
THE TAG FLAG

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE TOURNAMENT ANGLERS ASSOCIATION

MARCH 2003

**ANDY JACOBI WINS
SAILFISH TOURNAMENT**

By Steve Davis

Andy Jacobi, who recently took top individual honors at the Presidential Challenge, continued his winning ways by becoming the 2003 Ixtapa Champion with 14 releases for 2100 points. He edged out second place angler **Jim Severson** by 20 points. Third place honors went to **Smokey Molle** with 1970 points, while **Neal McNamara** placed fourth with 1800 points. These top four anglers will represent the Ixtapa Sailfish Tournament at the 2004 Rolex/IGFA Offshore Championship in Cabo San Lucas.

The 2003 Ixtapa Sailfish Tournament was a tremendous success, organized and managed by **Steve Davis** and **Jack Betts**. The fishing was excellent with an impressive 231 sailfish released. This was the highest release total since 1996.

The first day of fishing resulted in 64 releases. Topping

the scoreboard was **Smokey Molle** and **Gary Lucas** with 5 releases each, followed by **Neal**

(Continued on page 2)

TAA IS ON THE WEB

Thanks to the great work by **Steve Davis** the Tournament Anglers Association has a new web page, the address is www.fishtaa.com. You will find tournament information, news, release statistics, and a photo gallery on the site. This is a work in progress, if you have suggestions for the website, contact Steve Davis by e-mail at, sdavis@firedept.net.

**CIRCLE HOOK
WILL BE REQUIRED**

At the annual TAA Board of Directors, meeting in Ixtapa, it was voted to take the organization's conservation efforts and concerns to the next level. The use of circle hooks will be required at the Ixtapa Sailfish Tournament in 2004. The board also recommended that Eastcape anglers experiment with the use of the circle hook at the 2003 tournament, with

possible implementation during the 2004 event.

The use of circle hooks has proven to reduce the mortality rate of billfish significantly, because 82% of hook ups are in the jaw of the fish. It has also

been determined that the number hook ups is not affected by the use of this style of hook. A number of tournaments, including the Presidential Challenge Events, have switched to the circle hooks and found no reduction in the number of hook ups.

The Rolex/IGFA Offshore Championship has required circle hooks since its inception in 2001.

Not all circle hooks are tournament approved. TAA will most likely follow the lead of the Presidential Challenge and the Miami Billfish Tournament in recommending only tournament-approved hooks. Please wait until you receive your 2004 Ixtapa invitation, which will identify the approved hooks before making your purchases.

**UPCOMING TAA
TOURNAMENTS**

May 10 to 16, 2003 - RO-
LEX/IGFA, Cabo San Lucas

June 22 to 24, 2003 – East-
cape Billfish Tournament

Jan. 17 to 23, 2004 - Ixtapa
Sailfish Tournament

JACOBI WINS IXTAPA
(cont.)

McNamara, Alene Molle, Steve Davis, Peter Davis and Rocky Franich with 4 releases each. The daily high point went to Smokey who proved once again that the small game fish make a difference.

The second day of fishing saw continued action with 9 anglers releasing 3 sailfish each. They included **Jack Betts, Peter Davis, Steve Davis, Mark Lottis, Neal McNamara, Dale Miles, Alene Molle, Jim Severson, and Smokey Molle**. Smokey received the high point award once again by catching a dorado. A total of 49 sailfish were released on the second day.

Day 3 of fishing turned out to be the most productive with 81 sailfish releases. High angler for the day was **Andy Jacobi** with an impressive 8 releases, followed by **Jim Gill** with 7, **Dave Holland** with 5, and **Dave Stroller and Jim Severson** with 4 each.

The fourth day of fishing started with numerous anglers within striking distance of top honors. **Jim Severson** was

the High Point angler with 6 releases, followed by **Rocky Franich, Neal McNamara, Bill Evans, and Smokey Molle** with 3 releases each. Day 4 turned out to be the slowest day with 37 releases.

Top Teams were **Peter Davis/Rocky Franich** with 3020 points, **Gary Lucas/Andy Jacobi** with 3010 points, **Neal McNamara/Mark Lottis** with 2830 points, and **Nora Schofield/Jim Severson** with 2680 points.

During the awards ceremony the TAA recognized 17 anglers for their angling achievement with release patches. Most notable were **John Jackson** with 150 releases, **Nora Schofield, Rocky Franich, Arlene Steiner** and **John Zehnder** with 125 releases each, and **Dave Stoller** with 100 releases.

The Hotel Dorado Pacifico did an excellent job hosting this year's event.

Next year's tournament dates are January 17-23, 2004. **Jack Betts** and **Dale Miles** will Co-Chair the event.

THANK YOU

We would like to thank all the people involved in the recent 2003 Ixtapa Sailfish Tournament for being so friendly and helpful. This was the first time we had ever been to one of TAA's functions, and the way everyone treated us made for a great experience.

Thank you again and we look forward to seeing everybody next year, if not before.

Mark & Karen Lottis
Gold Beach, Oregon

**TAA CELEBRATES
20TH BIRTHDAY**

TAA is celebrating its 20th birthday this year. The organization was founded in February 1983.

Thank you to the founders **Lou DeMers, Bill Hoey, John Jackson, Neal McNamara and John Zehnder** for 20 years of great fishing, good times and most importantly **OUTSTANDING FRIENDSHIPS!!!**

See www.fishtaa.com, "About Us" for more information.

IN MEMORIUM

One TAA member and a friend of many of TAA members were lost in 2002. On our next fishing trip let's remember both of them.

Rolfe Croker passed away on December 27, 2002. Services were held on January 6, 2003 and Rolfe's ashes were scattered in the Pacific Ocean, near San Francisco Bay..

Dick Wilkes passed away on November 21, 2002. Dick was the US booking agent for the Solmar Hotel and formerly handled the bookings for the Pamilla and Hotel Cabo San Lucas. While not a member of TAA, he in many ways was responsible for the formation

of the organization. He introduced many of the founding members to each other, through his tournaments "The Classic" and "The Cortez Pacific".

**2003 EASTCAPE
BILLFISH TOURNAMENT**

The 2003 Eastcape Billfish Tournament will be held on June 22 to 24, 2003.

The chairman, **Darrell Ticehurst**, has promised a great tournament. "There are a lot of fish out there, and the reports for this year's tournament look very good. This tournament is the ideal one to introduce someone to TAA and our Challenge Division gives new anglers a great chance for glory."

As of press time there were 2 spots remaining. If you've been procrastinating, do not delay any longer.

If you need an invitation or additional information, contact Darrell. He can be reached by telephone at 650-347-5919, or via email at darrellt@attbi.com.

**ROLEX/IGFA OFFSHORE
CHAMPIONSHIP**

TAA will field two teams to the 2003 Rolex/IGFA Offshore Championship. The event will be held May 10 to 16, 2003, for the second year in Cabo San Lucas. The two teams will consist of:

Ixtapa Team – **John Zehnder** (Captain), **John Jackson**, **Smokey Molle**, **Arlen Steiner**

Eastcape Team – **Neal McNamara** (Captain), **Keith Leimbach**, **Mike McElroy**, **Dale Miles**

A field of 45 U.S. and international teams will compete in this year's event.

This will be the third Offshore Championship. TAA has had an outstanding record in the previous Championships. **Neal McNamara** was the high point angler in the inaugural event, held in Kona, Hawaii. The Eastcape Team of **Bill Evans**, **John Jackson**, **Neal McNamara** and **Jerry Yahiro** placed third in 2002. Fifty seven (57) teams participated last year.

For up-to-date information and daily standings go to www.igfatournaments.com.

GOOD LUCK to both teams!

**TORUNAMENT
CHAIRPERSONS**

Each tournament held by TAA requires a chairperson(s). These people put in a tremendous amount of time and effort to see that these tournaments are coordinated and successful. Everything from hotel accommodations, boat reservations, goodie bag items, prizes, shirts, receptions, cocktail parties, score keeping, money collection and many, many other details must be attended to.

Please express your thanks to these dedicated chairperson(s).

If you are approached by a TAA Board member and asked

to chair a future tournament, PLEASE consider the request and opportunity for an extremely gratifying experience. Attached is a listing of prior tournaments and chairpersons.