



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

## **HIBT Day One Billfishers Ready to Fish and Fish Ready to Fight**

**Kona, Hawaii** (Monday, July 25, 2011) – As the sun rose over Mount Hualalai, 27 teams were already gathering at Kailua Pier in excited anticipation of the first day of fishing at the 52<sup>nd</sup> annual Hawaiian International Billfish Tournament. Danny Akaka, son of noted U.S. Senator Daniel Akaka, delivered the traditional Hawaiian blessing and the teams were given the go-ahead start fishing signal at precisely 7:30 a.m. HIBT anglers were ready to go as all teams were loaded aboard the impressive fishing fleet and on the starting line with 15 minutes to spare.

The first two anglers to put points on the board this year were Susan Ward fishing with Old South Marlin Club #1 from North Carolina and Sally Kurz with Laguna Niguel Billfish Club-Col. Brooks Morris Memorial Team #1 from California. Close behind the wahine anglers was veteran HIBT angler and captain of the Kona Game Fishing Club-Taivo, Masaharu Matsushita.

By the time the first official Tournament roundup took place at 10:00, eight Pacific blue marlin and two Short-nose spearfish had already been tagged and released, earning valuable HIBT team points. By lunchtime, Team Old South Marlin Club #1 had tagged three qualifying billfish, PKU Sun Fun, China's first HIBT team ever, had tagged their first Pacific blue marlin and 13 other teams had put points on the scoreboard.

“This is not my first fish here at HIBT, but it’s certainly great to be first today,” said Susan Ward, Team Old South Marlin Club #1. “And can you believe that just 50 minutes later my husband Randy tagged a Short-nose spearfish. What a wonderful morning here in Kona!”

Members of the Old South Marlin Club have been fishing for years, yet a Short-nose spearfish

-more-

had managed to elude Randy Ward's lifetime catch list. Back home in North Carolina, Ward received weekly calls from other Old South Marlin Club members taunting him about joining their Short-nose spearfish club. Well, today he joins their ranks as the newest, and very proud, club member.

Not to be outdone, Allen McGee, angler with Laguna Niguel Billfish Club-Col. Brooks Morris Memorial Team #1 boated the day's only Pacific blue marlin, weighing in at 482 pounds. "There was quite a lot of action throughout the morning, but this girl waited until the afternoon to bite. She put up a good battle, flipping and jumping. In the end, we boated her and put good points up on the scoreboard," said McGee. "Our team has been a three-time winner here at HIBT and we anticipate putting more points on the scoreboard by week's end."

At the end of day one of the 52<sup>nd</sup> HIBT, points were awarded for 18 Pacific blue marlin, one boated, a Striped marlin, 4 Short-nose spearfish and 2 boated Ahi.

"As the teams were boarding this morning, you could feel the camaraderie and competitive spirit of the anglers fill the air," said HIBT Founder Peter Fithian. "Teams that have been coming to this tournament for a long time know what it takes to win. Our new teams sense the importance of Kona's waters and they are here to fish and win. If today's fishing action is an indicator, our HIBT tournament week will be a very busy one."

HIBT rules note that billfish points are awarded for any Pacific blue marlin, Black Marlin, Striped Marlin, Short nose spearfish and Broadbill Swordfish that weigh in at 300 pounds or more. Tuna are awarded points per pound that weigh in at 100 pounds and more. Bonus points are given for weighed fish over 500 pounds, for the heaviest qualifying marlin each day and the heaviest qualifying marlin of the tournament. Qualifying tagged and released billfish are awarded valuable points computed on line weights of 80- or 50-pound test.

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.

-more-

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](http://www.hibtffishing.com).

###



### DAILY CATCH (Monday)

16 Pacific blue marlin tagged & released  
1 Pacific blue marlin weighed  
1 Striped marlin tagged & released  
4 Short nose spearfish tagged & released  
2 Ahi boated

### HIBT WEEK TOTAL

16 Pacific blue marlin tagged & released  
1 Pacific blue marlin weighed  
1 Striped marlin tagged & released  
4 Short nose spearfish tagged & released  
2 Ahi boated

### 24 TOTAL

### TEAM STANDINGS

| Place | Team                           | Points |
|-------|--------------------------------|--------|
| 1     | Old South Marlin Club #1       | 700    |
| 2     | Laguna Niguel Billfish Club #1 | 682    |
| 3     | Hilo Yacht Club                | 600    |

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