

The IGFTO Observer ~ July 7, 2024



# The IGFTO Observer

*A Newsletter for International Game Fish Tournament Observers*

~Volume 13



Edition 2~

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## **Aqua Inspiration Three 2024 | Golfito and Quepos, Costa Rica**

**Story by: Reese Bowles**

### **Golfito**

A little over six weeks ago, Aqua Inspiration kicked off in Golfito, C.R., on Monday, May 27, 2024. Our second year in Golfito, the event was sponsored by the IGFTO, Junior Achievement–Costa Rica, Marina Bahia Golfito, and Marina Pez Vela Youth Career Days.

The event started with Junior Achievement–Costa Rica implementing career–building activities such as team building, communication, self–presentation, and leadership at the Colegio Tecnico Profesional de Guaycara. The IGFTO was introduced, and events shirts were given to every student participant. Twenty–two team members and volunteers met at the hotel Casa Roland for planning and review that evening during an IGFTO–hosted dinner.

### **Nearly 100 Students and School Administrators Participated**

On Tuesday, May 28, 2024, IGFTO members along with Junior Achievement–Costa Rica, Marina Bahia Golfito Staff, and volunteers from Marina Pez Vela welcomed

nearly 100 students and school administrators at Marina Bahia Golfito. All participants received a healthy breakfast followed by a group photo session.

Students were divided into smaller groups and met their station leaders. Each group was assigned to 1 of 10 learning stations. The students rotated through all 10 stations spending 15–20 minutes at each station.

Junior Achievement improved the event with several additions this year. Topics included conservation of Billfish (FECOP), risks and safety (CISMA), hospitality, certification opportunities (Learning National Institute), restaurant services, fuel dock environmental and safety concerns, and formal program opportunities (Universidad de Costa Rica).



Fuel Dock Operations | Photo Credit: Sebastian Harris

#### **Students Toured Two Large Vessels**

Students toured two large ships, the 120-foot shark research vessel *Range Rover*, and the 130-foot private yacht *Contiki*, a charter service from Ecuador. In addition, the crew of the *Gladiator* introduced students to proper rod and reel

techniques for fighting sportfish (special thanks again to Bobby McGinnis).

All the groups met downstairs in the La Playa Restaurant for lunch. Afterward, all moved upstairs to the crew lounge to listen to motivational speakers, conduct a station review in question form, vie for raffle prizes, and receive certificates of completion.



Aqua Inspiration Golfito | Photo Credit: Sebastian Harris

### **On To Aqua Inspiration Quepos**

Thursday, May 30, 2024 the IGFTO and Junior Achievement–Costa Rica kicked off year three in Quepos, Costa Rica. The Junior Achievement–Costa Rica staff introduced activities such as team building, communication, self–presentation, and leadership at the Liceo Academico de Londres. Three communities participated. The IGFTO was introduced and shirts were given to every student participant. On the evening of May 30, 2024, twenty team members and volunteers met at Kokey’s for an IGFTO–hosted dinner.

### **More than 100 Students and School Administrators Participated**

Friday, May 31, 2024, the IGFTO, Junior Achievement–Costa Rica, and the staff of Marina Pez Vela, Quepos welcomed 110 students and administrative volunteers.

The group was introduced to the day’s activities during breakfast. They gathered for a group photo and then broke into smaller groups and met their group leaders. Students rotated through nine educational stations spending 20 minutes at each one. Every station was staffed by professional experts in their field.

Topics included a presentation about Billfish conservation by Henry Marin (of FECOP), risk and safety (CISMA), reef–building (marine conservation), and labor skills. Students took a tour of the yacht yard and learned about boat service and

repair.



Aqua Inspiration Students are shown a portion of the "yards."

Photo Credit: Sebastian Harris

### **Fishing Equipment and Techniques Were Presented**

Down on the docks students learned how to cast a spinning rod. Captain Butch Carlson, owner of the vessel *Gypsy Girl*, talked about teasers and dredges. Captain Harold of the vessel *Aly-Gator* spoke about outriggers. We all moved to the pavilion to listen to motivational speakers, conduct a station review in question form, vie for raffle prizes, and receive certificates of completion.





**IGFTO Member Capt. Butch Carlson in the tower of *Gypsy Girl***

**Photo Credit: Sebastian Harris**

### **Both Events Were a Huge Success!**

**Both events were a huge success and the participants all showed enthusiasm. Stations reported that students were attentive and asked many questions.**

**I would like to thank all the sponsors and volunteers at both events. I have been impressed with the staff at both Marinas. Randall and his staff at Junior Achievement–Costa Rica outdid themselves this year. My thanks especially go out to Maria Bakit Jimenez, her husband Neil, and their entire family!**

**One never knows how much of an impact one can have in someone's life with just one day of showing them the opportunities that await them. The Aqua Inspiration**

program is looking to expand to other marinas in Costa Rica in the future.

If you want to be a part of the Aqua Inspiration program, planning has already begun for 2025. Your generous tax-deductible donation is always welcome via check to: IGFTO, P.O. Box 30191, Pensacola, FL 32503 – annotate Aqua Inspiration on the memo line, or online via [venmo](#) THANK YOU!!

Want more photos and stories, navigate to our partner pages: [JACOSTARICA-GOLFITO](#) or [JACOSTARICA-QUEPOS](#)

## Preview



Aqua Inspiration Quepos | Photo Credit: Sebastian Harris

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## *Bet You Didn't Know*

Story by: Art McDonald



Photo Credit: worldwideweb

The scientific name for White Marlin is *Kajikia Albida*. Prior to 2001, Roundscale Spearfish and White Marlin were identified as the same species (although Roundscale Spearfish were often identified as a mutated White Marlin – referred to as a “Hatchet Marlin”).

#### **White Marlin vs Roundscale Spearfish.**

Researchers at Nova Southeastern University first discovered that these two species were significantly different through genetic tests. White Marlin have dark spots on their dorsal fins, which is one way to distinguish them between the Roundscale Spearfish (who do not have dark spots on their dorsal fins). Another “give away” is the anal opening on a White Marlin is close to its anal fin, whereas, the Roundscale Spearfish has an anal opening 5–6” further forward from the anal opening.

The color of the White Marlin is bimodal: dark blue on one side and dingy white on the other, referred to as “countershading.”

White Marlin are deep water fish.

White Marlin are found in waters with a depth of greater than 100 meters (337’), although they prefer to remain close to the surface. White Marlin are found throughout warmer waters of the Atlantic Ocean 45 degrees North to 45 degrees South, it is found in the Gulf of Mexico, Caribbean Sea, and Mediterranean Sea, although records from the Mediterranean Sea appear to refer to vagrants (single fish not common to the area). They are believed to live up to 15 years.

Tagged White Marlin have been recaptured after being at liberty for almost 12 years. Yours truly captured a White Marlin in Venezuela that had originally been tagged off Virginia Beach, VA and had been at large for 3,041 days (8.3 years). They are highly migratory and are “ram ventilators,” which means they have to be constantly moving to breathe. Many have made long transatlantic journeys; in fact, One White Marlin resurfaced 6,517 km (4,083 miles) from where it was tagged 474 days earlier.

Female White Marlin can lay more than half a million eggs.

Each female White Marlin has an egg-laying capacity of between 190,000 and 565,000 eggs. Spawning only takes place once a year. The all-tackle IGFA World Record White Marlin weighed 183 pounds, captured in Victoria, Brazil (location of several IGFA White Marlin world records in various line classes). Female White Marlin grow larger than males (common in all billfishes).

The Behavior of gathering in large groups is rare among White Marlins, and it usually only happens when there is a lot of food in one area. When first hooked most White Marlin will propel themselves straight up out of the water (perpendicular) as opposed to other marlins who will, due to their girth, shake their heads or greyhound across the water. This is, sometimes, the easiest way to identify them and their rounded pectoral, anal, and dorsal fins.

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### **Member Profile – Gina Teixeira *Renaissance Lady***

**Story by: Art McDonald**

Sport fishing has undergone a transition over the past 25 years with more females taking part in the sport – and, these ladies are darn good anglers! IGFTO is actively involved in several all-female billfish tournaments, including 3 Los Sueños Ladies Tournaments, and the Pescadora Ladies Tournament in Quepos, CR. Saying that, there's one place in fishing circles which has a vast male superiority – fishing crews! Well, stand aside fellows...meet Captain Regina Teixeira, a USCG licensed captain from Islamorada, FL!

Captain Teixeira hails from Stonington, Connecticut. Her father and grandfather were both commercial fishermen, so Regina developed an early taste for the fishing industry. She moved to the Florida Keys in 2010 and fished a few years recreationally. She honed her skills, met many of the charter crews and ended up getting a job offer as a mate out of Whale Harbor. She jumped at the opportunity.

Regina sat for her USCG Captains License in 2016 and started her charter business – *Size Matters* out of Islamorada. She started with a 2017 Robalo Cayman 246, and just bought a new 2024 Blue Wave Makaira 2600. She is docked at the Lorelei Restaurant (MM 82) and is available for charter specializing on patch reef, wreck, and offshore fishing. She chose this occupation because she loves to fish and share that passion with others. She revels in watching her customers excitement when they catch a fish – especially the children. She's "hands on" in teaching and sharing her knowledge with others.

Gina learned about the IGFTO six years ago and took the Observer Training Course. She says she was "hooked from the get-go." She has observed in all the Costa Rican tournaments in addition to those in El Salvador and Puerto Rico. She is also one of the best IGFTO "Good Will Ambassadors" and is responsible for recommending IGFTO to a number of her fishing friends who have become members. She enjoys visiting foreign ports during her adventures as an observer and is quick to try out the



local fishing.

Check out her website at [sizematterschartersllc.com](http://sizematterschartersllc.com). If your travels take you to the Florida Keys and you are hankering to “wet a line” be sure to give Gina a call at 305.731.0880 or send her an email at [sizematters@gmail.com](mailto:sizematters@gmail.com).



L to R: Gina with a Roosterfish in Costa Rica, Size Matters ad, and a Bonnet Head Shark in Tavernier, FL.

Photo Credits: Capt. Ruddy and Beach Dollar

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## What's left for the rest of the year you ask?

- \*Puerto Rico for the 71st International Billfish Tournament
  - \*El Salvador for the 30th Anniversary of the International Billfish Tournament
  - \*Guatemala for the 9th Annual Guatemala Billfish Invitational (Member eBlast coming soon.)
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**Want More Information? Navigate to: [IGFTO](#), [upcoming OTCs](#), and [FAQs](#).**

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**Frequently Asked Questions**

**What is the IGFTO?**

The International Game Fish Tournament Observers Inc. (IGFTO) is a 501 (c) (3) non-profit corporation. It is made up of approximately 250 active members, including experienced Captains, Mates, and Anglers. The Directors and Board Members of the IGFTO are elected by the members and serve on a volunteer basis.

**How do I become an Observer?**

Tournament Directors require that all observers complete an Observer Training Course (OTC). The IGFTO is the only organization regularly conducting OTCs.

**Where can I take the Observer Training Course (OTC)?**

We conduct OTCs in various locations both in the U.S. and abroad. We post the schedule and location for OTCs on our website ([igfto.org](http://igfto.org)). Visit our training schedule calendar [here](#): If you have a group of 10, or more, qualified applicants - we can discuss coming to you.

**What are the requirements to become an Observer?**

We do not have any "cast in stone" requirements for membership other than offshore fishing experience. We like to see a history of bill fishing.

**Observer Training Course Schedule**

Thank You for your interest in becoming an IGFTO Observer. Please REGISTER to enroll below your course preference date and time, and submit your application.

Registration is Open unless otherwise indicated.

The Shack, Virginia Beach 7/11/2023

Ocean City, MD Marlin Club 8.25.2024

Hampton Inn, Downtown Los Angeles 11.9.2023

Fort Lauderdale, FL 11.9.2023

Future classes to be announced. [Details]

**We've Moved**

<https://www.igfto.org/about/Frequently-asked-Questions>

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## What's new you ask?

We've added another Observer Training Course for the Mid Atlantic region. Join us on Sunday, August 25, 2024 at the Ocean City Marlin Club. Read more and sign-up here - [OTCs](#). Bring a friend. As a reminder...Observers are always welcome and encouraged to attend one of our courses as a refresher.

Congratulations and Welcome Aboard to our most-recent Observers!

Jeff Adams	Carlsbad, CA
Keith Antell	Mays Landing, NJ
Jennifer Chandler	Key West, FL
Rob Dyer	Kennebunk, ME
Lauren Johnson	Tavernier, FL
Burt Moss	Pompano Beach, FL
Steve Shortridge	Cocoa, FL
Randall Weitzel	Tierra Verde, FL

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Have feedback or want to submit an article? Get in touch with our [webmaster](#).

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Thanks for taking the time to catch up on our happenings during our "between tournaments" time of the year. As always, Tight lines and all the Best,

Evan A. Hipsley, Jr.  
*IGFTO President | Director*

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L: IGFTO President Evan A. Hipsley, Jr. and Observer David Cambron at the 53rd Pensacola International Billfish Tournament.

R: Science/Education Specialist T.J. Morrell from The Billfish Foundation (TBF) and IGFTO President Evan A. Hipsley, Jr. at the Orange Beach [Alabama] Sportfishing Club. T.J. talked about TBF and the Gulf of Mexico. Thanks Ellen for letting T.J. come visit us :-)





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*International Game Fish Tournament Observers Inc. is a 501(c)3 tax-exempt charitable organization dedicated to the preservation and conservation of game fish worldwide. We provide trained and insured observers to authenticate the “catch and release” of billfish and game fish during international big game fish tournaments.*

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