

Last Dance Wins 55th Annual Islamorada Sailfish Tournament

The 55th Annual Islamorada Sailfish Tournament kicked off at Whale Harbor hosting 79 anglers, plus friends and family with a grand buffet. Great sailfish action started on Friday morning and continued over the next three days concluding on December 2. Captain Robert Collins of *Last Dance* led anglers Matt McLean and Mark Wodlinger both from Naples, along with Ken Longaker and Robert Helms of Islamorada, to the winner's circle with a total

of 14 sailfish releases. 138 Sailfish were released out of the 170 called in hook ups with nearly \$70,000 going to the winners.

Last Dance ended the 3-day tournament with a total of 14 fish landing them the Overall Champion trophy. Angler Matt McLean released a total of 7 fish earning him the High Point Angler. He was also awarded the Bill Hirni high point angler perpetual trophy. Captain Robert Collins took home the High Point Captain Award.



The High Point Mate awards went to Brandon Hopper and Dallas Hopper.

Priceless anglers Bernie Perez, Coral Gables; Thomas Sims, Miami; Matthew Rodriguez, Cutler Bay; Manny Fernandez, Miami; and A.J. Sepe, Coral Gables released 5 more fish on the last day landing them the Second Place Trophy, with a total of 12 released fish.

Anglers Josh Jackson, Temple, TX; Erik Ehlers, Islamorada; Jeremy Stigler, Rockdale, TX; Jake Turek, Islamorada; Tim Johnson, Rockdale, TX fishing aboard *Cloud Nine*, captained by Greg Eklund, finished with 12 sailfish releases and end up in third place on time.

Top Lady Angler, Debbie David of Miami, released a total of 4 Sailfish. Fishing aboard *Relentless*, she also earned the Most Outstanding Catch Award with a 65 lb Wahoo caught on 12 lb. test.

Junior angler Matthew Williams of Melbourne, FL released 2 sailfish fishing aboard *Smile Maker*, earning him the First Place Junior Angler trophy. A second place junior trophy went to Daniel Maduro of Miami, aboard the *Mangler*. Ryan Cano, also fishing aboard the *Mangler* released 1 sailfish and earned Third Place Junior Angler award.

Photos courtesy of Tim Rahn Photography.

The Islamorada Sailfish Tournament is the first leg of the Florida Keys Gold Cup Sailfish Championship. Last Dance is currently in the lead with 14 fish. Second place in the Gold Cup is Caribsea with 12 releases and third is Kalex with 10 releases. The next leg of the series is the Islamorada Fishing Club's Sailfish Tournament on January 24, 2019 and the champions will be crowned at the Cheeca Lodge Presidential Sailfish Tournament January 26-27. For more info: islamoradasailfishtournament.com



Priceless anglers came in second place.

Elks Annual Kids' Christmas a Success



The Florida Keys Elks Lodge in Tavernier held the annual Children's Christmas party on December 8th. Ninety-two little ones visited with Santa, Mrs. Claus & Elf, decorated cookies, watched the fantastic magic of Michael Trixx, enjoyed lunch, made a few Christmas crafts and went home with a goodie bag. Kids of all ages had pictures with Santa. At the right: with Santa are Landon and Coral Snyder. Above is the Barreto family, Jenny Brooklyn and Autumn. Top row Steven, Dee Dee and Richard. Elks members Patty and Tim Hartnett were Mr. and Mrs. Claus and Hollis Krutulis was the Elf. This annual event is possible thru a grant from the Elks National Foundation.



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Conch Characters



Junior angler Matthew Williams of Melbourne, FL won First Place Junior Angler in the 55th Annual Islamorada Sailfish Tournament. Photo by Tim Rahn Potography.



Capt. Josh and Bassman Bill at Snooks.



Burton Memorial Methodist Church singing Christmas carols at The Conch House.



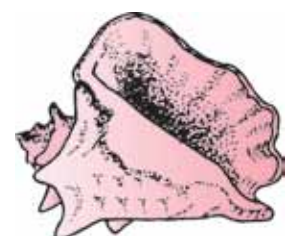
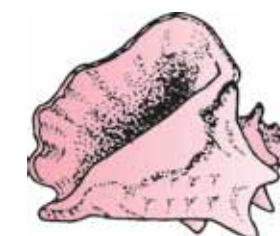
Uncle Rico entertains at the Big Chill.



The Rotary Club of Key Largo installed four new members to its new Rotary Satellite Club in December. Congrats to Nicole Blanche, Melissa Lopez, Lourdes Montagne and Sarah Masterson.



KL Chamber of Commerce at the ribbon cutting for the grand re-opening of Key Largo Flowers and Gifts.



Toys for Tots at the American Legion Jam Night.



Key Largo Women of the Moose hosted a Christmas party for MARC.