



Top boat Arabita takes the 67th light tackle, COVID19 special edition of the International Billfish Tournament of Club Náutico de San Juan

December 10, 2020

With 52 boats, 38 releases and 2 grand slams on the same day, the IBT67 COVID19 Special edition closed the 2 days fishing journey everyone longed for!

The 52' Viking, *Arabita*, won the IBT of Club Náutico de San Juan with boat owner, Luis Córdova Dexter and angler José Miguel Bird joining releases to make a Grand Slam (Blue, White and Sailfish) on the first fishing day. Córdova kept his winning streak by releasing 2 more billfish, a blue and a sail on the 2nd day, to also win the Best Angler and Best Angler Overall prizes of the 67th International Billfish Tournament COVID19 special edition with a total of 860 pts. Córdova released a total of 2 Blue marlin and 2 sailfish.

“Fishing was good for us,” said Córdova who released the first two blues. “Billfish cooperated, biting was good and sea currents helped in spite of some bad weather.” He pinned point to the skills of Capt. Yerrison Millán and his fellow anglers. Capt. Millán won the Mike Benitez Best Captain Perpetual Trophy.

Coming in second was Eduardo Rodríguez's 42' Bertram, *Blueprint*, the other grand slam of the IBT, with a total of 850 pts. (1 Blue, 1 White and 3 sailfish), and third position went to Godfrey Franco's 34' Sea Vee *Dredge from Ponce Yacht & Fishing Club*. *Blueprint* won with a blue marlin and a sailfish by Dr. José Rodríguez Santana, a white and sailfish by Rodríguez, and sailfish by José Quiñones. *Dredge* scored 2 blue marlin on the rods of Luis Náter and Xavier Quiñones.

Roger Casellas, chairman of the special two-day fishing competition, said it was a tournament full of surprises in a light tackle format with strong choppy seas, especially during the first fishing journey.

“We wanted to keep the tradition alive, and go out and fish to keep our minds out of the daily stress and routine of the lockdown we've been facing due to the Covid pandemic. Everybody was eager and ready to go out and release the stress. We

have to thank boat owners and anglers who took off their time during this special period when there are so many things to be taking care of ...family, business,

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communities, and they all supported the tournament,” said Casellas. A very special thanks is in order to the Puerto Rico government who allowed and extended the permit for us to celebrate the tournament under all due COVID precautions guidelines.

In two days, 38 billfish were released including fifteen blues from three winning, best anglers overall: Luis Córdova (2), Andrés Portela (2) and José Rodríguez Santana (1). In contrast with other billfish, the majestic blue accounted for 300 points while whites earned 160 points and sailfish 130. 52 boats participated in this edition.

The winning international team was Club Náutico de Santo Domingo with 300 pts. thanks to the blue caught by lady Angler Camila Infanzón. She also took the Best Lady Angler trophy and was the last angler to release a blue in the Tournament.

Also winning the top spot in the Interclub category were Córdova, María Eugenia Rivera and Nicolás Carvajal from Vistamar Marina with 990 pts.

The IBT included this year the following categories for prizes – Heaviest Tuna, Wahoo and Dorado (Mahi-Mahi). These were won by the following – Ryan Christiansen on the *Bravada* caught a 66.00 lb. tuna; José Torres on the *Angie* had a 40.0 lb. dorado, and Carlos Díaz Martínez on board the *Security* caught a 37.00 lb. wahoo.

“We are very grateful that all this happened and that we kept being the longest consecutively held billfish Tournament on the world”, expressed Casellas. “Lucky and grateful that we had an excellent response form our local and international anglers, like Craig Kenneip and Randy Strauss from The Lighthouse Point Anglers Club in Florida, and Best Visiting angler winner, Alvin Lartique, who fished onboard the *Hammertime*.

“Come and join us for the 68th edition! It will be a memorable one!!,” expressed Casellas. Dates to be announced soon!

More information at www.sanjuaninternational.com or write an e-mail to chairman@sanjuaninternational.com

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