of the lower Keys.

Permit were in every spot you could have imagined them being in, and they seemed very happy to be there. Large schools found motionless near the surface told me they were content just hanging out after escaping past week's extreme cold temperatures. Small live crabs under a small cork float did the trick, as Sheryl and Kevin Jones of Tennessee boated three nice Permit during a half day charter.

Another interesting and unusual thing seen while fishing areas west of Key West were the huge schools of Grey Snapper also seen near the surface in the deeper water channels that cut through the flats. Like the Permit, I felt that these snapper were just happy to be back in their realm, and seemed to be pleasantly soaking up the sun's warmth.

On a more normal note, schools of Mackerel can currently be found near Key West running through Northwest Channel on the hour. These Mackerel are found under birds, are super aggressive, and taste great when fried. They'll eat about anything you can give them, just be sure to use wire leader.

I must say that I am very happy to be back on the water and able to show people a good time with plenty of fish, it was a bit difficult after that "big chill". It looks like we should be in the normal swing of things during these next couple of weeks, and I hope to get some of you interested readers out there with me. 

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Gillian and Chuck Lewane on their honeymoon, catching Permit.



Gillian Lewane with a Hogfish and Capt. Burson.



Ted, fishing aboard Key Largo's *Fin Razer* with wife Melissa, landed this spectacular African Pompano, ably assisted by Mate Alex Ross.



Capt. Jon Milchman prepares to release a sailfish caught by Capt. Steve Friedman during the Bayboat Billfish Tournament.



17 y/o Austin Coleman (Cedar Park, TX) was more than pleased with his recent Sailfish catch on the *Fin Razer* with mate Alex Ross and Captain Brandon Jeminez.

Fishing Report

Capt. Steve Friedman fishes off of Islamorada using primarily fly and light tackle methods. If you would like to fish with Capt. Steve, call (305) 393-3474 or visit www.afishingguide.com or steve@afishingguide.com

Capt. Steve Friedman Islamorada

Headlines spout nothing but gloom and doom, and plenty of sad sights remain on the water, but recent reports from the backcountry suggest that life is coming back to the Bay. Thanks to the rising mercury last week, water temps have risen enough to make the shallows more hospitable, and the fish more active. As the Snook emerge from the cryogenic freezer, there's still a steady bite of Redfish and Black Drum. Shrimp are still the answer on about a quarter-ounce jig bounced very slowly off of the bottom.

Up on the flats, the Bonefish are starting to peruse the flats again but are reluctant to take flies and even a live shrimp. The same can be said for the Redfish found around the mangroves and flats in Flamingo. Large fish up to 30" have been lurking around schools of happy mullet, but are not keen on visitors angling for a closer view just yet.

The reef is the place for the most consistent action. Mutton Snapper, Grouper, Mackerel, Blue Runners and Yellow Tail Snapper are active and hungry. I've been using cut bait, like ballyhoo or pilchards, along with fresh live shrimp to get the job done. I try to free-line a shrimp or chunk bait with very little weight back into my chum slick, until the line starts taking off from the spool, before I engage the bail again and begin to quickly wind back the line. I like circle hooks for this technique to

make for an easier release; the hook almost always sticking right into the corner of the fish's mouth.

Last week was second leg of the Bayboat Billfish Tournament series. Captain Jon Milchman and I, along with nine other boats less than 24' bobbed along the reef on a beautiful calm day with a northerly breeze – in pursuit of the Atlantic Sailfish. I was hoping to use some fresh pilchards but it wasn't in the cards that day, leaving the mighty ballyhoo to be our primary bait. Since my live well has a decent capacity, but isn't huge, we decided that a couple dozen hair-hooked 'hoos would do the trick.

By the time the boat reached the fertile waters around the reef, we were already behind in the game. At least two boats had already scored, one releasing two Sailfish by 8:30. Our first Sail came into the spread fast and furious knocking the line off into free spool but missing the hook. With fish around, we pitched out another cast and hooked up! After some mayhem, including diving for the bow to prevent a cutoff underneath the boat and safely unwrapping the 12-lb. line from my rod tip; we had our first release of the day. There were high-fives all around, and our hearts were pumping like crazy.

We raised several more fish in the afternoon, but it wasn't until about a half hour before "lines out" that another Sail made an appearance in the spread of 'hoos. He wasn't alone because all of a sudden we've got two Sailfish on – going very fast in opposite directions. After about a 25-minute battle, we grabbed the bills of both fish for two releases and some great photos. Our total of three fish earned us second place. The winners took the title with four Sailfish released by Capt. George Clark, Jr. and his crack squad of Sailfish gurus. Well done guys and thanks to Ma's Fish Camp and Capt. Jim Dalrymple and Capt. Mark Johnson for hosting the event. The last tournament in the series begins on February 9th for a 2-day finale. Hope to see you there.



Greg Van Beuren from Virginia with a Sailfish caught aboard the *Hooked Up* with Capt Z.



Capt Joe Ptashinski's dad Joe's very first sail, and it was a good one. Brother Mark also gives thanks to Mother Nature!

Fishing Report

Capt. Dave Schugar of Sweet Enuf Charters is located at Castaway's Restaurant/Marina in Marathon. If you would like to fish with Capt. Schugar, call (305) 610-4778, or visit: www.sweetenufcharters.com sweetenufcharter@aol.com

Capt. Dave Schugar Marathon



It is feeling more and more like the Keys, with temperatures up in the 80's, just where we like it. The warmer weather has in turn, warmed up the shallows, which can be essential for finding our bait for the day. Pilchards are showing back up, as well as the pinfish, so get out there and get your bait for some hot offshore fishing. The ocean side has been red-hot, no matter which of our numerous species you like to target.

Sail fishing has been as hot as it can get from the showers in the shallows to the packs of Sails tailing down sea off the edge of the reef. I haven't been sail fishing this week but, from what I gathered from my friends and other charter captains, it is good out there, really good. Using live bait will generally always be better than trolling dead bait, but one of my friends got three Sails on dead bait, along with some Dolphin and Blackfin tuna. There are many different ways to fish for Sails, so pick

the best way you know how and go get some. When the wind blows, you shouldn't let it get you down, you can always anchor up on the reef.

The reef has been producing some quality Yellowtails from 45-60 feet of water. While you're fishing for Yellowtail, put out a kite with a Blue Runner or a Yellowtail for a chance smoker King or Wahoo. When you're chumming and you have a big school of fish behind your boat, there will be predatory fish lurking for an easy meal. If your chum is going the same direction as the wind, add a couple of big split shots to your kite. This will allow your kite to veer to one side or the other. You don't want your kite bait back in your Yellowtail school for two reasons. The first is that it might scare the Yellowtail, and second, by placing it amongst all the other fish it may get lost. So, if you get your kite to skirt to the outside of the school, the bait will be targeted by the predators. Most predators will attack a bait that gets separated from its school first. I also would recommend that you make your kite go to the side closer to the deeper water. When we have north winds you may not even need any split shot if the current is strong enough. Try out this method, it really works. If you have never have used a kite and feel intimidated with it, hire me to run your boat for the day, I will teach you how to work the kite and many other methods, which all of us captains use down here.

Wreck fishing has been really good – many different species are being caught in the deeper water. Amberjacks seem to be on all the wrecks, but if you are persistent, you might get yourself some nice Muttons that have been in the 10-18 pound range. Groupers have been biting well, but unfortunately we will have to release all of them due to the new Grouper regulations. The bait has been easier to catch as the warm water returns to the shallows.

Deep dropping is on fire, from Snowy Grouper to Queen Snappers. Some Tilefish are being caught and, of course, the Barrels have been

Cont. on pg. 14

Fishing Report

This report is brought to you courtesy of Capt. Ron Wagner aboard his boat, the Producer. If you would like to fish with Capt. Ron, please call: (305) 664-2028, or visit: www.captainronwagner.com fishwithcaptron@hotmail.com

Capt. Ron Wagner From the Skiff



There was a lot of activity this week at Fiesta Key Resort now that the weather has returned to its normal winter patterns. We are glad to see the cold replaced by some beautiful 80 degree days. Now as water temps return to normal, many of the fish that got to escape the shallow waters are on the prowl and they are hungry. Out back on the edges of Everglades National Park I have been having good catches of Sea Trout and Redfish in the deeper drop offs from the third point of Nine Mile Bank to the west side of Oxfoot bank. Leaving the marina from Fiesta Resort allows me a straight run to the grounds, and I can be into fish before we can hear the sound of another outboard engine. There is a lot of area out here and room for lots of boats.

Most of the fishing has been working the deeper waters, slower than normal, throwing bucktails tipped with shrimp or the many colors of

gulp baits available. The best color has to be the new penny color which since it's introduction by Berkley products has been the top seller in all of South Florida. I would not go out without them, whether I might be fishing in Flamingo or way out in the gulf. Many game fish find this color and sent irresistible. Pick some up at your favorite shop and give them a try and watch the results you will get.

I have also been able to take some photographers out for some scenic shots they wished to capture along with the sunsets from just off channel 5 bridge. I get paid to fish but there is some real satisfaction in spending a day with nothing more then a camera in the skiff. Your focus changes from where the fish might be to the sheer beauty that is out here in the bay. Carol Ellis a professional photographer from Ocean Reef Club and one of her students, Mary Lou Krause met me at the dock and after loading the camera gear, we headed for the center of the bay. Two thousand pictures later and the setting sun now down, we headed back to the marina satisfied of our adventure. Without a rod in the boat, I just watched them composing their shots of some amazing birdlife. I for one am waiting to see the vast array of those shots.

The boat is gassed and ready for the morning charter. Want to go? Just give me a call and I'll try and make your adventure the best that I can. One quick note, Paul (the marina manager at the resort and campground) informed me that the marina would be opening up at 6 a.m. That's great news to so many fisherman staying here and also those coming from around the area. This is great news for us who are looking to get out early and beat the pack. COFFEE AT THAT TIME, that's where you will find me.

Until then, get out in nature and enjoy your day. 

Fishing Report

Brought to you by
Captain Tom Aiuto ...
You can reach him at:
hawkscayfishing@aol.com
For charter info,
call Hawks Cay Marina
(305) 743-9000, option 2.



Capt. Tom Aiuto What's Hot – What's Not

On January 8th and 9th Hawks Cay Resort & Marina had their annual Hawks Cay Sailfish Open which was a great success. Over 135 Sailfish were caught and released during the tournament. After two days of competition Vitamin C 2 was declared the victor. The hard working captain and crew had caught and released a total of 11 Sailfish. Captain Josh Ardis on the Fighting Lady who also fished the Sailfish Open reports that the Sailfish are truly making their presence felt offshore. They are eagerly inhaling live bait such as, Goggle-eyes, Ballyhoo & Cigar Minnows. Most of the Sailfish are being taken hanging live baits from kites or sight-fishing. Mixed in with the Sailfish were good numbers of nice size King Mackerel to 45 lbs. and some Dolphin (Mahi-Mahi) taken on live baits hanging from kites to 20 lbs. There is also a decent number of Blackfin Tuna bending rods around the Marathon

Hump to 20 lbs. Capt. Matt Ballanger from bamboo charters on the Go Fish reports the bay is supplying plenty of action.

The bay is loaded with schools of Spanish Mackerel. Many anglers are scouring up to 40 Spanish a day to 6 lbs. There are also King Mackerel on bay side. Live blue runners rigged with a balloon are doing the trick with kings to 30 lbs. The Pompano also came out to play to 3 lbs; Bluefish are excellent mixed in with the mackerel to 7lbs. Some captains are doing very well with Mangrove Snappers in their favorite honey holes to 5 lbs. Despite the cool waters and high winds, fishing has been decent offshore, but recently the bay has been hit hard by the cold water temps. Many species such as Spanish Mackerel, Bluefish, Pompano and Snappers were plentiful a few weeks back and were hard to find this past week.

There are reports that the Bonefish population has suffered up to 1/3 loss because of the extreme cold. "A proactive, precautionary approach is warranted to preserve our valuable snook, bonefish and tarpon resources, which are among Florida's premier game fish species," said FWC Chairman Rodney Barreto. "Extending the snook closed season and temporarily closing bonefish and tarpon fishing will protect surviving snook that spawn in the spring and will give our research scientists time to evaluate the extent of damage that was done to snook, bonefish and tarpon stocks during the unusual cold-weather period we recently experienced in Florida."

Capt. Joel Tomlinson from the ESPN's Saltwater Experience crew reports fishing has been tough, but found some decent action with Redfish willing to eat to 8 lbs. Capt. Josh Ardis on the Tailwalker reports that the Sail fishing is red hot. They are inhaling live bait such as, Goggle-eyes, Ballyhoo & Cigar Minnows. Most of the Sailfish are being taken hanging live baits from kites or sight-fishing. But most recently drifting cut bait is doing the trick with as many as 20 to 40 Sailfish

Cont. on pg. 14

Fishing Report

Capt. Greg Eklund owns and operates the CLOUD NINE in Islamorada out of Bud n Mary's Marina. You can reach him at (305) 360-7476, email: cloudninegreg@bellsouth.net, or visit him at: www.islamoradafishingtrips.com



Capt. Greg Eklund Islamorada Offshore

Fishing offshore of Islamorada this weekend has been excellent. The Sailfish action continued to please visiting anglers last week. The Cheeca Lodge Presidential Sailfish Tournament was won by the Get Lit team with a total of 20 releases during the 2 day tournament. The Islamorada Sailfish Gold Cup series wraps up this week with the final event, The Islamorada Fishing Club \$30,000 winner take all tourney on Thursday.

Conditions should continue to be great this week for the Sails as we have a large quantity of baitfish both along the edge of the reef and inshore on the patch areas. All of this bait is providing excellent forage for the Sailfish and many other species that are in our waters right now.

Not to be outdone by the Sailfish, the King Mackerel fishing has been outstanding as of late. Fish in the 8 to 25 pound range have been chewing

at several places along the reef line and deeper ledge of the reef. Cigar minnows have been a primary choice of bait by the fleet but the larger Kings can be targeted with baits such as Speedos and Blue Runners.

The waxing moon this week has brought with it a fair number of Wahoos. Several of these speedy predators were seen and caught over the weekend on the north end of town. High speed trolling as well as live baits are great ways to target these fish in about 150 feet of water.

A little further offshore there has been some good action around the area humps and deep wrecks with the Greater Amberjacks. These Jacks are gathered around these areas to spawn this time of year. The fish average 35 pounds or so but occasionally there are still a few caught over 80 pounds.

Further inshore along the top edge of the reef line the Yellowtail Snappers have enjoyed the warm up in water temperatures over the last week and have been biting well. The patch reef action has also been quality, producing a good number of Lane, Mutton, and Mangrove Snapper. With all of this great fishing action so close to shore this time of year it is a great time to get out on the water and go fishing.

If I can help you with any questions or make arrangements to get out on the water please get in touch with me at the number above. Have a great week and take a friend fishing!!



Fishing Report

This report is brought to you by
James M. Simcic III
If you would like to learn more
please contact him by phone:
(305) 393-5600, or e-mail him at:
Keysdiver0106@yahoo.com
Captain Hooks Marina
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James Simcic III Spearfishing



Now that the wind has died down and the air temps have risen dramatically, I expected the visibility to increase considerably. In the aftermath of some of the harshest winter conditions our ocean and bay environments have faced in decades, we can only hope that it starts to turn around. Going forward this week, we cross our fingers that the water clears up and strong currents disperse the ugly water surrounding the Keys. After continued reports of visibility in the 5-10 foot range, I think we might have to just wait it out. In the meantime, spend your time fishing the reef. As you'll read from the captains in the area, it has been pretty hot, with reports of Mangrove Snapper and Yellowtail biting very well on the patch reefs. With this unfortunate break from diving, I thought I would let you in on how I choose my spearguns.

When choosing a spear gun one has to take into account that the manufacturer has made each gun and model with a purpose. Here we will look at the different characteristics that the guns share. These characteristics will dictate the types and sizes of the fish you can hunt along with the type of underwater terrain. Please take a look at the characteristics that make up each gun. They are the integral components that give each gun its purpose.

Weight: Weight is a very important factor when considering recoil and gun power. The more power you give the gun the more recoil it will have so you have to counteract the power with weight. This will reduce the recoil back to a manageable amount.

Balance: Balance is a crucial aspect when firing the gun at the fish. You want the gun to be neutrally buoyant from front to back so that when you aim you don't shoot above or below the fish.

Shaft Diameter: Shaft diameter is a key player in shaft speed, shot distance and penetrating power. Thin shafts start at about 6mm and go up to 8mm+. Shaft speed depends on shaft diameter in conjunction with the bands used. The lighter the shaft the faster the speed, but any inertia is decreased because the lighter shaft results in less penetrating power on longer shots.

Muzzle Type: Muzzle type is a preference from diver to diver. It is located on the front end of the spear gun and houses the bands and the exit point of the shaft. There are generally two types of muzzle.

- **Closed muzzles**, such as those used on some rail guns, have an enclosed hole at the end of the gun that the shaft passes through. These muzzles hold one of the bands in a more inline path with the shaft where the second band is placed just under the first (in most cases).
- **Open muzzles** are usually incorporated into the barrel of the gun placing the bands slightly below the shaft. Open muzzles are sometimes preferred by divers because they allow the shooter to look down the shaft as a means of sighting the gun, rather than having to look through the hole of the closed muzzle.

Cont. on pg. 13



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Gillian Lewane on her honeymoon, fishing with Capt. Burson.



Jim Rathburn from Maple Grove, MN with a Sailfish caught aboard the *Fish Tales* out of Whale Harbor Marina.



This fine sailfish was caught by English Captain and writer Frank Shaw on a kayak!! Under the watchful eye of four friends and surrounded by lots of sailfish boats, Frank hooked and landed his first ever Sail after a 30 minute battle that saw the fish dragging the kayak (*Freedom Hawk, Freedom 12*) a long way. The Sail was landed on 20lb test and took a goggle eye bait kindly supplied by Jim Mulcahy of Fins & Feathers fishing charters. Frank, who spent 11 hours on the water and paddled more than 12 miles also landed a nice blackfin Tuna. He would like to thank all the local Captains and anglers for their advice, with special thanks to Captain Brandon Jimenez, and Don Miller of the Yellow Bait House, Key Largo.



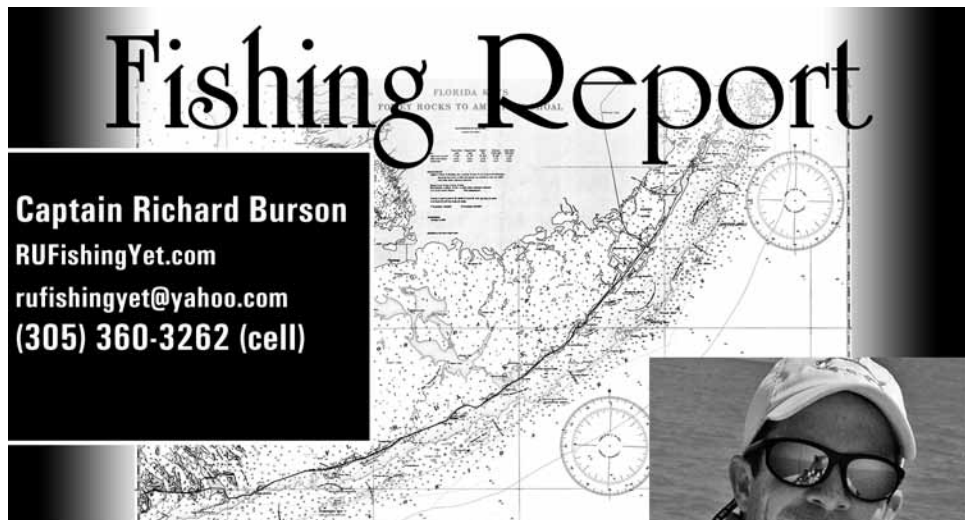
Sheryl Jones with her beauty of a Permit caught on charter with Capt Luke Kelly.



Sisters Ashley (8), Alexys (11) and Avery (9) with porgy and hogfish caught while fishing with grandparents, Bill and Myra Russo.

Fishing Report

Captain Richard Burson
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 (305) 360-3262 (cell)



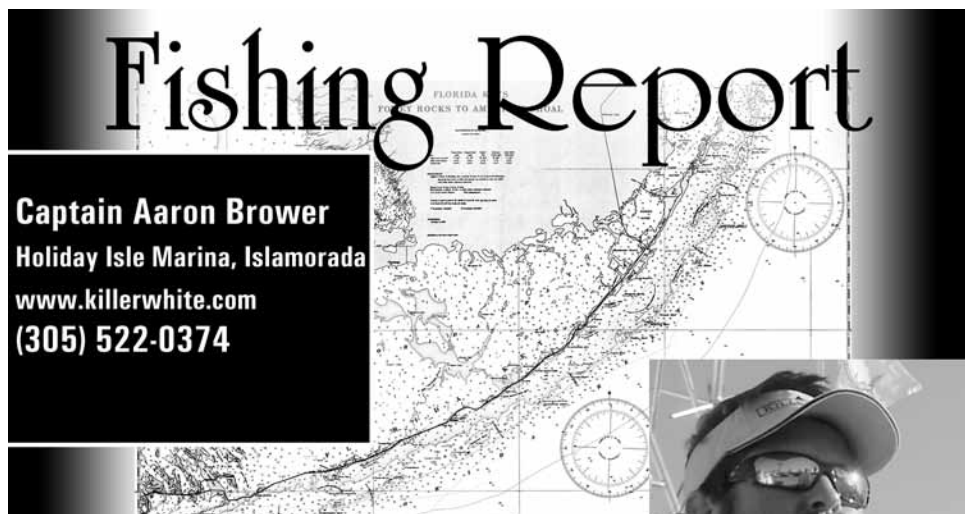
Capt. Richard Burson
Key Largo Backcountry

Fishing is at full blast as we all predicted and now is the best time to be on the water! If you are looking to bend the rod you are in store for an exciting time. I have been on the water most of the week and my clients and I came back to the dock with lots of fish stories. Many species of Snapper, great sized Grouper, Sharks, Mackerel, Sea Trout, Redfish and a few shots at some Bonefish filled our days with action. Things are alive and recovering in the backcountry and I am sure happy to be reporting it!

The weather has been absolutely beautiful this week with the same expected for the weeks to come. The warmer weather has returned and what a relief! The average temperature lingered around 78 degrees. The winds have been calm with many days near flat conditions, ideal for a day on the water.

Fishing Report

Captain Aaron Brower
 Holiday Isle Marina, Islamorada
 www.killerwhite.com
 (305) 522-0374



Capt. Aaron Brower
Islamorada Offshore

Lodge Presidential Sailfish Tournament. A tournament started by Julie Olson and Capt. Don Gurgilio back in 1990, it was dubbed the 'presidential' because president George Bush used to stay at the Cheeca Lodge when he came down here to Bone Fish every year. There were 7 boats in that first tournament, and this weekend there were 28 boats. The Get Lit released 20 sailfish between Friday and Saturday to win this year's event, in second was the My Sea Sin with ten releases followed by the Close Call with ten releases as well. Big congratulations to the winners and everyone who was able to fish in such a fun event.

This coming week has two - one day tournaments; the Al Flutie Over The Hill Tournament for anglers over fifty, which I'm very excited to be fishing my father in, and the IFC which is also the last tournament in the

On the patch reef was where I found the most action this week. Yellowtail and Mangrove Snappers, Black, Red and Gag Groupers, Cero Mackerel and a variety of Sharks were all biting while fishing off lower Key Largo. In the shallows of the backcountry the action included Redfish and Speckled Sea Trout, which were biting on the five inch Berkeley Gulp shad jerk, in a variety of colors. While targeting these fish varieties, make certain to provide a long cast about seven to ten feet past the fish then steadily reel and jerk the bait about two to three feet in front of its nose. This action will surely entice the desires attack.

As I moved Oceanside the patches were littered with the same game fish however, they preferred live bait such as shrimp, pilchards, and pinfish. Make sure to have a block or two of chum handy as this will increase your chances of catching your prized fish. Your chum slick will attract fish from other areas depending on the currents direction and speed.

In addition to the fun in the backcountry the beautiful and historic Cheeca Lodge and Spa located in Islamorada held their 20th annual Cheeca Lodge Sailfish tournament! Hats go off to the Get Lit Captained by Quinton Dieterle. He was successful in guiding Kitt Toomey, Peter Miller, Jon Cooper, and Captain Hinckley to a total of 20 sailfish releases. So if you are looking for what to do in the Florida Keys, getting on the water is the best decision of your life! You are sure to find a well rounded and respected guide here in the Florida Keys.

So until next time ask yourself this one question . . .

Are You Fishing Yet? 

Gold Cup Series. Just a piece of information for you, any one of our local charter boats are more than qualified to fish these tournaments. If you want to get out there and see what all the excitement is about, get to the docks and book your favorite boat. I guarantee you'll have a great time.

It seems like the bite of King Fish has slowed down a little this week. You were still able to catch a few or even your limit; you just had to work at it a little more. There are also lots of Cero Mackerels on the inside edge of the reef, especially when the water gets stirred up in the heavy winds. Ceros are a great fish to catch on light tackle and they make great dinner fare. They are actually one of the best eating Mackerels out there.

With the dirty water inside the reef there have been good reports of Yellow Tail Snappers being caught as well as Muttons. I've also heard of many catches of the new version of Grouper, the catch and release version. Although still fun to catch it's just too bad you don't get to keep one to eat. Think about that the next time you order Grouper at your favorite restaurant during the closed season. Where is that Grouper coming from?

On the gulf side of things, fishing was very slow this week until Friday. As the water warmed up, a good Trout bite developed slot and over size fish too. As there were all the Spanish Macks out there you could want, the key to those fish this week was fishing in 10 feet of water or deeper.

Here's to keeping the rod bent . . . 



Fishing Report

Brought to you courtesy of
Capt. Andrew Tipler.
To fish with Capt. Andrew,
call (305) 744-9796 or visit
www.lastcastcharters.com
scarpa1@bellsouth.net

Capt. Andrew Tipler Lower Keys



Weather and fishing patterns have been changing at the blink of an eye lately. It can be hard to nail down a plan when things change this rapidly so plan on loading up with live baits and rigs for a variety of situations.

The key to fishing this time of year is having tackle set up for everything that could swim past. This week has been no exception. There have been Sailfish, Tuna, Kings, Dolphin and Wahoo within a cast from the reef. Start your day by filling the well with lively pilchards and you all but insure success.

Reef fishing has been very good with some nice Yellowtails showing up. The fishing has been better shallow. The best numbers of fish showed up in the 20-50 ft depths. Venturing out deeper and you held a better chance at Tuna and Kings, but the Tails were not as aggressive.

The patch reefs have been fishing very good. Plenty of live shrimp are a must for near shore fishing. The Mangrove Snapper have been big and hungry. One shame this past week is the number of legal sized Grouper that have gone back.

Gulf fishing has been good with some nice Cobia moving in. Big Cobia have been showing up west of Key West and have been working their way towards us. The gulf water temps in our area have been cool keeping the fish out further. As water temps warm up, plan on big numbers of Cobia to slide through our near shore spots.

Flats fishing is making a slow return to normal. Capt Darren and I found some big Permit wandering around the usual warm up spots. Look for big Cudas and Sharks to be prime targets until the Permit come back to normal. Last February was fantastic Permit fishing, and let's hope it is the same this year.

Good luck and good fishing. 



Fishing Report

Brought to you courtesy of
Capt. Chris Lembo
of Incognito Charters, Key West.
To fish with Capt. Chris,
call (305) 292-0067, or visit
www.incognitolighttackle.com
incognitocharters@comcast.net

Capt. Chris Lembo Key West Offshore




We should have some great weather this week. Look for milder temperatures than we have been having!! The water temperature should warm up a few degrees as well and that will get the fish into normal feeding patterns. The cold water just shut everything down and killed plenty of Snappers, Grunts, Tilefish, Cowfish and many more. There are lots of fish washing up on Key West beaches.

On the reef the Mutton fishing will be decent. Use long leaders and live pinfish, thread herrings and pilchards for the best bite and dead ballyhoo and bonito strips for dead baits. With the cold water the chum will melt slowly so make sure you are using a large mesh chum bag and shake it often. Grouper have been biting pretty well and it is a difficult task to throw keeper Grouper back. Inshore patch reefs have been loaded with

big Red and small Gag Grouper. Yellowtail will start to improve as the water warms again.

Sailfish, Blackfin Tuna, Wahoo and Kingfish as well as a few small Dolphin will be the best targets for trolling. Dead ballyhoo and one deep bait for the Wahoo is a good spread. Work any drops, deep wrecks, current rips and weed lines you may find. Slow trolling with live ballyhoo will be a better strategy for Sailfish and there have been loads of Sails in close, chasing the huge schools of ballyhoo. If you can find big live thread herring, speedos or small blue runners try drifting with a kite.

On the Gulf-side the wrecks and rock piles will be starting to hold big schools of Cobia and a live pinfish along the edge of the structure is the best bait. Kingfish will prowl the surface around the structure and Sharks, Grouper, Snapper will be holding close. 



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Bahamas Report

Capt. Trey Ryne

The Hawks Nest Wahoo Tournament saw some nice fish come to the scales this week. Three fish over 100 pounds hit the dock, with two going 111 pounds and one going 121! Congratulations to the crew of the *Zephyros*, winning with a total of 345.4 pounds!

After seeing such quality fish caught in the Cat Island Wahoo Tournament we were eager to get out and fish the edge off Guana Cay. OU left the dock at the crack of 10 am to go find some Wahoo yesterday. The reports had been slow, but the wind shift accompanying the weak front that just passed, allowed us venture out with renewed hopes. Right after the lines were in 2 free jumping sails popped up out of the water 100 yards in-shore of us! Really what chance did we have? We had 2 leads attached Yo Zori Plugs down in the water. Never-the-less, we had to go in to the area and take a look right? Oh well, no shot at them and we continued our search for some wahoo action. We went down the line to my favorite area to fish off of Guana. It did not take long to get a bite.

The first bite was in 330 feet of water on the weighted down rod. After a brief fight, the Wahoo was gaffed and put on ice! This one weighed around 30 pounds. Quickly we got set back up and had a long rigger bite on a purple and black feather. This one was short lived and threw the hook after about 10 seconds. We decided to troll towards a great deep drop spot and had our third Wahoo bite come tight on the deep rod again. This fish was active. Everyone in the pit did a great job angler, mate and guests. The fish finally came to the boat after some classic head jerking and long runs. This second fish came in around 40 pounds. Our short trip had us back at the dock by 1pm and we decided to grill up some Wahoo



for lunch! If you want to get in on the Winter Wahoo Bite, Treasure Cay is offering some incredible bargains on marina front town homes and we can put together the complete package, including airfare! 🐟



Simcic..... cont.from pg. 8

Power: Power is another big factor in shot distance and impact. The power in these guns is derived from two sources, namely compressed air or surgical rubber bands. The band guns can house anywhere from one to six bands, depending on the designated use.

Bands: The striking ability of the gun is strictly based on the power that these bands provide. There are several ways to increase and decrease the power of your gun.

- **Diameter:** Bands come in many different diameters that reflect power. The common sizes you will see on the market include 9/16" or 14mm, 5/8" or 16mm, and 3/4" or 19mm.
- **Length:** The length of your bands need to be specific to your gun length because bands have a certain stretch that is optimal for firing the shaft. For example, you will be underpowered with a band that is too long and overpowered if it is too short.
- **Wishbone:** Wishbones are the piece of the band that actually hook into the shaft so that it may be propelled forward. Wishbones are made of metal or dynema. Metal wishbones can be fixed or articulated. Articulated wishbones have hinges on the side so that they stay straight as you pull them to the back of the shaft. Dynema is a very strong type of soft cord that is used to affix the band to the back of the shaft. When using more than one band to propel the shaft these types of wishbones are often used.

Barrel: When choosing one, take into consideration the shape and density.

- **Shape:** As most of the barrels are circular in shape some of the guns have barrels that are elongated more in one direction or the other. In the recent past some manufacturers have been taking hydrodynamics into consideration when shaping their barrels. These newer guns have made it easier to track fish while aiming and following your target.
- **Density:** The density of the barrel dictates the recoil that is passed to the user's hand. For instance, some rail guns, that have light shafts, don't need a very dense barrel to offset the recoil from the shaft.

I hope these characteristics will help you decide which guns to use for specific fish and hunting techniques. Remember to stop in your local

dive shops so you can get your hands on the different types of guns out there. This will help you compare the different styles and lengths. One, if not more, will more than likely catch your eye. Ask what the sales associate thinks. They probably spearfish if they work in a dive shop! If you have any recommendation questions on brands and specific gun set ups you can contact me at Captain Hook's or on my e-mail in the header box. Have a good week and good luck! 🦞



Fishing for sailfish off Islamorada, Jeff Dupre caught this 29 lb. Blackfin in 100 ft. of water on a slow-trolled, live ballyhoo.

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BC-Back Country • LT-Light Tackle • FL-Flats • OFF-Offshore • GF-Gulf Fishing
WR-Wreck • OVN-Overnight • MD-Multi-Day • TP-Tarpon • FLY-Fly Fishing

Listings in this Directory are available for only \$299 / year (print and web).

Upper Keys	Key Largo to Islamorada
Captain / Charter	Contact Info
Capt. Greg Eklund Cloud Nine Charters	OFF / REEF / WR / FL (305) 360-7476 www.islamoradafishingtrips.com
Fin Razer Sportfishing	OFF / BC / REEF (305) 923-9293 captgreg@keyssportfishing.com
Key Largo Fishing Adventures	www.keyssportfishing.com
Capt. Ron Allen	Fish Tales Charters (305) 664-0050 www.fishtalessportfishing.com
Capt. Jack Falcucci	OFF / REEF 50' Custom Ocean Sportfish (305) 393-0795
Capt. Ron Wagner	TP/LT/FLY/BC/FL/GF/REEF (305) 664-2028 fishwithcaptron@hotmail.com
Capt. Aaron Brower	OFF/REEF/WR www.killerwhite.com (305) 522-0374
Capt. Steve Friedman	FL / BC / FLY (305) 393-3474 www.afishingguide.com
Capt. Richard Burson	BC/LT/FL/GF/TP/FLY www.rufishingyet.com (305) 360-3262 rufishingyet@yahoo.com
Capt. Scott Keller	OFF / BC / WR / GF (305) 664-6678 captscott@badhabitfishingcharters.com
Bad Habit Charters	
Capt. Z	OFF / REEF / WR (305) 393-6931 hookedupgladius@aol.com
Hooked Up Charters	
Capt. Joe Petrucco	OFF / GULF / REEF / TP (305) 304-4580 joepetrucco@yahoo.com
Killer Instinct 6	

Middle Keys	Long Key to Marathon
Captain / Charter	Contact Info
Capt. Nick Borraccino	OFF / REEF / WR (508) 769-4189 www.noreastersportfishing.com
Capt. David Schugar	OFF / REEF (305) 610-4778 www.sweetenufcharters.com
Sweet e' Nuf Charters	

Lower Keys	Big Pine Key to Key West
Captain / Charter	Contact Info
Capt. Chris Lembo	OFF / REEF (305) 292-0067 incognitocharters@comcast.net
Capt. Andrew Tipler	BC / FL / OFF / REEF (305) 744-9796 www.lastcastcharters.com
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Capt. Luke Kelly	FL / FLY / LT / BC / TP (305) 304-3152 www.lowerkeysflatsfishing.com
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Fishing Reports (cont.)

Schugar cont. from pg. 6

biting as well. I like to use cut bait and squid when I am deep dropping, it gives them a choice, even fish like a choice. Swords are biting, but if you are as unlucky as we were this last trip, you can fight a Sword for a couple hours only to have a shark eat it before you can get it in. I swear that it was a jumbo because he fought really hard the whole time, and usually when they fight hard on the bottom, it's a big one. Large Swordfish do one of two things when you hook one. They will fight hard and stay down for many hours, or fire up to surface faster than you can reel in the line. We had numerous bites and hook ups, but the fish were just coming unglued on this trip. Well, I guess that's why they call it fishing, and not catching. The more frustrating thing was that my friend Capt. Will Wagner fishing right next to me and landed two fish. My mother told me there would be days like this.

Have a great week, and catch some fish!

Aiuto. cont. from pg. 7

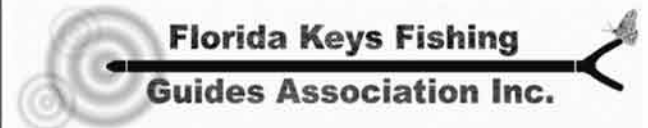
a day. He also found excellent numbers of nice-sized King Mackerel that were eagerly ripping up live bait, cut bait and even taking tins to 40 lbs. Dolphin (Mahi-Mahi) are being taken on live baits in good numbers to 20 lbs. The Reef has been holding its own with Yellowtail Snappers to 5 lbs., Mutton Snapper averaging 4 to 8 fish a trip to 20 lbs., Black Grouper to 40 lbs. and Red Grouper between 15 and 20 lbs.

Tight lines to all . . .

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KEY LARGO (Ocean Reef - 25.3100° N, 80.2800° W)

		High	Low	High	Low	High
Date	Day	Time / Height	Time / Height	Time / Height	Time / Height	Time / Height
Jan 27	Wed	05:47 / 2.28 ft	11:50 / 0.07 ft	17:51 / 2.21 ft		
Jan 28	Thu		00:13 / -0.86 ft	06:42 / 2.47 ft	12:45 / -0.25 ft	18:51 / 2.41 ft
Jan 29	Fri		01:08 / -1.06 ft	07:33 / 2.64 ft	13:38 / -0.56 ft	19:46 / 2.59 ft
Jan 30	Sat		02:00 / -1.18 ft	08:21 / 2.76 ft	14:29 / -0.83 ft	20:39 / 2.71 ft
Jan 31	Sun		02:52 / -1.19 ft	09:09 / 2.81 ft	15:19 / -1.01 ft	21:31 / 2.76 ft
Feb 1	Mon		03:42 / -1.08 ft	09:55 / 2.78 ft	16:09 / -1.08 ft	22:22 / 2.73 ft
Feb 2	Tue		04:33 / -0.87 ft	10:42 / 2.68 ft	17:00 / -1.03 ft	23:14 / 2.62 ft
Feb 3	Wed		05:25 / -0.58 ft	11:29 / 2.53 ft	17:52 / -0.88 ft	

BIG PINE (Pine Channel - 24.6900° N, 81.3833° W)

		High	Low	High	Low	High
Date	Day	Time / Height	Time / Height	Time / Height	Time / Height	Time / Height
Jan 27	Wed		03:15 / -0.20 ft	08:41 / 0.39 ft	14:04 / 0.13 ft	19:33 / 0.96 ft
Jan 28	Thu		04:06 / -0.24 ft	09:22 / 0.44 ft	15:05 / 0.07 ft	20:33 / 1.03 ft
Jan 29	Fri		04:51 / -0.25 ft	09:59 / 0.50 ft	16:03 / 0.01 ft	21:28 / 1.07 ft
Jan 30	Sat		05:32 / -0.24 ft	10:35 / 0.57 ft	16:59 / -0.05 ft	22:21 / 1.05 ft
Jan 31	Sun		06:12 / -0.20 ft	11:11 / 0.66 ft	17:56 / -0.09 ft	23:12 / 0.98 ft
Feb 1	Mon		06:50 / -0.15 ft	11:48 / 0.73 ft	18:53 / -0.12 ft	
Feb 2	Tue	00:04 / 0.87 ft	07:26 / -0.09 ft	12:25 / 0.79 ft	19:52 / -0.12 ft	
Feb 3	Wed	00:56 / 0.73 ft	08:04 / -0.03 ft	13:05 / 0.83 ft	20:55 / -0.11 ft	

ISLAMORADA (Whale Harbor - 24.9400° N, 80.6083° W)

		High	Low	High	Low	High
Date	Day	Time / Height	Time / Height	Time / Height	Time / Height	Time / Height
Jan 27	Wed	06:02 / 1.46 ft	12:24 / 0.02 ft	18:06 / 1.41 ft		
Jan 28	Thu		00:47 / -0.21 ft	06:57 / 1.58 ft	13:19 / -0.06 ft	19:06 / 1.53 ft
Jan 29	Fri		01:42 / -0.26 ft	07:48 / 1.68 ft	14:12 / -0.14 ft	20:01 / 1.65 ft
Jan 30	Sat		02:34 / -0.28 ft	08:36 / 1.76 ft	15:03 / -0.20 ft	20:54 / 1.73 ft
Jan 31	Sun		03:26 / -0.29 ft	09:24 / 1.79 ft	15:53 / -0.24 ft	21:46 / 1.76 ft
Feb 1	Mon		04:16 / -0.26 ft	10:10 / 1.77 ft	16:43 / -0.26 ft	22:37 / 1.74 ft
Feb 2	Tue		05:07 / -0.21 ft	10:57 / 1.71 ft	17:34 / -0.25 ft	23:29 / 1.67 ft
Feb 3	Wed		05:59 / -0.14 ft	11:44 / 1.61 ft	18:26 / -0.21 ft	

CUDJOE KEY (Pirates Cove - 24.6600° N, 81.4917° W)

		High	Low	High	Low	High
Date	Day	Time / Height	Time / Height	Time / Height	Time / Height	Time / Height
Jan 27	Wed		02:04 / -0.34 ft	07:42 / 0.65 ft	12:53 / 0.21 ft	18:34 / 1.61 ft
Jan 28	Thu		02:55 / -0.40 ft	08:23 / 0.73 ft	13:54 / 0.12 ft	19:34 / 1.73 ft
Jan 29	Fri		03:40 / -0.43 ft	09:00 / 0.84 ft	14:52 / 0.02 ft	20:29 / 1.78 ft
Jan 30	Sat		04:21 / -0.41 ft	09:36 / 0.96 ft	15:48 / -0.08 ft	21:22 / 1.76 ft
Jan 31	Sun		05:01 / -0.35 ft	10:12 / 1.10 ft	16:45 / -0.15 ft	22:13 / 1.64 ft
Feb 1	Mon		05:38 / -0.26 ft	10:49 / 1.23 ft	17:42 / -0.20 ft	23:05 / 1.45 ft
Feb 2	Tue		06:15 / -0.15 ft	11:26 / 1.33 ft	18:41 / -0.21 ft	23:57 / 1.21 ft
Feb 3	Wed		06:53 / -0.04 ft	12:06 / 1.39 ft	19:44 / -0.19 ft	

MARATHON (Boot Key Harbor - 24.7067° N, 81.0967° W)

		High	Low	High	Low	High
Date	Day	Time / Height	Time / Height	Time / Height	Time / Height	Time / Height
Jan 27	Wed		00:43 / -0.48 ft	07:27 / 0.83 ft	11:29 / 0.43 ft	18:08 / 2.12 ft
Jan 28	Thu		01:31 / -0.60 ft	08:05 / 0.94 ft	12:31 / 0.26 ft	19:09 / 2.23 ft
Jan 29	Fri		02:15 / -0.67 ft	08:41 / 1.07 ft	13:29 / 0.08 ft	20:05 / 2.27 ft
Jan 30	Sat		02:55 / -0.66 ft	09:15 / 1.23 ft	14:25 / -0.10 ft	20:58 / 2.21 ft
Jan 31	Sun		03:34 / -0.59 ft	09:51 / 1.41 ft	15:22 / -0.23 ft	21:49 / 2.04 ft
Feb 1	Mon		04:12 / -0.45 ft	10:26 / 1.58 ft	16:19 / -0.32 ft	22:40 / 1.80 ft
Feb 2	Tue		04:49 / -0.28 ft	11:03 / 1.72 ft	17:19 / -0.34 ft	23:31 / 1.51 ft
Feb 3	Wed		05:27 / -0.09 ft	11:41 / 1.80 ft	18:22 / -0.31 ft	

KEY WEST (Hawk Channel - 24.5450° N, 81.7833° W)

		High	Low	High	Low	High
Date	Day	Time / Height	Time / Height	Time / Height	Time / Height	Time / Height
Jan 27	Wed		00:55 / -0.38 ft	07:29 / 0.84 ft	11:42 / 0.33 ft	18:18 / 2.03 ft
Jan 28	Thu		01:44 / -0.48 ft	08:09 / 0.94 ft	12:44 / 0.20 ft	19:18 / 2.15 ft
Jan 29	Fri		02:28 / -0.54 ft	08:46 / 1.07 ft	13:42 / 0.05 ft	20:13 / 2.18 ft
Jan 30	Sat		03:09 / -0.53 ft	09:22 / 1.22 ft	14:39 / -0.10 ft	21:05 / 2.13 ft
Jan 31	Sun		03:47 / -0.48 ft	09:58 / 1.38 ft	15:35 / -0.21 ft	21:57 / 1.97 ft
Feb 1	Mon		04:25 / -0.38 ft	10:34 / 1.53 ft	16:32 / -0.27 ft	22:48 / 1.74 ft
Feb 2	Tue		05:02 / -0.24 ft	11:11 / 1.66 ft	17:31 / -0.29 ft	23:40 / 1.46 ft
Feb 3	Wed		05:39 / -0.09 ft	11:50 / 1.73 ft	18:33 / -0.26 ft	

Moon Phases

Full: 01/30/10 • Last Quarter: 02/05/10
New: 02/13/10 • First Quarter: 02/21/10

Tide predictions may not be accurate. The Weekly Fisherman accepts no liabilities associated with any referenced use of the above-listed tidal information. Remember that weather conditions affect tidal ranges and current speeds, sometimes very strongly.



TOURNAMENTS

We want to hear about your tournament!
Have it listed here for FREE by calling
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e-mail: editor@weeklyfisherman.com.

Jan. 27-28: Islamorada Fishing Club Sailfish Tournament.

Islamorada. The historic fishing club offers a \$30,000 winner-take-all cash prize in this sailfish challenge. The tournament is limited to 30 boats. Contact Dianne Harbaugh at (305) 852-2102 or (305) 664-4725, e-mail fishing@theislamoradafishingclub.com or visit theislamoradafishingclub.com.

Jan. 29-30: Florida Keys Fishing Guides Association Swamp Guides Ball.

Islamorada. This all-release event offers fishing for bonefish, redfish and snook in the shallows of the Florida Keys and the saltwater fringes of the Everglades. Contact Captain Rusty and Terry Albury at (305) 664-5142, e-mail talbury@aol.com or write to P.O. Box 303, Islamorada FL 33036.

Feb. 4-6: Billfish Bowl. Key Largo. An all-release sailfish tournament hosted by NFL legends Jimmy Johnson and Mike Ditka to raise money for the nonprofit group Gridiron Greats. The event will take place at the Big Chill Bar and Restaurant in Key Largo. Contact Tammie Gurgiolo at (866) 203-2720 or visit billfishbowl.com.

Feb. 12-14: Islamorada Women's Sailfish Tournament. Islamorada. This light-tackle challenge has female anglers facing off against the famous tail-dancers for trophies and prizes. Contact Tammie Gurgiolo at (305) 852-9337, e-mail fishnbully@msn.com or write to 124 Tavern Drive, Tavernier FL 33070.

Feb. 16-17: Poor Girls Sailfish Tournament. Key Largo and Islamorada. This popular Keys tournament typically draws more than 200 anglers. Contact Sharon Mahoney Ellenwood at (305) 664-2012 or e-mail sharellen@netzero.net.

Feb. 26-27: Backcountry Fly Championship. Islamorada. This new fly-fishing competition will target snook and redfish in that region of the Keys famous for them. Contact Charlotte Ambrogio at (305) 664-2444, e-mail csasun@aol.com or write P.O. Box 1063, Islamorada, FL 33036.


March 5-6: Backbone Lures "Fish 'Til You Lose It." Islamorada. Anglers compete to catch the finned denizens of the flats and backcountry, fishing with one lure or one fly until they lose it. Contact Paul Tejera by e-mailing captbackbone@gmail.com or visit backbonelures.com.

March 5-7: Captain Leon Shell Memorial Billfish Tournament. Key Colony Beach. Anglers pursue sailfish in honor of the late lure maker who made the Middle Florida Keys his home. The tournament benefits Hospice of the Florida Keys. Contact Terry Fisher at (305) 289-1310, e-mail kcbmarina@bellsouth.net, visit leonshelltournament.com or write to P.O. Box 510910, Key Colony Beach FL 33051-0910.

March 11-14: Florida Keys Survivor. Islamorada. In this backcountry elimination draw tournament, the winner is the sole survivor. Contact Sharon Mahoney Ellenwood at (305) 664-2012 or (305) 393-6174, or e-mail sharellen@netzero.net.



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