

## GUIDES TARPON TOURNAMENT COMING SOON

It seems like yesterday that we were catching a lot of tarpon during the exciting 2008 Boca Grande Fishing Guides Association (BGFGA) Invitational Tarpon Tournament and now, all of a sudden, the 2009 event is just around the corner. It's only three months away and time for entrants and guides to solidify plans for tournament charters.

During the two afternoons of fishing last year, there were a total of 96 tarpon either weighed at the wet sling scales or released at the back of the boat with leader swivel in hand, plus another 40 or so fish hooked and jumped (visibly tarpon). That tournament will be remembered for years as the number of tarpon caught was phenomenal! See the results:

### First Place:

- Captain: Lamar Joiner, Sr.
- Boat: "Miss Sarah"
- Team Leader: Linda Foster
- Angler: Linda Foster
- Tarpon Weight: 180 pounds
- First Place Winnings: \$35,000

### Second Place:

- Captain: Matthew Coleman
- Boat: "Momma Leslie"
- Team Leader: Jeff Pflugner
- Angler: Jeff Pflugner
- Tarpon Weight: 160 pounds
- Second Place Winnings: \$21,000

### Third Place:

- Captain: Tater Spinks
- Boat: "Anejo"
- Team Leader: Mark Rando
- Most Releases: 9
- Third Place Winnings: \$14,000

Obviously, the fifth annual tournament is in the process of being planned with great expectations. For the 2009 event, fishing will be on Thursday and Friday, May 21<sup>st</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup> (2009), between the hours of 2:30 p.m. and 6:30 p.m. each day. The final registration will take place on Wednesday, May 20<sup>th</sup> at Whidden's Marina and the captain's party will be that evening. The same rules will apply as in the 2008

tournament. All tarpon caught will be released either at the boat or after being weighed in a specially designed wet sling.

The awards party will take place on Friday evening at the conclusion of fishing. There will be no planned evening event on Thursday after the first day, which will allow participants and families to frequent local restaurants and island shops. With Friday being the second day of fishing this year, it is expected that many of the participants and their families will stay on the island for the weekend to experience some additional tarpon excitement, which should also add to weekend business for local establishments..

In addition to the money and prizes awarded for the first three places, the Jay Joiner Memorial Award for most releases (third place) is a coveted achievement for the captain and includes a specially designed gold and silver belt buckle by Montana Silversmiths, plus the captain's name is placed on the Jay Joiner Memorial Trophy, which is on display in the Gasparilla Maritime Museum at Whidden's Marina. Enthusiasm for the 2009 tournament is even greater now than for previous events. For more information about the event, including past year's winners, pictures and sponsors, visit the BGFGA website at [www.bocagrandefishing.com](http://www.bocagrandefishing.com) and click on "Tarpon Tournament".