



Hawaiian International Billfish Tournament
Primary Contact: Peter Fithian
Phone: 808-383-6701
Email: hibtkona@aol.com

Media Contact: Laura Aquino
Current Events
Phone: 808-326-7820

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Port Vila Game Fishing Club of Vanuatu Retains HIBT Lead 540lb Pacific Blue Marlin Propels New Zealand

Kona, Hawaii (Thursday, July 28, 2011) – Two hours into Day Four of the 52nd Annual Hawaiian International Billfish Tournament and Kona’s Captain Marlin Parker heard the reel scream. Fishing in sector Juliet, just north of Kailua, Bay of Islands Swordfish Club #2 of New Zealand boated a major catch to propel the team into second place on the current leaderboard.

Angler Simon Brown battled the 540-pound Pacific blue marlin on 50-pound test line for just over two hours. “Simon is an experienced angler and we had a strong fight. We got her to the back of the boat in good time,” said Captain Parker.

“This is my first time here in Kona,” said angler Brown. “She was a huge fish and this is a huge experience here at HIBT.” Brown’s catch is the largest fish of the 2011 Tournament to date and will be noted in the HIBT Major Catch category.

Other notable catches today included one by the Pajaro Valley Gamefish Club #1, a team that has competed at HIBT for 50 years. To mark their Golden Anniversary in Kona, veteran angler Rocky Franich boated his 429-pound Pacific blue marlin on 80lb test line fishing aboard *Topshape* and captained by Al Gustavson.

Franich’s father was originally invited to fish HIBT 50 years ago. “I will never forget it, I looked out the window of the plane and wondered if I would ever be back,” said a nostalgic Franich. “Well, I’ve been back ever since.” This three-time winning HIBT team is ready for more action as the Tournament wraps up its final day of fishing tomorrow.

Buzz Colton, another HIBT veteran and team captain of Alii Brothers Marlin Hui, boated a 440-pound Pacific blue marlin. “I’ve been fishing here at the HIBT since 2005. This is my first boated fish – I’ve caught plenty of tags, but this is my first fish boated,” said Colton. “The water was different today, just a bit choppy. Fishing down south paid off.”

Going into Day Four, Port Vila Game Fishing Club of Vanuatu was the team to beat, and both the team and Captain Rob Ellyn delivered. In just five minutes, angler Andrew Neill was able to tag and release an estimated 150-pound Pacific blue marlin while fishing on 50-pound test line. Right behind him, team captain Adrien Mourgues tagged another Pacific blue marlin estimated at 125 pounds in just under ten minutes giving this team the top spot heading into tomorrow’s finals.

“The tides continue to play a big part in this year’s tournament,” noted HIBT founder Peter Fithian. “Fish are biting later each day and the 2011 winners may well be decided at the last stroke of the clock tomorrow.”

The Hawaiian International Billfish Tournament is underwritten by the generosity of the County of Hawaii and sponsored in part by KWXX Radio and numerous other corporate and community donors.

The 2011 HIBT is comprised of five days of tournament fishing and continues through Friday, July 29.

Future HIBT dates:

2012 HIBT August 12-18, including five days of tournament fishing August 13-17

2013 HIBT August 4-10, including five days of tournament fishing August 5-9

2014 HIBT July 27-August 2, including five days of tournament fishing July 28-August 1

For more information on the Hawaiian International Billfish Tournament, including team listings, IGFA world-record rules and a daily video recap of tournament standings, log onto

www.hibtffishing.com.

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DAILY CATCH (THURSDAY)

10 Pacific blue marlin tagged & released
3 Pacific blue marlin boated
3 Short nose spearfish tagged & released

HIBT CUMULATIVE WEEK TOTAL

44 Pacific blue marlin tagged & released
5 Pacific blue marlin weighed
1 Striped marlin tagged & released
15 Short nose spearfish tagged & released
3 Ahi boated
68 TOTAL

TOP 5 TEAM STANDINGS

Place	Team	Points
1	Port Vila Game Fishing Club	2,000
2	Bay of Islands Swordfish Club #2	1,470
3	Hilo Yacht Club	1,200
4	PKU Sun Fun Club	1,150
5	Old South Marlin Club #1	1,100

TOP CAPTAIN STANDINGS

Skipper	Boat	Points
Rob Ellyn	<i>Lightspeed</i>	1,600
Marlin Parker	<i>Marlin Magic II</i>	1,520
Tim Hicks	<i>Last Chance</i>	1,301

*Note: in the event of point ties, place standings are determined by the time the fish is boated.