



The IGFTO Observer

A newsletter for International Game Fish Tournament Observers

Volume 1

Edition 3

Observing Today ... Conserving Tomorrow



2012 - IGFTO Year in Review

One of the greatest accomplishments in IGFTO's short history occurred in 2012 with the designation of a 501(c)3 tax-exempt charitable organization awarded by the Internal Revenue Service. The IRS designation creates significant opportunities for IGFTO to raise funds through tax-deductible contributions and, as a result, will advance the organization into the next level of development and growth.

Other accomplishments in 2012 included:

- 44 % increase in membership
- Participation in 13 tournaments in 7 countries.
- Witnessing the catch & safe releases of 2,454 billfish, including 254 blue marlin, 197 white marlin, 9 striped marlin and 1,994 sailfish.
- Provided liability insurance for all IGFTO members.
- Enhancement of the [IGFTO website](http://www.igfto.org), www.igfto.org
- Appointment of Steve Hargett & Greg Moore as IGFTO Directors.
- Providing **Blue** IGFTO Danali, moisture wicking work shirts for members only.
- Supplying IGFTO work books for members only.
- Distribution of IGFTO buckets stickers for tournament boats.
- Participation at the Miami Boat Show and the Fort Lauderdale Boat Show.
- Attendance at The Billfish Foundation 26th Annual Gala.
- Increased presence on the IGFTO [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/igfto) site.



This Richard Gibson picture of IGFTO observer Bill Slaughter posing with the crew of The Teaser at the Presidential Challenge Cup of Aruba was the most viewed and talked about photograph posted on the [IGFTO Facebook site](https://www.facebook.com/igfto) in 2012. What a nice way to Promote the Circle Hook Release Flag created by Marine Artist David Wirth.

IGFTO in 2013

With the IRS designation as a tax-exempt charitable organization, IGFTO will work toward increasing revenue to further billfish conservation education, assist with observer training courses and promote more release tournament venues.

Upcoming IGFTO observing opportunities include:

- ◆ Palm Beach Double Shot, Jan. 23-26.
- ◆ Los Suenos Signature Series I & II Tournaments, Jan. 16-19 & March 16-19.
- ◆ Presidential Challenge of Costa Rica, Feb. 28- March 3.
- ◆ Presidential Papagayo Cup, May 16 - 19.
- ◆ Cap Cana Billfish Shootout, May 29 - June 3.
- ◆ St. Thomas USVI July Open, July 16-18.



IGFA Observer Training Class

The next Observer Training Course will be held Feb. 16 at the IGFA Headquarters in Dania Beach, FL. Find applications at www.igfa.org. For more info, call Jack Vitek at 954-924-4246 or email him at jvitek@igfa.org.

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IGFTO Membership Applications Available Online at www.igfto.org



Observer Lee Fickinger wears his IGFTO blue work shirt as he watches as an angler hook up a sailfish on the winning boat, Hey Chama, in Aruba.