



Hurting toward three exceptional days of fishing on the Sea of Cortez...



The 10th Annual Baja Invitational Gamefish Tournament

Article by Tim Babcock

And so we sat waiting beneath an uncharacteristically gray July Baja sky, floating on the gently rolling Sea of Cortez. Words of complaint were occasionally heard above the idling diesels of our fishing cruisers as we floated waiting for the starter's flare, already some 30 minutes overdue. Despite the delay, caused by a late boat, things could have been much worse. The almost inevitable melee of ill will towards myself as tournament director and all the other organizers, directed by 70 impatient anglers had fortunately been squelched by the overly festive proceedings of the night before. I hazarded a guess that this would have been a radically different scene if some of the more "outspoken" of our group not been among the most overindulgent the night before. I gave silent homage to the great Tequila gods (and of course Tecate Beer, a valued sponsor).

A couple of enterprising individuals broke out light tackle to find distract-

tion playing with the schools of small jacks and pargo circling below. Just as it seemed that nothing short of breaking tuna amid the boats could delay a large-scale mutiny, my radio crackled to life and my name was unmistakably called in English, drawing my immediate attention. The message from Senor Alejandro was short, but sweet. The boat we'd been waiting on had just rounded the northern point from Los Barriles and was headed for the beach to pick up the last of our shore-bound anglers.

Tensions mounted as the late comer retrieved its charter and headed for the bait boat. All of this hoopla may have been nothing more than silly gringo games to our captains and mates, but you'd never have known it from their demeanor as that last boat finally cast off and joined the waiting pack. Their determination to be the first boat to the fishing grounds was hard to conceal. Moments later a bright orange flare arced into the overcast Baja sky and the diesel engines of 18 cruisers

and super cruisers roared to life hurtling us into three exceptional days of fishing on the sea of Cortez.

We fanned out to destinations according to the desires of anglers and knowledge of boat's crews. Many remained close to shore to plunder the

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10th Annual Baja (cont. from pg. 1)

shoals of football-sized yellowfin tuna that remained on tap there throughout most of the event. Others plied the deeper offshore waters for blue and striped marlin, sailfish and larger dorado. Still others worked nearshore waters from north to south in search of a variety of targets including tuna, dorado, pargo, grouper, roosterfish, and sailfish.

It was a good time, and many friendships from past years were refreshed over bent rods and swinging gaffs. New relationships were forged as they are whenever anglers work together to boat a big gamefish. For those of you who have yet to experience it, it's hard to describe the feeling of gratification and camaraderie shared in big-game angling. It's an instant bond that isn't quickly or easily forgotten.

The next best thing to catching a big saltwater pelagic is helping someone else to do it. Catching that big tuna or billfish is a true team effort. There is the rigging of rods for both trolling and baiting. Setting lines out and working to find effective patterns or baits. Add a fish to the equation and there are lines to be quickly retrieved and rods to be stowed out of the way. Someone must close the deal and set the hook. Anglers in standup harness must be steadied in rough seas or while backing down. Those fighting from chairs benefit from a spotter to direct them toward the fish and address any gear problems that may arise. There are also the less glamorous jobs such as photographer and drink gopher that are always much appreciated by the person tied to the fish. Include typically crew-exclusive tasks such as boat maneuvering, leadering, releasing or gaffing and you get the picture. The high-fives and smiles that follow are the extra kick that keeps many of us coming back again and again.

But of course there is the element of competition. Personally, no one needs prizes to lure me into a boat but a little something for the effort is always appreciated. While nobody took home the grand prize 2000 Ford Truck for biggest fish over 500 pounds, a couple of us did come close. I personally witnessed one such close call during the last day of the tournament. Jeff Babcock, winner of the billfish trophy with 2 released blue marlin fished aboard *Pargo* with his wife, Mike McCall and myself. The chance came during his turn at the troll when our mate and I teased a reluctant blue estimated by the captain at over 600 pounds for five heart-stopping minutes before it finally rejected our slow trolled dead tuna and a live mackerel. Jim Jacobs (son of crowned 2000 "El Zorillo" Marty Jacobs) also told of a close but fruitless encounter with a finicky finning blue estimated by his captain at over 500 pounds.

All in all we didn't see large numbers of billfish, although enough were caught to keep it interesting. Perhaps most surprising was the catch of a FRED first swordfish. The broadbill, estimated at 200 pounds was leadered and released by angler Mitch Kipp after a four hour long slug-

fest involving a boat supplied rod with Penn 114 reel (sans harness, ouch!).

The dorado weren't huge, but were found in good numbers. This was a great relief after the dodo draught of recent years when their aerobatics displays (and tasty fillets) were sorely missed.

Tuna were also on tap in good numbers but at a size reminiscent of pre-1999 FREDs. The bruiser 50-100 pound battlers of last summer were missed but I heard few complaints by those who hungered to bring home Baja tuna. Tight lines and smiles were the order of business during the daily morning show attended by our anglers at the invitation of thousands of football sized yellowfin only a short distance north from the beach. Other guests at this post breakfast bash included the ever present bonito and a healthy smattering of school size dorado.

The next best thing to catching a big saltwater pelagic is helping someone else to do it.

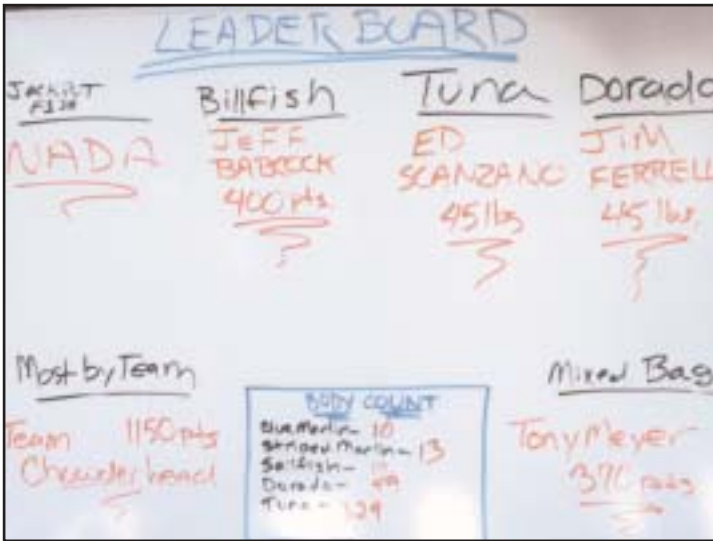
Although Marty Jacobs walked away with the esteemed "El Zorillo" as the unluckiest angler for year 2000, he didn't actually fish all 3 days of the competition due to illness. The fact that no angler who fished all three days was skunked for the first time in three years is an indicator of the quality of fishing that we enjoyed. So just how good was it? The final gamefish tally included 11 blue marlin (8 released), 13 striped marlin (released), 19 sailfish (released), 1 swordfish (released), 1 wahoo, 229 tuna, 58 dorado, 4 pargo, 2 grouper, 4 rainbow runner, 2 amberjack and 1 pompano.

As each day on the water came to a close, anglers inevitably took time away from their ice cold cervezas and bowls of ceviche to scan the leader board. Some waited impatiently for the posted tally. Others viewed it with nothing more than mild interest in the face of overwhelming rest and relaxation. To tell the truth it got hard to remember who had caught what amid the nightly happy-hour parties, sumptuous meals and after dinner entertainment (either local music and dancing, or just laughing at ourselves).

All too soon the last night came and the trophies were handed out once again. Our big raffle followed, running perhaps a little too late into the evening. Still, no one thought about the dust and the heat and the long trip of the coming day. There was just the warm Baja night air, friends to laugh and talk with and pitchers of chilly margaritas served up by people who themselves have become old friends.

This place that we return to every year might not really be the slice of heaven that I remember it to be in my heart. I'm sure that nothing would seem as magical if I made the jump and called it my home. But that's OK, because no matter where I travel around the world in my sporting quests I know that come every July I'll be floating under that warm Baja sky or watching that bright Baja moon light up the Sea of Cortez. And for a few short days I'll feel like I'm home once again.

Winners & Sponsors



And now your moment of zen. Here are the winners of the 2000 Baja Invitational Gamefish Tournament:

BILLFISH The winner was Jeff Babcock with 2 blue marlin and total of 400 points. Jeff was awarded a free trip to the 2001 FRED. His prize includes all hotel, food and fishing for the upcoming FRED as graciously donated by Hotel Punta Colorado and \$500 toward his airfare from London, England. Nice work Jeff, looking forward to your return!

DORADO The winner was Jim Ferrell with a beautiful 45-pound bull. Jimmy took home a new TLD50a two speed reel, discounted to USF&G by the Shimano Corporation.

TUNA The winner was Ed Scanzano with a fine 45 pound yellowfin tuna. Ed's prize for his efforts was a gorgeous Custom Seeker 645XXH rod complete with Aftco rollers/gimble/reel seat, donated by Monte Parsons of M & M Custom Rods.

MOST FISH BY A CREW This award was taken by Team Chowderhead; Tim Tyler, Robert Giattino, Steve Krcik and Tony Meyer. This was Tim's 4th time taking this honor in as many years. The "Heads" raked in a nice few coolers of fish and were rewarded for their efforts with shirts and hats from the fine folks at Maxima and some nice new fillet knives from club funds. Total points for Team Chowderhead was 1150, way to go boys!

MIXED BAG winner was Tony Meyer with 370 points total. Tony won some nice gifts including a pocket front Gamakatsu shirt, hat and various fishing items bought with club funds.

And the real heros of the day were our sponsors. Each deserve our heartfelt gratitude and patronage for donating the overwhelming array of prizes that helped make year 2000 one of the best FREDs yet.

FOSS ENVIRONMENTAL INFRASTRUCTURE, INC. provided 100 excellent custom embroidered hats for our 10th Annual Event.

This is big stuff guys, these hats are definite keepers and believe me a 100 of 'em doesn't come cheap!

ACTION OPTICS again sent us 6 pairs of high precision polarized sunglasses, always the most sought after of raffle prizes. Thanks guys!

HI-5 LURES kicked in 10 high-speed trolling lures. Hi-5 is an up and coming manufacturer of some of the finer lures available. We've got members buying their lures and catching fish worldwide. They are precision made and get the attention of experienced anglers and boat crews.

HOTEL PUNTA COLORADO the never-ending support of the Van Wormer family goes without equal. They have kicked in another great return tourney with all "the fixens". Thanks Eddie!

ACCURATE makes the highest precision reels and aftermarket reel goodies gave us a Boss Twindrag 870 reel. This sweet reel was the cream of the raffle prizes!

SALTWATER SPORTSMAN MAGAZINE once again donated magazines and goodie bags for everyone. They've been a long time supporter of the FRED and deserve a bid thanks from all of us.

MAXIMA another seasoned supporter of the club that has helped us throughout the years. Their gifts included a dozen Maxima shirts and hats and five *One Shot* spools of line. As always, thanks for your support!

M & M RODS pitched in the custom Seeker stick that was awarded for the tuna category first place shot. This is an excellent prize that will provide years of great fishing. Muy bueno, amigos!

THE SHIMANO CORPORATION provided us with an executive discount on the TLD50 and Calcutta 400 reels used for prize and raffle.

SUMO TACKLE threw in two top-notch fight belts that were drawn in the raffle. They included a large and the small fighting Ninjas. These belts have a reputation of being in forerunning of their product class. Thanks Sumo!

GAMAKATSU turned us all on to a hook pack for use during the tourney and also kicked in four nice pocket front shirts. We all know the hooks produced by these fine folks are the cream of the crop for all fishing applications. Well received, thanks!

PRECISION MARINE HARDWARE presented the club with two gaffs and two baitnets. Real fine hardware to add to any fishing boat!

Our total sponsorship donations had a cash value of approximately \$5000.00 for the July event. We need to spend a moment to thank each and every one of our sponsors for putting the magic into our awards ceremonies and making this FRED one we won't soon forget!

Executive Chatter

Article by Kevin Krause

Well, it has gotten to the point of no return—that is, to the day where I used to get at least a few minutes each day at the Baja Invitational to spend talking with everyone, drink a beer with them and hear their days' fishing tales. I suspect that there is no returning to those days. We have gotten too big, and there is so much going on that there will no longer be time to talk at length with anyone. Other than the poor unfortunate three guys that share my cruiser each day, I just don't have the time anymore to spend socializing [Editor's Note: Horse pucky, Kevin! There's a lounge chair at the bar in Punta Colorado that still has a lasting impression of your backside]. Before you accuse me of whining, I have to admit that all things considered, this is a good thing.

It's a good thing because the size of our club is growing, meaning that we have more men and women to participate in our events. It is a good thing, because more participants mean more contributions to the charities that we support. This past year we donated \$1,500 to DIF and another

\$1,500 to the church of Santa Maria de La Rivera, both to aid poor children in the rural area around La Rivera, Mexico.

It is also an especially good thing because it allows the Club to have more creative resources to draw upon and shared help with administration. Which brings me to the next subject, the direction of the club; we need to know what you want to see happen as we enter our 11th year, and we want to know which of you will help make it a reality. I cannot stress enough the importance of new ideas, and new

Last year we donated \$1,500 to DIF and \$1,500 to the church of Santa Maria de La Rivera, to aid poor children in the rural area around La Rivera, Mexico

people to do what it takes to run an event from start to finish. Look at the pictures in this newsletter, and see how many new faces there are. Think of the available talent, and recognize the different skills this diverse group of people brings with them. Unless we start to plan now, 2001 may remain as a one or two event calendar. The Baja Invitational Gamefish Tournament (The FRED) has been



our cornerstone event, and is now married nicely to the British Columbia Salmon/Halibut Derby. A couple of other events, (like the Golf Tournament) were cancelled, and a few others, like the Salmon and Tuna Derbies attempted in Bodega Bay, California were delayed or cancelled because of weather.

As many events are weather dependent, it may well be time to promote a series of smaller localized events to bolster the number of things that our members can do. The Abalone Ab-A-Thon held in Point Arena, California is a fine example. It boasted a small turnout, but was very successful nonetheless (thanks for your participation, Nick Nickerson and John Rapp) and allowed some newer members to meet some old timers and have a lot of fun doing it.

If you look back over the years since FRED/US Fish & Games got started as a ragged group of six or eight abalone divers some fourteen years ago to an even more ragged group numbering some hundred today, change has meant growth. Let me ask those of you who went with us to Baja to think back to the array of people there. Drawing on the amassed brain-pool (however shallow around the edges...) provided by seventy odd participants I'm sure many

of you could contribute valid ideas for improvement. Some of you spoke about additional offshore trips, or long range trips out of San Diego or Cabo San Lucas. Others spoke about more hunting opportunities, or more informal, dinner-type get-togethers. We are all ready to make these things happen, but we need you to take the lead! If you spent as much time in the presence of Tim Babcock as I have, you will know that one person can only handle the organization of one or two events and still hold down a day job. So help us to find some other venues for charitable ventures or member events. It's a lot easier for us to help organize than to go it alone, so we are more than happy to help you put your event together and of course finance USF&G board approved endeavors. We hope to get our membership above 150 by the springtime, and that means our effort at growing the club must be coupled with additional opportunities for member participation.

Let me end by saying we had a hel-luva good year, and some pretty good fishing in Baja and British Columbia, if not in Bodega. I was very pleased with how smoothly everything went, and I promise to remember your suggestions (like sending out a newsletter that contains tipping suggestions, and other "how tos" about being in Mexico.)

Salt Water

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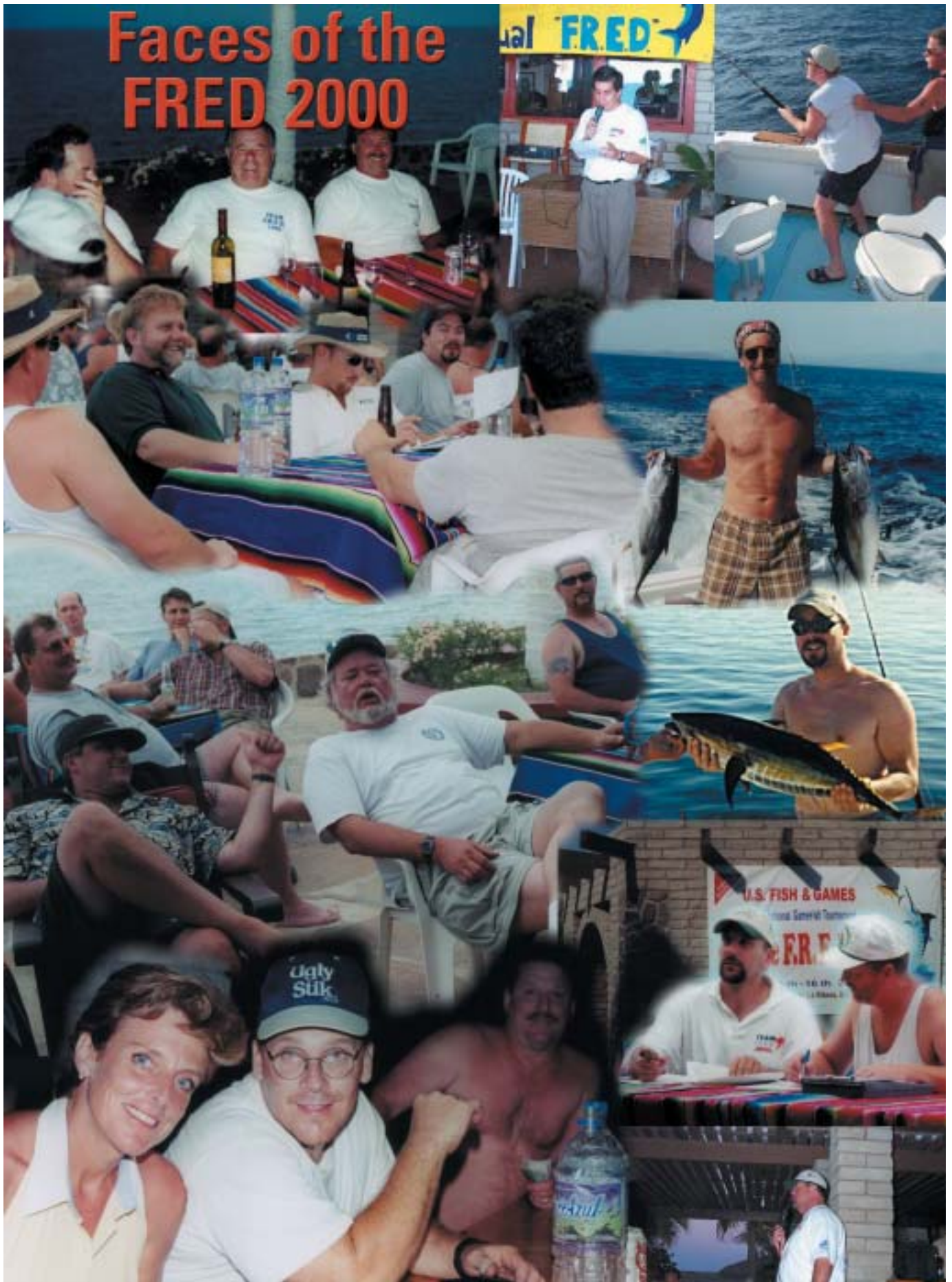
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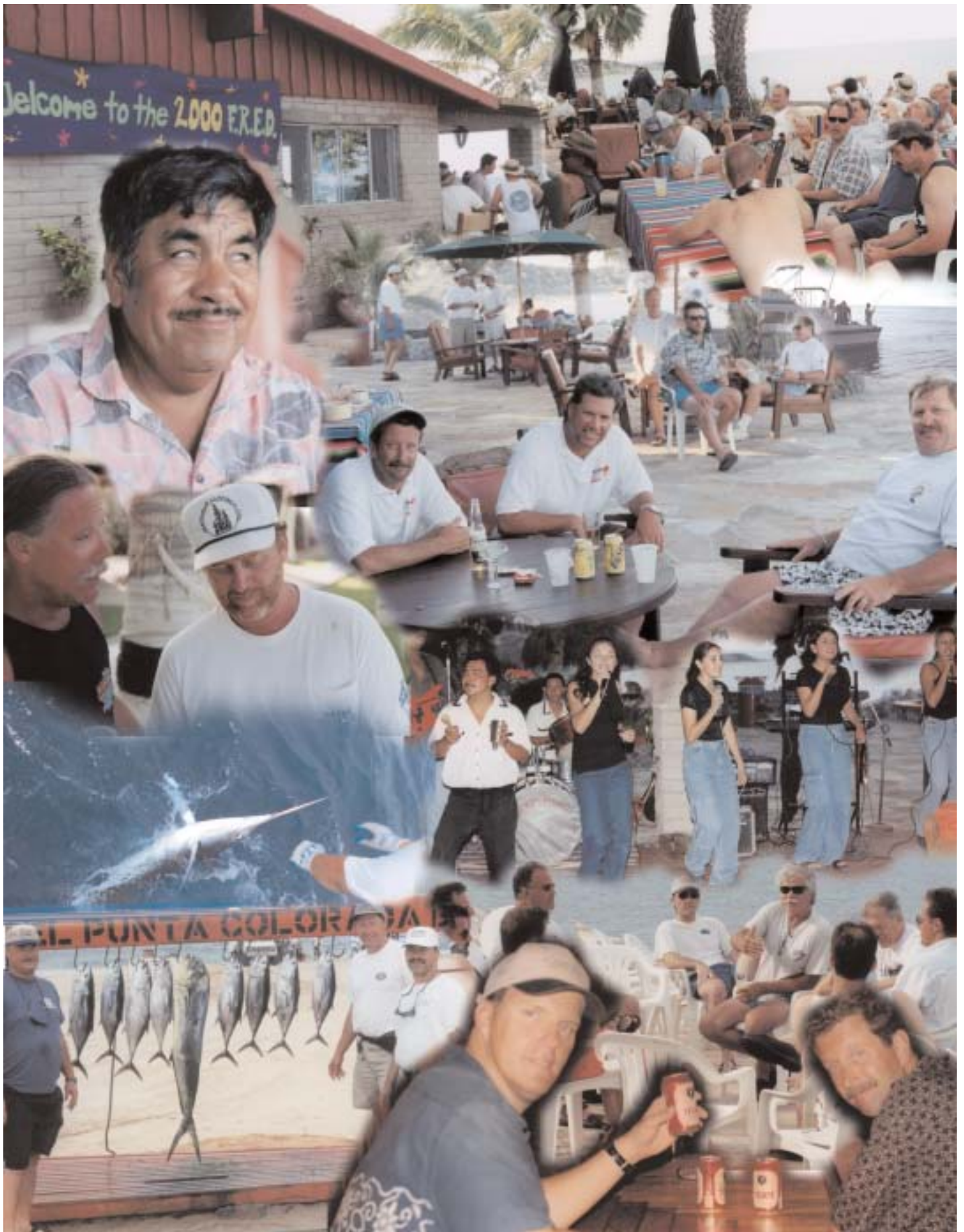
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Faces of the FRED 2000





Ramblings from a Non-Fisherman

Article by
Wayne
Gathright



The author enjoying Baja's "non-fishing" attractions

to all of the sportsmen who joined us at the 2000 FRED, *thanks for a great turnout.* I hope and believe that everyone had a great time. A good many fish were caught this year, so many so that even our Vice President Tim Babcock caught something for a change using his million dollars worth of high-tech offshore tackle.

Ask why a non-fisherman like myself enjoys this event and I'll have to say that the reasons are many. To begin with, there is the challenge. That would be the challenge of trying to understand what the hell you guys are all talking about.

Then there is the joy. The joy, that is, of watching Tim Babcock lug a thousand pounds of equipment to and from his boat each day.

And then we have our president Kevin Krause. What can I say except eat, fish, drink and be happy. I'll have to say that I'm not so sure about the fishing part after tallying his catch records. It seems "El Heifer" was in contention for the *El Zorillo* award right up to the end this year and damned close over the last several years as well. It would do my heart good to see Kevin win something besides the "who bought me the last shot award". But I ain't holding my breath.

At the top of my list, however, has to have been the look on Tim's face when I started off the raffle giving what I thought was a great description of the prizes, coming from a non-fisherman, (i.e., "Here's a—what looks like a nice fishing

reel—don't know what you'd use it for, but it's a pretty gold color.") Never seen eyes come out of their sockets before.

On a personal note, thanks to Jim Ferrell's crew for allowing me to fish with them for a day. I'd also like to apologize to the Lombardi's for standing them up (mostly on account of Don Sr. telling me the night before that larger bait were required for the fish they wanted to catch and I was about the right size).

All members who enjoyed this year's tournament owe a big thanks to Tim and Kevin for the work that went into setting this thing up. I would personally like to thank Tim for the work he did in lining up our sponsors. Prizes and awards donated by the host of fine companies who contributed their products allowed us to spend less club funds on the event, leaving more to donate to the local community and kids.

As for next year, this non-fisherman will most likely do the same as he did this year and jump aboard a boat for one of the three days of the tournament and put on a fishing clinic for you poor fishing-type slobs.

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How can I help?

SEND MONEY

by Wayne Gathright

Over the past year and most recently during the 10th annual FRED, several members have inquired as to how they can help the organization. As always when asked I used my favorite reply, "SEND MONEY". It seems like we are locked in a constant struggle to do just a bit better than break even and can use every dime we get. Besides that, as a bona fide non-profit charitable corporation (final ruling pending), all donations are tax deductible! The obvious aside, there are several other things that civic-minded members could do.

Bring In New Members

The most important thing is to bring in new members. As you'll find by reading this article, expanding membership is our club's first and foremost priority for a multitude of reasons.

Renew Your Membership

The simplest way, of course, is to make sure you renew your membership each year. One of the most significant problems facing us at this time is keeping members active continuously. Everyone joins when they want to go on a trip, but many skip a year when they can't. It's hard to build a solid membership foundation if we can't count on the return of past members.

What we need most are members that look upon our club as an annual commitment. This is important to the group in several ways. One of these is

that the size of our club greatly influences sponsor participation. Our leverage with them depends largely on how many members we can field.

Your membership dollars are also very important to our newsletter budget. At this time they constitute the entire source of funding for this publication. Per page costs drop sharply with increased circulation. We are pulling to increase membership to a point where we can cost effectively outsource printing, but can't currently do so given our size. We already outsource the publishing at great cost. Members still doing the printing on their own with reimbursement only for toner and paper costs.

Our eventual goal is to cover the entire cost of newsletter publication by selling advertising space to vendors and member's firms. Attracting this type of money, of course, depends upon our amassing a larger membership. We plan to begin seeking advertisers in our 2001 spring or summer issues.

Our current sole additional source of income has been the annual prize raffle held during the Baja Invitational Gamefish Tournament. We generate approximately \$1,200-\$1,400 through this event. We need this money to fund new event development, a critical task if we are to continue to expand and attract new and return members alike. This money must also cover administrative expenses such as office supplies, postage and professional services like legal and accounting.

It will take the dues of approximately 150-160 members to pay for this year's publishing and materials costs

alone. Our membership currently includes only about 100. If you do the math you'll see that there isn't much income left over for new event development after deducting our newsletter and administrative costs.

Volunteer: Assist with Events or Develop New Events

Those of you who want to become further involved can do so either by volunteering to assist in managing a current event or by developing a new one. Members John "Johnny Cabo" Carnett and Shaan Vandenburg have already stepped up to organize California fishing derbies in Lake Tahoe and Bodega Bay. If you have an idea for a great club trip or have a worthy charity in mind, call one of the club officers and start the wheels rolling.

Contributions and Advertising

Others have expressed interest in getting their names and the names of their companies out to the membership. We handed out our first member directory during this year's Baja tournament (contact a club officer if you have not received one and wish to). Since many of us work in related fields across the country and could benefit by a club network, we'll offer advertising space for sponsors and interested member companies in our 2001 directory to be published late next March.

I have also been asked what non-cash donations can be made. We can always use raffle items. Most of you have seen what we raffle at tournaments. Whether you have a new or "like-new" item to give or a desirable antique you can help us generate working capital while receiving a write-off.

We are also always looking for event sponsors. If your company is looking to

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Send Money

(cont. from pg. 9)

make a charitable donation, we ask that they consider one of our club events. We'll provide exposure through the newsletter and tournament brochures as well as public media sources, when possible.

As the Director of last year's California golf tournament and the current volunteer to set up our next one, I would greatly appreciate any and all help in this arena. I am looking for one or more experienced golfers, preferably but not necessarily experienced in tournament management. I'm also looking for a co-sponsor for both fall and spring dates. Volunteers are needed to help find door prizes and trophies and to serve as the event photographer.

Sign Up On Time for Events

One last item and I promise I'll shut up. This one is a biggie and although I know we've carped about it in past issues, I think it bears repeating. Please sign up on time for club events. We have had problems in the last year with members signing up for events well after the published cut-off date. This has resulted in two unnecessarily cancelled events and forfeited deposits in addition to wasted administrative time and money.

So there it is. I'll go ahead and thank you all for doing what you can, whether you simply maintain your memberships, work to build the organization or come through with a donation. Every small effort on your part gets us closer to our goal and of fulfilling the corporation's mission statement to help children and those in need in the places that we as sportsmen and women visit in our outdoor sporting pursuits.

Remember!
April 1st
DEADLINE
for sign up for 2001
FRED!!!

The 2000 BC Salmon/Halibut Derby

One Woman's Perspective

Article by Jana Eaves

Photo by Tim Babcock

When my husband Dwayne told me I was going on a fishing trip to British Columbia I was in shock! The only real fishing I had ever done in my life was catching trout in the lakes of Utah with my dad in my early teens. I had seen pictures of all the huge Fish my husband Dwayne had caught in Alaska and Mexico on past trips with the club. I'll admit that I was just a little nervous about the possibility of bringing in a fish almost as big as me. Speaking now as a veteran of the 2000 USF&G British Columbia Salmon/Halibut Derby held in June, I want everybody (other wives in particular) to know what a wonderful and enjoyable experience it was.

The excitement began for me with all the different plane rides—especially the last leg where we took off from the water at Sandspit and landed on the water in front of the lodge.

The lodge staff was very friendly and accommodating. They even had a surprise for us. Dwayne had told Tim about our upcoming Tenth Anniversary and Tim mentioned it to the lodge manager. On the last night of the trip, the chef made a big, beautiful cake. The staff came out to present it and

congratulate us. They even gave us two nice bottles of wine with our dinner. The whole evening was so special and made our trip even that much more memorable.

Now to the guys from the club that joined us. What great guys they were—Tim and Phil Babcock, Frank and Ed McNaughton, Tom Reese and Bruce Brother. Despite being the only woman in the group, they made me feel very welcome.

All eight of us stayed in a gorgeous log cabin by ourselves away from the main lodge. Dwayne and I had our own room with our own bathroom, which

Dwayne told me was very unusual for a fishing lodge. Our cabin had a big kitchen and living room area as well. We also had our own private hot tub at the

cabin which Dwayne and I relaxed in after long days out on the water.

On the first day of fishing, we didn't get on the water until nearly noon. Although we didn't have that much time, I did manage to hook one fish. Being a beginner to big fish fishing, I lost it. But what a rush when it grabbed my line and ran. I found out why you call the Canadian mooching reels "knuckle busters", as I almost broke all of mine on this first fish. However, I could then say that I had hooked my first big fish in the ocean.



Jana Eaves sharing with the local fauna

So whenever Tim and Phil came by our boat and asked how we did, I would put my arms out wide and say "Big Big Fish" and we would all laugh.

The next morning most of us were on the water by five thirty. This time I landed my first fish—a huge 24-pound king salmon. Compared to the two and three pound trout, it felt like a monster. About an hour later, Dwayne caught a 25-pounder. It was okay that his was bigger, I thought it was cute how close in size they were.

The third day I caught a 21-pound king and Dwayne caught the big 30-pound king that won the contest. It was still a great time, although we were not able to catch any halibut.

There were also some good-natured pranks from the guys, many of which involved duct tape (inside sandals, jackets, hats, etc.). Then there were the bananas! Frank had a phobia about bananas on his boat, a fear shared by some of the guides that fished with us. Of course, Tim had gone out early one morning to sabotage Frank's boat by hiding several bananas on it, all of which they found. That same morning I had taken one out to give to Frank on the water. Later in the day as we pulled alongside their boat I pulled out the banana to give it to them and before I could do it, I caught a fish right there in front of them. So I guess we proved that they are not such bad luck after all (I kept my banana).

On the last night Trevor, the lodge guide supervisor, came up to me with a hand full of bananas and asked me to sign them for the guides to put on their boats for good luck. The most superstitious guide even said that he would try bringing it along but if it didn't work, he would look me up. I haven't heard from him yet so it must have worked.

Thanks to Tim, Phil, Frank, Ed, Tom and Bruce for making me feel so welcome. And an extra special thanks to my wonderful husband Dwayne for taking me along. I hope I get the chance to go again. There were rumors about Alaska next year...sounds exciting.

Upcoming Events

F.R.E.D. Abalone Dive April 7

USFSHGames@aol.com

F.R.E.D. Invitational Gamefish Tournament

USFSHGames@aol.com

Fish for Fun Salmon Derby San Francisco

June 16 and 17 USFSHGames@aol.com

**Details of more exciting events next newsletter
and on the website (www.USFG.com)**

Current Event Contacts

Shaan Vandenburg – 707-566-0757 Svande8091@aol.com

Kevin Krause – 510-532-3934 USFSHGames@aol.com

Tim Babcock – 408-979-8601 Tunajunky@aol.com

Wayne Gathright – 408-225-8808 WaynePPE@aol.com

And an introduction...

from [Deborah Griffin](#) newsletter coordinator/designer

When you read this informative, entertaining, sometimes even inspiring, publication ever wonder how it all comes together? Probably not. I bet you imagined Kevin just cranks out his stories between bait and beers while Tim finesses and fine tunes his adventures into print. Toss some photographs in the air and *voila!* the USF&Games Quarterly Newsletter shows up in your mailbox—at least three times a year. Right? Sure, it's like that.

Actually, when Kevin invited me to work on the newsletter, I figured it would be just a bunch of "I caught a fish *this* big" stories, illustrated with photos of grinning, poorly-dressed sportsmen holding up dead fish and animals. Well...

Anyway, when I finally read the articles, I realized Kevin and Tim must have been weaned on Outdoor Life and Patrick McManus, with a little Mark Twain thrown in for good measure. These guys were good. Even better, the charitable aspects of the club are something I can get behind. And hey, I'll eat abalone—three times a day if given the opportunity. (*See Ab Dive April 7 above.*) I'll be there. I'm even a bit of a F.R.E.D. myself (substitute Dudette for Dude) by way of my day job: graphic designer for an environmentally-focused consulting firm [www.bki.com] and webmistress for the innovative newly-formed California Fuel Cell Partnership [www.fuelcellpartnership.org]. Skip this next part if you're not up for a bit of blatantly shameless self promotion: Newsletters, Business Cards, Website, etc. visit DeborahGriffinCreative.com or call 510-865-6762 for more info or hard sell.

Now if Kevin and Tim will just stop editing each other, I'll have the next newsletter out before this year's FRED. By the way, from the photos I've seen, those two and Wayne aren't the only people who attend these events. How about sending in some of your own adventure stories (minor exaggerations encouraged) and photographs? Mail to: US Fish & Games Newsletter P. O. Box 7171 San Jose, CA 95150-71, or email deborah@deborahgriffincreative.com

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