

LAST TOURNEY IS BEST

Tim Maddock has won plenty of fishing tournaments over the years, but none of those victories was as special as his triumph aboard *Reely Tight* in the World Diamond Source/YCF Billfish Challenge.

Reely Tight, a 54-foot Bertram skippered by Capt. Jimmy Lambert of Lighthouse Point, won the tournament by catching and releasing 19 sailfish. Maddock, of Pompano Beach, caught seven of the fish to take top angler honors. *Reely Tight* won \$31,900.

XXX was second with 15 releases. *Next Episode* was third with 11. Fourth-place R&R 33, which was paced by top female angler Jackie Allegra's five releases, and fifth-place *Owl's Nest* each had 10. In all, 59 boats released a total of 187 sailfish.

What made the victory so sweet for Maddock was the presence of his son, Timmy, on *Reely Tight*. For Timmy, who just turned 7, it was the first time he'd fished in a tournament with his father.

"It was the single best day [19 sailfish] I've ever had out here, and for my son to be there. . . . It was a great experience," Maddock said.

"It was 8-foot seas all day, from 5 o'clock in the morning 'til 5 o'clock at night and he was there with us. He was an absolute trooper. He never went inside, he was either on the flybridge or in the cockpit. Jimmy was like, He's taking



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after you already.'

Timmy wasn't just along for the ride. The *Reely Tight* team, which included Doug Kneer, Kyle Sherman, Chris Meek and Brian Schultz, hooked 26 sailfish and Timmy was in the thick of things.

"We had a quadrupleheader on and Jimmy was backing down and we were all fighting fish and my son was cutting the leaders for us," Maddock said, adding that it never crossed his mind to register his son as a junior angler.

"He caught his first sailfish about a month ago. He actually caught a doubleheader by himself. He picked the rods up and did everything himself."

Maddock, who's been doing a lot of swordfishing with Lambert while he waits for his new boat to be built, said sailfishing has been terrific this winter.

"I've had more double-digit days than single-digit days," he said. "The net ban and the [restrictions on] long-liners, I think they're really starting to pay off."

The Billfish Challenge was the latest in a string of South

Florida tournaments to enjoy a banner catch.

The tournament gave the boats the option of fishing out of three different inlets: Lake Worth, Hillsboro and Government Cut. *Reely Tight* took advantage of a hot sailfish bite south of Fowey Light and fished out of Government, as did XXX and *Owl's Nest*. R&R 33 fished out of Hillsboro.

Fishing off Key Largo between Triumph Reef and Pacific Light, *Reely Tight* battled back and forth with XXX for the lead.

"It was a phenomenal experience," Maddock said. "XXX had 14, we had 15, then we heard he caught one. We went an hour and a half without a bite, then we had a flurry. We got one out of a triple, then a double, then another single."

The tournament also had a funfish division. Buddy Bonura's 44.55-pound kingfish on *Insomniac* was the biggest fish. There also were several 30-pound kings caught, along with a 30.51-pound wahoo by Drew Schleter of *Off The Wall*. No dolphin were weighed.

Insomniac won the Barrel of Funfish with 129.4 pounds, followed by *Conched Out* at 98.06 and *Purple Fever*, 92.56.

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