

ALL AT SEA

SOUTH FLORIDA



Inside: Racing to Cuba

Sailfish Smack Down by
Extreme Kayak Tournaments

Fish & Wildlife Foundation 'I Do' Campaign

SOUTH FLORIDA NEWS



COURTESY OF BOSTON WHALER

BOSTON WHALER RECEIVES LOU FIFER AWARD

Boston Whaler received the VMA 2015 Lou Fifer Manufacturer of the Year Award presented at the 35th Anniversary Awards Banquet in December. The Lou Fifer award, named after VMA's founding executive director in 2009, recognizes the region's best in manufacturing, honoring those who have "made a tremendous contribution to our manufacturing community and the community at large."

VMA cited Boston Whaler's clear strategic direction based on its three-prong focus: brand and product leadership, being the best partner to its suppliers and its community, and nurturing a winning culture. Whalers impressive marketing and growth strategy, and outstanding customer satisfaction, brand development, and ongoing relationship with its dealer network also won high praise. Rounding out the accolades was the company's core strategy for employer branding adding more than 180 new jobs in the last 18 months, an achievement which earned them the State of Florida Governor's Award for job creation.

In addition, Boston Whaler was recognized for its community outreach efforts, which include the annual Boatload of Backpacks campaign, the Indian River Clean-Up, and contributions to Cudas Unhooked, an organization that helps financially challenged or at-risk students to become educated, contributing members of society.

"We are honored to be named VMA's Manufacturer of the Year," said Huw Bower, president of Boston Whaler. "It is truly rewarding to be acknowledged for what are essentially our passions and our values, which fuel every effort made here at Boston Whaler. We have an incredible, highly devoted team; this award is meaningful because it speaks to their hard work and dedication."

NEW SCIENCE PAVES THE WAY FOR FUTURE OF FLATS FISHERY CONSERVATION

MIAMI, FL – Imagine a fishery worth hundreds of millions of dollars annually, for which virtually no data exists to inform management. Until recently, that was the case for the recreational fishery for bonefish, tarpon and permit.

In the Florida Keys the annual economic impact of the recreational fishery for bonefish, tarpon, and permit exceeds \$465 million, and in the Bahamas the fishery for bonefish exceeds \$141 million. These fisheries are critically important for local economies, so research that helps to improve management helps coastal communities remain viable.

A special scientific journal issue on bonefish and tarpon conclusions from the Fifth International Bonefish and Tarpon Symposium includes 15 scientific articles describing new

research findings that will contribute to better sustainability management of these important fisheries. The special issue was co-edited by Aaron Adams, Director of Science and Conservation for Bonefish & Tarpon Trust and Research Associate Professor of Biological Sciences at Florida Institute of Technology, and Steven Cooke, Associate Professor and Canada Research Chair at Carleton University.

"If these fisheries are managed correctly, they can contribute to economic well-being in a sustainable way for communities that depend on the ocean for their living and way of life" said Adams. "The fact that the pace of research is increasing and that we're seeing the research findings being applied to conservation is rewarding."

Numerous articles in the special issue highlight the importance of collaborating with anglers to obtain the information necessary for conservation. This is essential for these types of fisheries which are data poor. Cooke, who with his students has conducted perhaps the most research on bonefish physiology in the scientific community, agreed with Adams. "We are able to take a fundamental research approach and apply it to real-world fisheries ... I am excited to see the new research and how far we have come over the last 10 years."

The International Bonefish and Tarpon Symposium is hosted by Bonefish & Tarpon Trust every three years, and includes research scientists, fishery stakeholders, and resource managers.



J. CHRISTOPHER/MARINE INDUSTRIES ASSOCIATION OF SOUTH FLORIDA

MORE DEPTH, MORE YACHTS

On the eve of the Fort Lauderdale International Boat Show the Florida Inland Navigation District, which oversees the navigability of Florida's Atlantic ICW, made a welcome announcement for all superyacht captains navigating the inland waters of Fort Lauderdale. FIND has awarded a \$20 million contract to Cashman Dredging of Quincy, Mass., to dredge the ICW to a depth of 17 feet from the 17th Street Causeway Bridge to Sunrise Boulevard. The existing depth is 13 to 14 feet.

Cashman Dredging recently completed the \$7 million dredge project at the Dania Cutoff Canal. A recent report by Thomas J. Murray and Associates on the economic impact of the dredging of the Dania Cutoff Canal, showed that boatyards'



COURTESY OF SAILORMAN

SAILORMAN TO KEEP IT IN THE FAMILY

Since 1985, Chuck Fitzgerald has been the sole owner/operator of Sailorman, a landmark new and used marine store on State Road 84 in Fort Lauderdale. His warm smile, fun-loving character, and honest approach to business have earned him a well-recognized and respected name in the marine community, both in Ft. Lauderdale and around the world. Exploring retirement options, Chuck decided to sell the property where the store's current run-down, mosquito infested building sits. He also searched for a soul crazy enough to venture to move the store with its unending inventory to a new location. After a few near deals, Heather, his eldest of two daughters and first mate for the past 23 years, couldn't bear to see it go, and decided to carry on the Sailorman legacy. Heather, aside from her remarkable resemblance to Chuck, holds dear the character and business practices that have made Sailorman one of the most loved marine stores around the world. She, her husband and four sons look forward to following in Chuck's footsteps.

Chuck plans on easing into retirement slowly and will be around until Sailorman has firmly set its anchor at the new location. While the exact place has yet to be finalized, the move will take place sometime in the spring of 2016. It will remain in close proximity and promises to bring the same charisma, inventory, and great prices, just without the mosquitos. And who knows, perhaps it will be air conditioned!

revenues have increased 59 percent since the dredge and the county has received an additional \$23.4 million economic benefit. Fort Lauderdale anticipates this same boost.

"The Florida Inland Navigation District's ICW dredging project will provide an extraordinary benefit to Broward County through the infusion of \$20 million by increasing the depth of the ICW from the congressionally authorized depth of 10 feet to a new depth of 17 feet to accommodate the vessels that are seeking to visit, reside and retrofit at our local marinas and boatyards," said Tyler Chappell, the Broward commissioner for FIND. "These facilities provide direct economic benefit and jobs to Broward County and our local communities. Our commission is extremely proud of the effort and cooperation from Broward County, city of Fort Lauderdale, and the Marine Industries Association of South Florida to make this a reality."

Dredging was expected to begin in December 2015 and will take 24 months to complete.

A NEW MAJORITY STAKE OWNER FOR EVERGLADES

Edgewater, FL and Chicago, IL – Grand Crossing Capital Partners LP ("Grand Crossing"), a family-backed private equity firm based in Chicago, announced it has acquired a majority stake in Everglades Marine Holdings LLC and RJ Dougherty Associates LLC (operating as "Everglades"). Terms of the transaction were not disclosed.

Everglades is an industry leader in premium offshore fishing boats. Founded in 1997 by boating industry legend and former Boston Whaler executive, Robert J. (Bob) Dougherty, Everglades revolutionized the boat building industry with the invention of the RAMCAP process for one-piece, unsinkable hulls. Everglades has received numerous industry awards and an unparalleled reputation for superior safety, performance and quality.

"We are delighted to partner with Grand Crossing to continue building the highest quality boats in the industry and servicing our loyal customers through our best-in-class dealer network. With fresh capital, Everglades will accelerate product development and geographic expansion, while continuing to bring cutting-edge innovation to the market," — Bob Dougherty.

Dougherty will be retiring as CEO, but will remain an investor in the company. The remainder of the Everglades team will stay in place and be led by Executive Chairman and Interim CEO, Tom Flocco, formerly the CEO of Beam Global (now Beam Suntory) and a Partner at McKinsey & Company. An avid boater, Tom



TERRY BORAM

has spent his career focused on consumer products and supply chain initiatives, including work within the marine industry.

"This investment follows Everglades' best sales year to date and is a testament to the company's legendary product portfolio and strong team. We are confident in continued success and excited about the opportunities ahead," added Tom Flocco.

Grand Crossing Capital LLC is a Chicago-based private equity firm focused on branded consumer and retail businesses. With its unique family office backing, the firm takes a patient approach to investing and focuses on long-term potential.

WESTREC MARINAS HAULOVER PARK SET TO OPEN SPRING 2016

After nearly two years in the making, Westrec Marinas will open its 508-rack fully enclosed dry storage building at Haulover Park in Spring 2016. The \$20 million drystack is five racks high, can accommodate vessels 50 feet in length overall, and can withstand a Category 5 hurricane. The new facility will also feature an innovative elevator lift system for launching and retrieving vessels. The dry stack is in response to the growing demand for storage for 45- to 50-foot yachts powered by three or four outboards.

Haulover Marine Center is located on the Intracoastal Waterway at Bakers-Haulover Inlet in North Miami Beach, between Sunny Isles and Bal Harbor. www.haulovermarinecenter.net/

ALL AT SEA SOUTH FLORIDA

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KAYAK BILLFISH TOURNAMENT

FISHING BY GLENN HAYES
PHOTO COURTESY OF JORGE BUSTAMANTE



The 2015 Sailfish Smackdown winner was Jon Venarchick. He won \$3,000.00 from Turbo USA and a Sailfish Mount from Global Fishmounts.

The thrill of hooking, fighting and landing a billfish is something that ranks high on any angler's bucket list. Doing it from a kayak and winning cash while doing so is something worth bragging about. Anglers can do just that this January at the Sailfish Smack Down put on by Extreme Kayak Tournaments. So get your kayak rigged and your tackle ready and head to Pompano Beach for a unique tournament, the thrill of a lifetime and some serious bragging rights.

The two-day tournament, the only U.S. billfish kayak tour-

namment, will occur January 30 – 31 in the waters off Pompano Beach, Fla. Joe Hector, the tournament's organizer and the founder of Extreme Kayak Fishing, expects over 120 kayaks to enter this year as word of this unique tournament spreads. Now in its third year, this tournament is one of five extreme tournaments held each year. In April the Battle in the Bahamas, also known as the Saltwater Championship at Port Lucaya, kayak anglers from around the world compete for \$10,000. A new tournament in Corpus Christi, Tx. will be added to their summer series following the first two in Florida.

Joe explained that Pompano Beach was a logical location for his unique tournament because billfish are easily accessible a half mile off the famous beaches. The area is also a great vacation location where competitors can kayak fish for pelagic fish while enjoying a great vacation with friends and family. Indeed many entrants gladly give up cold winter days for sunny Florida. In fact the first year's winner was a first-time billfish kayak angler from Oklahoma. Joe also noted, if traveling from far afield you don't have to bring your own kayak. Tournament sponsor, Nautical Ventures, will rent all the kayak equipment needed, with advance arrangements.

Most anglers though, will bring their own kayaks since each is unique in how it is rigged and equipped. Joe says, however, there are three basic items all anglers will be required to have. They are: at least two rods rigged with a 15-foot clear leader, circle hooks and a livewell of some sort. It can be a home-rigged well, a five-gallon bucket with one or two aerators or the increasingly popular Hobie livewell. Livewells are necessary because the best bait for sailfish and other billfish in the area is live goggle eye. Anglers can purchase goggle eye during a brief time period, from bait boats stationed just off the beach right after the adrenaline boosting shoot-off start. The cost is around \$40 a half-dozen. Anglers will also have to pass a Coast Guard inspection for safety equipment prior to the start. The inspection looks for a life vest and a safety flag visual.

All anglers are required to monitor the event's working channel and call in their catches. Once a fish is hooked and called in, a support boat will come to the angler to witness the leader grab, and then will take the fish to help revive and release it. There will be other support boats on the water to help kayakers in need and even a boat with Zona Fresca aboard handing out burritos on the water to hungry anglers.

All the fishing takes place about a half mile offshore in 80-200 feet, right at the color change where the depth drops off rapidly. Anglers should be prepared for choppy seas and have stable and comfortable kayaks as winter produces rougher seas than does typical summer weather. Anglers launch at 7 a.m. near the Pompano Pier and lines are out at 3 p.m. All anglers must check out each day. There is a second check-out station a mile down the beach at 16th Street for anglers that may have drifted north.

The entry fee for the tournament is \$150 per angler and includes the two-day tournament, a kick-off party Friday from 6 to 9 p.m. at Bru's Room in Pompano Beach, a goody bag,

FISHING TOURNAMENTS

ISLAMORADA, FL
JANUARY 8 - 10
 20th Annual Key Largo
 Sailfish Challenge
 fishnbully@msn.com
 305-240-9337

FEBRUARY 5 - 6
 Islamorada Women's
 Sailfish Tournament
 fishnbully@msn.com
 305-240-9337

FEBRUARY 26 - 27
 Backcountry Fly
 Championship
 www.BFCTournament.com
 captbackbone@gmail.com
 305-393-2156

KEY WEST, FL
FEBRUARY 4 - 6
 Cuda Bowl
 www.cudabowl.com
 info@cudabowl.com
 305-360-6969

MIAMI, FL
JANUARY 27 - 31
 Sailfish 400
 www.bluewatermovements.
 com/sailfish_400/
 info@bluewater
 movements.com

POMPAÑO BEACH, FL
JANUARY 30 - 31
 Sailfish Smack Down
 www.extremekayakfishing
 tournament.org

FEBRUARY 18 - 21
 The Sailfish Challenge
 www.bluewatermovements.
 com/sailfish_challenge/

WEST PALM BEACH, FL
JANUARY 7 - 8
 Silver Sailfish Derby
 www.westpalmbeachfishing
 club.org/silver-sailfish-
 derby.php



food and drinks on the beach tournament days and a big raffle that benefits the Broward Children's Center.

So get your kayak ready and hit the beach in January for some serious fun, bragging rights and possibly some cash to boot. ☺



FISH & WILDLIFE FOUNDATION LAUNCHES NEW PROGRAM AT MIAMI SHOW

FISHING BY CAROL BAREUTHER

The Florida peninsula, surrounded by salt seas, ranks number one in the nation for boating based on annual sales, most recently totaled at \$1.47 billion, according to the Chicago based National Marine Manufacturers Association (NMMA). What's more, an estimated 70 percent of the boaters fish while on the water. It was a natural then that in October, the NMMA became a new conservation partner with the Fish & Wildlife Foundation of Florida (FWFF). The new partnership will be on display in a big way when NMMA hosts a booth for the FWFF in the new Sports Fishing Pavilion at the February Miami International Boat Show. It will provide an excellent opportunity for attendees to learn all about the FWFF, its programs and how they can participate in conservation efforts.



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"I DO"

"It's a real honor to have the NMMA as our partner," says Tim O'Neil, marketing director for the FWFF. The nonprofit started in 1994 as the citizen support group for the Florida Fish & Wildlife Conservation Commission, with a mission to ensure the conservation and enhancement of the state's fish and wildlife resources for future generations. "This not only validates our conservation work but helps us take it to the next level," O'Neil continues.

One of the FWFF's latest initiatives is the 'I Do' campaign. It's an effort to encourage all 3 million anglers in Florida, plus the more than 47 million anglers in the U.S. who may vacation in the state and drop a line, to spend \$17 to buy a fishing license.

"Some people think that buying a fishing license is just another government tax," O'Neil explains. "However, every time a license is purchased, these funds are used by the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service through its Sport Fish Restoration Program for conservation projects like acquiring and improving fish habitats, conducting fisheries research, maintaining public access and providing aquatic resource education opportunities."

One-third of Florida's anglers are licensed and the FWFF goal is to encourage the remaining two thirds to buy. The group will be selling fishing licenses at its booth at the Miami International Boat Show. In addition, it has enlisted the help of influential sports fishermen like Johnny Morris, Capt. Rick Murphy and Peter Miller. Morris is founder and chief executive officer of Bass Pro Shops. Murphy and Miller are South Florida natives. Murphy is host and executive producer of Sportsman's Adventures, while Miller emcees Bass 2 Billfish on the NBC Sports Network. These men are featured in print, TV and social advertising for the FWFF 'I Do' campaign. O'Neil says the FWFF is expanding outside the industry for celebrity endorsements just as the dairy industry did with its iconic 'Got Milk' campaign. The Foundation wants to grow 'I Do' into a catchphrase as familiar as the American Express tagline... 'Don't leave home without it'.

"We are especially focused on promoting kids under the age of 17 to buy a fishing license. They can take great pride in having something with their name on it and it helps to promote sports fishing and fisheries conservation in the next generation," says O'Neil.

Fish camps are another of the FWFF initiatives. The five-day camps expose 9- to 14-year olds to fishing and the skills they need to be successful outdoors. Some 60 saltwater and freshwater camps were held throughout the state

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Florida Fishing License Campaign

To get involved, contact Tim O'Neil at toneil@wildlifeFlorida.org.

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NMMA CONTENDER CCFL TAKE THE FISHING COSTA FLORIDA SPORTSMAN NOMAD

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last year including in Miami-Dade county and the Florida Keys. O'Neil would like to see these camps expand to 600 or 6000 annually in the future. Part of the funding will come from the FWFF conservation partners as well as fundraising activities such as the organization's annual BlueGreen event. The \$300,000-plus raised at this event in 2015 will be used to help renovate the Everglades Youth Conservation Camp. This camp, located on the Corbett Wildlife Management Area near Palm Beach, has served youth in South Florida since 1960.

One of the next FWFF intentions is reaching out to the Hispanic community. Statistics show 20 percent of the population fishes, but only 4 to 5 percent buy licenses. To this end, the FWFF has enlisted the spokesperson help of Diego Toiran, creator of the Spanish-language television fishing show, 'Pescaando en los Cayos' (Fishing in the Keys). Along with 'I Do,' O'Neil would like to ensure ten percent of fishing camps cater to Spanish-speaking youngsters.

"Next up, we'll be launching a new campaign and a big contest at the Miami International Boat Show, thanks to having the booth platform sponsored by our latest conservation partner, the NNMA," O'Neil says.

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FISHING



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Ladies with fish
on *Play Baby*



Janet Steiner,
St. Augustine,
FL catches
a yellowtail
snapper aboard
Blue Chip Too

Sixty women came from around the country to learn from the pros at the award winning "Ladies, Let's Go Fishing!®" Keys University, November 13-15 at BPOE Elks, Tavernier, Fla. The "No-Yelling School of Fishing" featured a mix of classroom presentations and hands-on fishing skills, great social events and of course a Fishing Adventure out of Whale Harbor Marina in Islamorada. Judging by the take, the ladies were fast learners!

The 2016 schedule is at www.ladiesletsstofishing.com



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RACE TO CUBA!

SAILING

STORY AND PHOTOS BY TROY GILBERT



The list is getting impressive and it appears there's a lot of pent-up interest from Americans looking to distance race to Havana. After the surprise rapprochement and the reopening of diplomatic relations between the U.S. and Cuba last December, conventional wisdom was the first regattas might start to sail in 2016 - but the reality on the water couldn't have been more different.

In May 2015, Hobie Cat racers sailed in the Havana Challenge from Key West and landed the first American racers to finish on the island in 14 years. While the May race was underway, the Pensacola YC released a surprise preliminary Notice of Race announcing a 500-nautical mile keelboat regatta set for October 31. By all reports from the 22 participants - Havana Challenge was a spectacular adventure. The hospitality provided by the Hemingway Yacht Club and Commodore Eschrich was second to none. Havana is quite simply a stunningly beautiful city and has the feel of a Portuguese or Spanish waterfront city. Commodore Eschrich has already announced 11 regattas scheduled from the United States to Havana in 2016.

The opportunities to race to Cuba are getting crowded. Immediately following the 2016 Quantum Key West Race Week



is the Conch Republic Cup January 27 - February 6. The regatta features five races - Key West to Varadero, Varadero Offshore buoy race, Varadero to Havana, Havana's El Malecón Parade Race, Havana to Key West. With free days to explore and awards parties let loose this is sure to be a week to remember. If that weren't enough racing, the Coral Reef Yacht Club and Hemingway International Yacht Club of Cuba will host the 2016 Inaugural Miami to Havana Race departing February 10, with a coastal race along the famed Malecón and post race festivities February 14. Clearly the rush is on.

Historically, the big Gulf Coast distance races to Havana have sailed from St. Petersburg and were first run with schooners starting in 1930. A who's who of sailing participated in the regattas back then, and the races were part of the Southern Ocean

ULTIMATE CARIBBEAN DESTINATIONS

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Racing Circuit. One of the more unique stories occurred in 1952 when the first boats crossed the finish line in Havana and were greeted by Col. Batista's successful coup d'état - sailboat crews were quite literally caught in gunfire exchanges as they sailed into the harbor. The regatta ended in 1959 when Fidel Castro and his revolution eventually took over the island nation.

This past summer, Sarasota Yacht Club announced the revival of its historic Sarasota to Havana Race starting April 2, 2016. Sarasota YC replaced St. Petersburg YC as the organizing body in the 1990's when the race became more of a hot political football than St. Petersburg YC was willing to handle.

In Sarasota's 1994 race, the sailors were lambasted in a Miami Tribune editorial as "Dangerously naive stooges of Castro's propaganda" and crews had to navigate a gauntlet of angry protesters as they readied their boats. Coast Guard, police, and news helicopters buzzed the 85 docked sailboats while sailors stowed gear and supplies, and readied sails. Official patrol boats from the Tampa Bay area scoured the harbor, while scuba teams methodically searched the bottom of each vessel for bombs, before giving the skippers clearance to head to the race start. Along the waterfront, rumors circulated about an opposing fleet of anti-Castro boats waiting to strike the racers in the Florida Straits.

Sarasota YC attempted to restart their race to Havana in 2011. Heartened by an apparent easing of tensions under a new presidential administration, they officially petitioned the State Department to allow their return to Havana and had 120 early registrations - but were met by silence from the U.S. government. It is highly likely that their 2016 registrations will explode as word gets around to skippers, crews return from these early races and the bureaucratic documentation eases from the U.S. government. It should be noted that the Cuban government is making the documentation process quite simple, including issuing visas to sailors at the Marina Hemingway in Havana.



BOAT SHOW

CHARLESTON, SC

JANUARY 29 - 31

Charleston Boat Show

www.TheCharlestonBoatShow.com

erica@jbmsshows.com

JACKSONVILLE, FL

JANUARY 22 - 23

Jacksonville Boat Show

boatjax.com

jmaboatshow@boatjax.com

904-228-2328

MIAMI, FL

FEBRUARY 11 - 15

Yachts Miami Beach

www.showmanagement.com

FEBRUARY 11 - 15

Miami International

Boat Show

www.miamiboatshow.com

MYRTLE BEACH, SC

JANUARY 8 - 10

Grand Strand Boat and Sportsman Expo

www.grandstrandboatshow.com

kdb707@gmail.com

843-357-3098

NAPLES, FL

JANUARY 21 - 24

Naples Boat Show

www.miacc.org

director@miacc.org

239-682-0900

FEBRUARY 25 - 28

Bonita Springs Boat Show

www.swfmia.com

PORT CHARLOTTE, FL

JANUARY 14 - 17

Charlotte County Boat Show

swfmia.com | info@swfmia.com

954-570-7785

STUART, FL

JANUARY 15 - 17

Stuart Boat Show

www.AllSportsProductions.net

contacts@allsportsproductions.net

954-522-5288

MUSIC FESTIVAL

TAMPA, FL

JANUARY 30

Gasparilla Pirate Festival

www.gasparillapiratefest.com

NAUTICAL FLEA MARKET

VERO BEACH, FL

JANUARY 9 - 10

Indian River

Nautical Flea Market

FLNauticalFleaMarket.com

info@FLNauticalFleaMarket.com

954-205-7813

SAILING REGATTA

FORT LAUDERDALE, FL

JANUARY 9 - 10

Boomerang Regatta

www.lyc.org/

JANUARY 13 - 15

Fort Lauderdale

to Key West Race

www.keywestrace.org/

FEBRUARY 12 - 14

Melges Gold Cup

www.melges32.com

KEY WEST, FL

JANUARY 17 - 22

Quantum Key West Race Week

www.keywestraceweek.com

info@keywestraceweek.com

650-704-9770

JANUARY 27 - FEBRUARY 6

Conch Republic Cup

conchrepubliccup.com/

MIAMI, FL

JANUARY 23 - 30

ISAF Sailing

World Cup Miami

miami.ussailing.org/

FEBRUARY 10 - 14

Miami to Havana

www.havanarace.org/

Bob Kriegel, who was instrumental in Pensacola YC's successful race that started October 31, states, "Regattas, like any sporting event, are a way for the people of two countries to interact. It's time for new communications between our people and other countries, as opposed to the severe diplomacy of the past half century. We first contacted our government and then, after we were well received, the Hemingway International Yacht Club. Commodore Eschrich in Havana was incredibly enthusiastic about the prospects and everything just fell in place. What an amazing experience."



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PLANTATION BARBADOS 2000 RUM

RUM BY CLINT AND TERRY BORAM

On the first cool, rainy day of the season I went looking for a sipping rum which would remind me of the islands and warm my soul. High on the shelf was the Plantation Collection, vintage rums blended by Maison Ferrand, renowned for their exceptional cognacs. Each bottle, webbed in what appeared to be strands of sugar cane, hailed from a different island in the Caribbean. Jamaica, Grenada, Panama, Trinidad were all represented. But there was no question which island I wanted to be reminded of on this dreary day. I could not wait to share Plantation Barbados 2000 with Clint.

Plantation Rums are distilled in the Caribbean country in which the cane sugar is grown using both column and traditional pot stills. The rum is then aged in a combination of bourbon and sherry casks within the country. After aging for several years the casks are shipped to France and aged several more years in cognac casks. The final product is then bottled and distributed by Maison Ferrand.

After a bowl of chili, Clint and I settled in to dream of Barbados.

HE SAID

This rum has an extremely inviting golden hue. On the nose there is a hint of fruit but I'm smelling more of the sherry casks. I also get a strong alcohol note which leads me to wonder what it will do on the palate. On the tongue, the strong alcohol is gone and the sip is smooth and enjoyable. I get a very slight coconut hint mixed with other island fruits. The finish is smooth but dissipates quicker than I expect. My second sip, I hang on the rum a bit longer trying to reveal more. It is not meant to be.

SHE SAID

I'm glad we decided to use the larger brandy sniffers so we can enjoy the full bouquet of the rum. The nose reminds me of the fruits of the island. Coconut and passionfruit with a hint of underripe mango. Not overly sweet though. The sip is exactly as the nose. Mild, simple and unpretentious. I get nothing more, nothing less. The finish is warm and comforting. There is not a lot going on with this rum but for me that



is okay. On a rainy day in South Florida, the tropical hints take me back to my favorite sunny island..

OVERALL

Though we both enjoyed the rum, in our opinion is not worth the \$42.00 price tag. Definitely heads above some of the \$20.00 bottles we have tasted but not worth double.

RATING: 3.5 OUT OF 5

SIPPING RUM SCALE

- 1 – An expensive mixer
- 2 – A quick celebratory shot
- 3 – Wouldn't be embarrassed to share with friends
- 4 – Are my friends worthy of a sip
- 5 – Special moments rum

ABOUT CLINT AND TERRY: *We have sampled many a dram over our 32 years of marriage and quite often we don't fully agree. Could be the difference is male/female taste buds. Or, somebody is just wrong.* 