

Caribsea Victorious at 40th Islamorada Women's Sailfish Tournament Hosted by Ladies, Let's Go Fishing — A Thrilling Battle to the Finish!

The 40th annual Islamorada Women's Sailfish Tournament, January 31 to February 2, delivered an exhilarating competition with 52 sailfish releases, including multiple quads and triple hookups. This milestone event was hosted for the first time by Ladies, Let's Go Fishing (LLGF), a well-known organization dedicated to teaching and empowering women in the sport of fishing. Participants fished from their own boats or aboard chartered vessels.

A Tight Race to the Finish

The competition was fierce from the start. Day 1, Tunnel Vision took an early lead with 4 sailfish releases, followed closely by Caribsea with four releases while Kay K IV had one. However, Day 2, the sailfish bite intensified, setting up an exciting showdown between Kay K IV and Caribsea for first place.

In a dramatic finish, just 2 minutes before lines out, Caribsea landed a crucial double-header, including a release by Jolene Chandler of Jacksonville, who had never released a sailfish prior to the tournament. This final push secured Caribsea's victory with 11 sailfish releases, while Kay K IV claimed second place with 8 releases. Silent Hunter took third place, earning High Point Angler honors for Alysha Aratari, who logged an impressive 8 sailfish releases.



High Point Angler Alysha Aratari says "... a dream come true!"

Tournament Winners

- First Place Team: Caribsea (11 sailfish releases) - Capt. Kenny Spaulding, Islamorada
- Second Place Team: Kay K IV (8 sailfish releases) - Capt. Dave Galen, Islamorada
- Third Place Team: Silent Hunter (8 sailfish releases) - Capt. BJ Meyer, Marathon
- High Point Angler: Alysha Aratari, Marathon (8 releases on Silent Hunter with Capt. BJ Meyer)
- Top Mahi: Nicole Edwards, Tavernier (10.93 lbs. on Send It with Capt. Mike Edwards)
- Top Kingfish: Madison Ryan, Tavernier (11.53 lbs. on Kay K IV with Capt. David Galen)
- Top Tuna: Merida Garrell, Tavernier (10 lbs. on Bottom'd Out with Capt. Josh Krieg)

The tournament upholds a strong commitment to conservation, ensuring all sailfish are released and limiting fishing to 20 lb. test line. Tammie Gurgiolo, Tournament Director for the past 29 years, helped transition the event to its new host, LLGF.

Betty Bauman, LLGF Founder and Tournament Director, remarked: "Half of the anglers on the top two boats had never released a sailfish before. This tournament proves that whether you're a seasoned angler or a beginner, the excitement is unmatched!"

The LLGF series is supported by major partners and Monroe County Tourist Development Council; see the website for details.



RIGHT: Nicole Edwards (Tavernier, FL) with the top mahi on Send It.



First Place Caribsea Anglers: Susan Anthony (Fort Myers, FL), Jolene Chandler (Jacksonville, FL), Alisa Johnson (Chandler, TX), and Pam Ridgle (Brownsboro, TX) celebrate first place on Caribsea.



Second Place Kay K IV Team: Mitchell Harris, Avery Hartman, Capt. David Galen, Lisa Merritt, Tandra Blosser, and Cheyenne Gaskill (Key Largo, FL)



For details on upcoming 2025 LLGF events, including on-water fishing opportunities:



Contact: (954) 475-9068; fish@ladiesletsgofishing.com www.ladiesletsgofishing.com www.facebook.com/ladiesletsgofishing.

Ten Local Photographers Exhibit Their Work at Islamorada Library

Through Friday, April 4th, the Islamorada branch of the Monroe County Public Library will feature an exhibit showcasing original fine art photography and/or digital art based on original photography, curated by local photographer Marcia Brito.

The Islamorada Library is located at MM81.8 Oceanside. A Morada Way Art Walk event is scheduled for Thursday, March 20, from 5-6 PM. Artists will be available to talk about their works.

Patrons are welcome to park at the Library and walk over to the Morada Way Art Walk. The exhibit Photographers are members of the Art Guild of the Purple Isles, a group of artists supporting the visual fine arts in all media in the Upper Keys. They welcome new members interested in

the arts and interested in promoting the arts throughout the community."

AGPI provides opportunities for members by sharing artistic knowledge between new and experienced members in group activities, art education classes and workshops including Plein Air painting. AGPI hosts shows and exhibitions for members to present their work to the public, and volunteers within local schools on art related activities with students.

Exhibit Photographers:

Marcia Brito - Photographs the natural beauty of the Keys to encourage environmental conservation for our unique and fragile ecosystems.

Louise Lindsay - "I photograph whatever speaks to my heart. I also enjoy creating digital art elements."

James B Chambers - "I have enjoyed Nature Photography my whole life and I feel black and white is very dramatic and complements the subject matter."

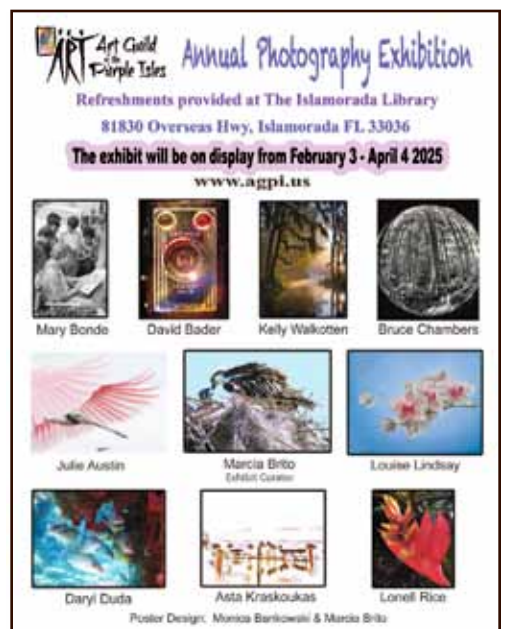
Daryl Duda - Audio Visual Artist, has worked in the technical realm of Television and Motion Pictures. In Key Largo searching for interesting images in the sea.

Lonell Rice - "My eye is drawn to the uniqueness of botanicals and nature in general"

David Bader - Shares his images of old Americana and cameras.

Julie Austin - Keys resident and local professional photographer with a passion for capturing the beauty of our local nature.

Asta Kraskouskas - is Lithuanian and loves to explore



various aspects of life and shades of light.

Kelly Walkotten - Travels photographing wildlife and nature and is continuously inspired by Keys tropical wildlife.

Mary Bonde - Key Largo Artist and Photographer presenting her "Street Art" collection.

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