

2004 Press Releases

Hatterascal Starts BBC 2004 with a Win

Record Start for BBC's 31st Annual Series

A record fleet of sixty-two of the world's top sport fishing teams started this year's Bahamas Billfish Championship in grand style by catching eighty-eight qualified billfish during the four-day South Abaco Championship. The record fishing action caused the benchmark minimum length to be raised from 99 inches to 109 inches for the second consecutive year during the first leg of the five tournament series.

The 60-foot Hatteras factory demonstrator, *Hatterascal*, came from behind to take top honors as Overall Winner and Top Release Team at the South Abaco Championship. Hatteras Yachts and MarineMax Yachts & Brokerage were hosts for the event last week at the Abaco Beach Resort & Boat Harbour Marina in Marsh Harbour, Abaco, Bahamas.

After winning the inaugural Bahamas White Marlin Open the week before, the *Hatterascal* started the South Abaco Championship slowly. *Hatterascal* was not among the eighteen teams releasing billfish on Day 1, Monday. However, the rest of the week produced a different story. Day 2 saw team *Hatterascal* release a white marlin and on Day 3, Thursday, the Team released a sailfish. At the start of fishing on Friday, the final day, team *Hatterascal* trailed the leading boat, *Therapy*, by 800 points. Once again, the persistence of Capt. Terry Stansel brought the *Hatterascal* out on top when they released two blue marlin and a white marlin for a tournament total of 1300 points.

Finishing a close Second was the *Won Buy Land* from Hillsboro Beach, Florida. Led by team captain, Harry Patton, the *Won Buy Land* achieved 1216 points by releasing a blue marlin, a white marlin and landing the largest blue of the tournament which weighed 616 pounds.

Won Buy Land narrowly edged out *The Recovery Room* from Orlando, Florida which finished in Third Place with 1200 points. Team captain, George Torn released two blue marlin and two white marlin for the week. Accumulating a total of 1109 points to finish in Fourth Place was *Boomer* from Manchester, Massachusetts. *Boomer's* team released a white and a blue marlin and, on the final day, landed a 509 pound blue marlin to edge-out *Therapy* by nine points.

For their win as Top Release Team, the *Hatterascal* received a handsome sculpture trophy from Murray Products, High Seas Technology and PipeWelders. The *Hatterascal* crew was awarded matching trophies by Lewis Marine Supply.

The excellent fishing during the South Abaco Championship resulted in forty-four qualified blue marlin

caught; forty-one qualified white marlin and five qualified sailfish. All but six of the billfish were released. All catches are verified using time and date stamped digital images.

An element of drama was added to the BBC's first leg when Jack Delaney aboard the *Lone Eagle* hooked up with a blue marlin estimated at over 1,000 pounds. Delaney fought the fish for more than thirteen hours only to lose the big fish at 3:30 AM on Wednesday morning. Despite being weary and disappointed at losing the fish, Delaney said, when he returned to the dock, "It was a thrill of a lifetime to have had the opportunity to do battle with such a fish."

Rolex continues their role as Title Sponsor of the 2004 Bahamas Billfish Championship. This year's Rolex Grand Prize of an all expense paid, round-trip to Queensland, Australia and participation in the Lizard Island Black Marlin Classic will be awarded to the Overall Winner of the 2004 series.

Hatteras Yachts and MarineMax Yachts and Brokerage were the principal hosts for the South Abaco Championship, presenting their trophies to the winners and hosting numerous social functions. The highlight of the week's social events was the Cajun Night Party presented by TABASCO's world renowned hospitality chefs, Lionel and Peggy Robin. Anglers and crews dined on a five-course Cajun meal prepared with local Bahamian seafood. Additional social sponsors included Abaco Gold & Sand Dollar Shoppe, Bristol Wine & Spirits, Cruzan Rum, Bimini Island Air, John Bull and Crown Royal.

Spanning April through June, all BBC tournaments are governed by a uniform set of rules controlling minimum lengths for qualifying billfish, line class, fishing hours and entry fees. Anglers can fish any or all of the tournaments with cumulative points determining the overall Bahamas Billfish Champions.

Throughout its history, the Championship has been a consistent supporter of billfish research and, in 2000, established an endowed Scholarship Fund to enable Bahamian students the opportunity to pursue a degree in marine biology. The BBC Scholarship Fund is supported by voluntary financial contributions from anglers, BBC sponsors and the Bahamian business community.

After the South Abaco Championship, the overall standings for the 2004 Bahamas Billfish Championship are: First Place - *Hatterascal* - 2000 points; Second Place - *Won Buy Land* - 1816 points; Third Place - *The Recovery Room* - 1700 points; Fourth Place - *Boomer* - 1509 points; Top Release Team - *Hatterascal*.

Next the Bahamas Billfish Championship anglers and teams will head to Spanish Cay in the North-central Abacos for Leg Two which begins May 9th and continues through May 14th.

Hey Jude Captures Spanish Cay Championship

Second BBC Tournament Attracts Forty-four Fishing Teams

The Bahamas Billfish Championship returned to the newly renovated and expanded Spanish Cay Resort & Marina, May 9th through 14th for leg two of the five tournament series. The venue continued to be a huge success for the forty-four participating teams. Despite strong southeasterly winds, a total of eighty billfish were caught during the week and the teams proved Spanish Cay to be a fertile fishing area for blue marlin.

Hey Jude team captain, Greg Dent of Tierra Verde, Florida boated a 609 pound blue marlin on the second day of fishing. After releasing three more blues and a white marlin during the week, the team finished First Place with a total of 2009 points.

The Second Place award was taken by the team *Tangled in Blue* of Ft. Lauderdale, Florida. Fishing on the 57 foot Allied Richard Bertram Marine Group's boat, Captain Lindsay Forde led his team to a total of 1800 points by releasing four blue marlin and one white marlin for the week. Team *Tangled in Blue* also captured the Top Release trophy at Spanish Cay.

Randy McCoy, fishing on the 47 Viking, *Aquasition* out of Ocala, Florida, took Third Place honors by being the first team, based on time, to release four blue marlin, scoring 1600 points for the tournament. The Fourth Place award was taken by BBC veteran, George Lorton's team, *Therapy* from Gulfport, Florida. The team also caught four blues also giving them 1600 points for the week.

Title Sponsor Rolex will award the Rolex Grand Prize to the 2004 Overall Champion. The Grand Prize winner will represent the Bahamas Billfish Championship by participating, courtesy of Rolex, in the Lizard Island Black Marlin Classic held in October of each year at Lizard Island, Queensland, Australia.

For the week, the field of forty-four teams caught eighty qualified billfish. All catches are verified using time and date stamped digital images. Blue marlin accounted for fifty-six of the catches, with twenty-four white marlin filling the balance. All but four blue marlin were released. On the second day of the tournament, team *Hey Jude* brought a blue marlin to the scales weighing 609 pounds. The third day three additional fish were brought to the scales by teams *Cabana*, *El Cazador*, and *Last Stall*.

Hatteras Yachts of New Bern, North Carolina participated as the tournament sponsor for the Spanish Cay Championship. David Ritchie, Director of Marketing and Bonnie and Terri Stansel from the factory demonstrator, *Hatterascal* presented trophies to the winners. Murray Products of West Palm Beach, in conjunction with High Seas Technology & PipeWelders of Ft. Lauderdale, sponsored the Top Release trophy awarded to *Tangled in Blue*. Crew trophies presented to the team *Hey Jude* were sponsored by Lewis Marine Supply. In conjunction with MarineMax Yachts & Brokerage, Hatteras also hosted Tuesday evening's Mexican Fiesta. Other social function hosts included Bimini Island Air and Bristol Cellars Wines & Spirits.

After the Spanish Cay Championship, the standings for the Bahamas Billfish Championship 2004 have

changed and look like this:

First Place *Hey Jude* 3409 points

Second Place *Therapy* 3200 points

Third Place *Tangled in Blue* 2900 points

Fourth Place *Hatterascal* 2500 points

Top Release Team *Therapy*

In 2000, the Bahamas Billfish Championship established an endowed Scholarship Fund to enable Bahamian students the opportunity to pursue a degree in marine biology. As of the second leg of the five tournament series for 2004, more than \$20,000 has been raised for the scholarship fund this year.

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Top Release Team Wins Central Abaco Championship

***Tangled in Blue* is Tickled Pink!**

Team *Tangled In Blue* was able to release five blue marlin during the Central Abaco Championship to not only take First Place honors in that tournament but also advance to First Place overall in the 2004 Bahamas Billfish Championship (BBC) series. *Tangled In Blue*, the 57 foot Bertram demonstrator owned by the Allied Richard Bertram Marine Group of Fort Lauderdale, Florida, has performed well in two of the first three BBC events with two tournaments remaining. *Tangled In Blue* took Second Place at the Spanish Cay Championship with 1800 points and First Place at the Central Abaco Championship at Treasure Cay with 2000 points.

Smooth Finish, led by Keith Aery from Friendswood, Texas finished in Second Place with 1659 points when Aery released two blue marlin and boated the largest blue marlin of the BBC season thus far; 859 pounds. Close behind *Smooth Finish*, with 1600 points, was previous BBC winner, Jim Lambert aboard *Reel Tight* out of Hillsboro Beach, Florida. Lambert had four blue marlin releases for the week. Team *Bright Star* combined a white marlin release with two blue marlin releases and a 516 pound blue boated on the final day to accumulate 1516 points and a Fourth Place finish at the Central Abaco Championship.

For the week, the field of forty-seven teams caught sixty-nine qualified billfish. Blue marlin accounted for fifty-six while twelve white marlin and one sailfish were caught. All catches are verified using time and date stamped digital images.

In addition to the 859 pound blue caught by *Smooth Finish*, team *Great Escape* from Houston, Texas landed a blue weighing 832 pounds and *The Recovery Room* from Orlando, Florida boated a blue that weighed 711 pounds. Team *Perfect Parts* managed to catch three blue marlin during the Central Abaco Championship releasing one and boating the other two which weighed-in at 512 pounds and 505 pounds respectively.

The Allied Richard Bertram Marine Group and Bertram Yachts participated as the tournament hosts for the Central Abaco Championship, with Don Jones, Vice President of Sales for Bertram Yacht presenting the trophies to the winners. In conjunction with Bertram Yachts, Allied also hosted their famous 'Bertram Bash' on Tuesday evening, featuring authentic Southwestern Barbeque of ribs, smoked pork and brisket.

After the Central Abaco Championship, the standings for the Bahamas Billfish Championship 2004 have changed and look like this:

First Place *Tangled in Blue* 5600 points

Second Place *Hey Jude* 3909 points

Third Place *Smooth Finish* 3459 points

Fourth Place *Therapy* 3300 points

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Next the Bahamas Billfish Championship anglers and teams will return to Treasure Cay Resort and Marina in the Abacos for Leg Four which begins June 6th and continues through June 11th.

Stay Tuned!