

INTERNATIONAL EDITION

Offshore World

OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE
OFFSHORE WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP

HISTORY LESSON:

The Backstory
Behind the OWC

COSTA
SUNGLASSES
Come Up Big
in Costa Rica

essential
**COSTA
RICA**



**OFFSHORE WORLD
CHAMPIONSHIP**
20TH ANNIVERSARY


MARINA PEZVELA
QUEPOS COSTARRICA



HEAVYWEIGHT DORADO CATCHES DRAW CROWDS AT 2018 OFFSHORE WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP

One surprise result from the 2018 Offshore World Championship (OWC) was the high number of massive dorado caught by anglers throughout the event. In 2017, the heaviest dolphin caught at the OWC was a 47-pounder. In 2018, seven dorado weighed more than 48 pounds.

The fish caught were not close to the current IGFA all-tackle record – an 87-pounder landed in Papagayo Gulf, Costa Rica – but they were definitely eye-catching and personal records for a number of anglers competing in the tournament.

Because the top dorado on the dock wins a prize, competition and suspense surrounded day three's weigh-in when numerous teams weighed monsters. Day one started the dolphin deluge and set a benchmark, with a 46.8-pounder caught by Juan Manuel Cobar de La Hoz, of Team 35th International Sailfish Tournament. That was just the beginning.

Day three saw a push of massive dorado intersect with competing tournament boats. From lightest to



history. A memorable day was in the 2017 Torneo Cabo Frio Marlin Invitational. We released four blue marlin in the same day, and all of them were 400-plus pounds – the biggest was 750 pounds. The anglers that day were me, Matheus Assad and Helio Marques.

OFFSHORE WORLD: Do you think your team will ever come back to Costa Rica and compete in another Offshore World Championship?

as these teams have won qualifying events from around the world. They are world-class anglers for a variety of species, and those who regularly target billfish in their home waters have a distinct advantage.

OFFSHORE WORLD: You're not the only team to return to the OWC. Why do you think so many different winning teams end up coming back to fish again?

marlin and two sailfish. The fact is, none of our teammates had ever been to Cabo San Lucas before, and we caught more marlin in that tournament that we had caught previously in our combined lifetimes. It was our first year, and we had some beginner's luck, combined with great swimming ballyhoo that we had brought from Florida. Also, we had world-class anglers Sam Worden and Hunter Baron on our team.

OFFSHORE WORLD: What's it like to be able to talk to, drink with and socialize with fishing teams from all over the world?

KC: It is an honor to be with all those anglers who represent the pinnacle of the sport-fishing world. They are true competitors and embrace ethical angling and sportsmanship. There are always great fishing stories to be told, and as we anglers like to say, 'All fishermen are liars, except me and you and I'm still not sure about you!'

OFFSHORE WORLD: How does Costa Rica compare to some of the other billfish fisheries you guys have fished together? In the 2011 tournament, I believe you guys won a qualifying event in the Keys?

KC: We had been on the sailfish tournament circuit for years in South Florida and were always pretty competitive, so when we finally won a qualifying event, we couldn't pass up the chance to be in the OWC. We mainly sailfish in the Florida Keys, but have also fished for billfish in Hawaii, Cabo and Costa. All are great billfishing grounds, and Costa Rica has seen an amazing number of sailfish during the OWC tournaments thanks to the efforts of conservationists like Capt. Richard Chellemi of *Gamefisher II*, and Carlos Caveno Vargas of FECOP [Federacion Costarricense de Pesca]. FECOP was instrumental in stopping the exportation of sailfish from Costa Rica beginning in 2009 and lobbied the government to reduce the number of purse-seine licenses by 70 percent, probably saving 25 metric tons of marlin that would have been bycatch, not to mention tons of other pelagic species and marine mammals.



TEAM 2011 OFFSHORE WORLD CHAMPIONS

EH: We very much intend to. Unfortunately, probably not with all the same anglers, but the OWC 2018 team will definitely return to try to win again.

KEVIN CLARK, A MEMBER OF THE 2011 OFFSHORE WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP TEAM

OFFSHORE WORLD: As the 2011 winners, we consider you guys veterans of Offshore World Championship tournaments. Was the competition stiffer in 2018?

KC: The competition is always stiff,

KC: I think a lot of times it is to challenge their own accomplishments and to prove that their win was not a fluke. It truly is a great experience, and to consistently be a top-10 team at this level requires a tremendous amount of talent, focus and true team effort.

OFFSHORE WORLD: Sailfish catches dominated 2018. How does it compare to 2011 fishing? I imagine you guys caught a ton of striped marlin in Cabo when the OWC used to be held there.

KC: In Cabo we caught 15 striped

OFFSHORE WORLD: Do you have any memories or moments you can share from the Offshore World Championship?

KC: In 2013, after being in the top five after days two and three, we didn't have a bite all day on day four. We insisted the mates rig fresh baits with half an hour to go in the tournament, and 20 minutes later we hooked up and landed a quad of sailfish to jump from 13th place to fifth place in the waning minutes of the tournament. Catching a 200-pound blue marlin in 2016 on a TDL20 with 30-pound-test for me and Worden's 62.6-pound dorado this year were also great memories.

OFFSHORE WORLD: In 2018 Brazilian teams dominated the top three places. What is it going to take to beat out those guys in future OWC tournaments?

KC: The Brazilian teams are great fishermen who do more dead-bait fishing than a lot of the other qualifying teams. They have mastered the art of the drop-back and the use of spinning rods for catching billfish. They also have a communications advantage. I'm still practicing my Spanglish to improve communications with the great Tico captains and mates.

OFFSHORE WORLD: Have you learned any new fishing techniques for billfish fishing alongside these other international teams?

KC: We have had to learn to troll weighted dead baits, as this is really the only week of the year we get to use this technique, and there is a great deal of skill required to consistently hook up billfish using the drop-back technique.

OFFSHORE WORLD: What advice do you have for teams coming to the Offshore World Championship for the first time?

KC: Be sure to enjoy the beautiful country of Costa Rica. I have had a home here for the past decade, and the people are very friendly, the wildlife and fisheries are phenomenal, and the weather is always beautiful.

OFFSHORE WORLD: Will you guys come back and compete for another championship in Costa Rica?

KC: We are planning on coming back in 2019 and 2020 so that we compete in 10 OWCs in a row. I don't think anybody has come close to that yet, so that is our goal.

DELPHINE HARTSHORN, A MEMBER OF THE CAICOS CLASSIC RELEASE TOURNAMENT TEAM

OFFSHORE WORLD: As a new team, what were your first impressions of the Offshore World Championship in Costa Rica?

DH: We were very impressed with the organization of the tournament. From the welcome evening to the daily marina socials to the closing party, the atmosphere was great and everything ran smoothly. It was certainly a

well-run and professional tournament. For such a large event it wasn't at all intimidating, and we felt so welcome by the committee, volunteers and other teams. Carter at Marina Pez Vela was fantastic. He used to live in Turks and Caicos, so it was great to have an old friend there with us.

OFFSHORE WORLD: Were the teams you met at the 2018 OWC friendly? Were they just as addicted to fishing as you were?

DH: Absolutely. We didn't have the opportunity to meet all of the teams, but those we did were welcoming, and their passion for being on the water and chasing big game was apparent.

OFFSHORE WORLD: Do you believe the competition was tough? Was it what you expected?

DH: Honestly, we didn't really know



TEAM CAICOS CLASSIC RELEASE TOURNAMENT

EVELIO RAMIREZ