
JIM RAMSEY WINS EASTCAPE

Veteran angler Jim Ramsey won the 17th Annual Eastcape Billfish Tournament. Sponsored by Tournament Anglers Association (TAA), the tournament was held on June 22 to 24, 2003, at the Hotel Palmas de Cortez, Baja California Sur.

This tournament is one of TAA's two qualifying events for the Rolex/IGFA Offshore Championship. (The other qualifying tournament is the Ixtapa Sailfish Tournament.) The top four (4) anglers will represent TAA's Eastcape Team at the 2004 event.

This year, 30 anglers caught and released 21 billfish. Most of the billfish caught were striped marlin, with a few blue marlins also caught and released. No sailfish were caught.

There was no logical explanation for the fall off in productivity from 2002, when Eastcape anglers caught and released 71 marlin. While marlin were sighted, not many were caught. In the words of our Mexican boat captains, "Fish not hungry".

Jim Ramsey led the field from start to finish with three releases on day one. He also caught another striped marlin on day 2. Jim won both the Challenge Division and the Overall Championship.

Jim will be the Captain of the 2004 Eastcape Team at the Rolex/IGFA Offshore Championship. He also is a long time member of the Pajaro Valley Game Fish Club.

Other Eastcape Team members to the 2004 Championship are: Second Place Angler, Darrell Ticehurst; Third Place Angler, Dr. Sanbo Sakaguchi, a legendary big game angler who is 86 years young; 4th Place Angler, Dean Hafeman, the Champion of the 1999 Eastcape Tournament.

The Tournament Chairman was Darrell Ticehurst, who was recently appointed to the Pacific Fisheries Management Council as a representative of recreational anglers. Darrell also is an IGFA representative.

IN MEMORIAM

Jack Betts was tragically killed in an accident on July 23, 2003. A long time member of TAA, Jack fished in both the Ixtapa Sailfish and Eastcape Billfish Tournaments. Our sympathies go out to the Betts family.

Catch a big fish and hoist a cold one in his memory.

TAA MEMBERS WIN HIBT

TAA members Rocky Franich, Jim Ramsey, Arlan Steiner and Mike McElroy, fishing for the Pajaro Valley Gamefish Club, Watsonville, CA won the Hawaiian Invitational Billfish Tournament (HIBT). (Also fishing with the Pajaro Club was Joe Yee, well-known marlin lure maker.) Held August 8 to 14, 2003, in Kona, Hawaii, this was the third time this team has won this prestigious tournament (1997 & 2001).

The Pajaro Valley Team won the tournament with three blue marlin, two of which were over 500 pounds. Jim Ramsey caught a 508-pound marlin and caught and released another.

Rocky Frnaich's catch weighed 516 pounds. His catch was also the largest catch of the tournament and won the Duke Kahanomoku Memorial Award.

Another TAA member, Bill Hoey, and the Big Island's Anglers Team finished in second place. The team also won the Pacific Ocean Research Foundation's Award for the tagging and releasing of three marlin and one spearfish.

The HIBT is also a qualifying event to the Rolex/IGFA Offshore Championship. Rocky, Mike, Arlan and Joe will represent their Club in the 2004 event.

ROLEX/IGFA OFFSHORE CHAMPIONSHIP TOURNAMENT

The Rolex/IGFA Offshore Championship Tournament, held in Cabo San Lucas, has become one of the premier big game fishing tournaments. TAA not only has participated in this tournament since inception in 2000, but also have placed a team in the top 5 each year.

The Eastcape Team of Neal McNamara, Mike McElroy, Dale Miles and Keith Limbic finished 4th in the 2003 Tournament. Additionally, Mike McElroy took the honors for the largest Wahoo (65.7 pounds) in the tournament.

Here are the results for the previous Offshore Championships:

2000, Kona, Hawaii – 5th place, Eastcape Team.

2001, Kona, Hawaii – 3rd place, Ixtapa Team: Neal McNamara, Gary Lucas, James Severson, Steve Lynch. Neal McNamara 1st place individual angler

2002, Cabo San Lucas – Third place, Eastcape Team: Bill Evans, John Jackson, Neal McNamara, Jerry Yahiro. Jerry Yahiro 1st place wahoo (89.74 pounds)

The 2004 Rolex/IGFA Offshore Championship will again be held in Cabo San Lucas, May 16th to 21st. As of late October, 41 teams have committed to participate.

Teams are selected through a series of qualifying tournaments. This year a record 98

tournaments, representing 33 countries and territories and 12 states, will determine the teams who will participate in 2004.

TAA will again have teams qualifying from the Ixtapa Sailfish Tournament and the Eastcape Billfish Tournament. The top four anglers of each tournament qualify for the team. Team members are:

Ixtapa Team: Team Captain, Andy Jacoby, Jim Severson, Smokey Molle, Neal McNamara.

Eastcape Team: Team Captain, Jim Ramsey, Darrell Ticehurst, Sanbo Sakaguchi, Dean Hafeman

Good luck to both teams.

2004 TOURNAMENTS

Ixtapa Sailfish Tournament: January 17 to 23 – Chairman Dale Miles, Telephone 916-425-3150, email, 5miles@prodigy.net

Eastcape Billfish Tournament: June 10 to 14 – Chairman Mike McElroy, Telephone (831) 722-2591. email, amestimike@msn.com