

BLAZING MAKO TOURNAMENT IN ISLAMORADA

April 4, 2016



Photo by Luyen Chou

Blazing Mako Tournament in Islamorada

The tranquil Florida Bay, known to anglers as the backcountry, is an environmentally sensitive estuary, home to hundreds of species of marine life, including top gamefish—bonefish, redfish, snook, permit, sea trout and the mighty silver king tarpon.

Chasing these backcountry trophies strung along the six islands that comprise Islamorada are thousands of anglers on flats and bay boats often accompanied by the world's largest collection of tournament-grade captains and guides.

"It's truly the best place in the world to host an inshore fishing tournament," said Capt. Cliff Jensen, director of sport fishing and watersports for the Guy Harvey Outpost Resorts, which is managing the Father's Day Blazing Mako Tournament & Festival scheduled for June 16-19. "Islamorada is where backcountry sport fishing and saltwater fly fishing were pioneered."

Angler House Marina will be the venue for inshore boats to launch as well as a fishing seminar for backcountry tournament anglers.

The Blazing Mako Tournament & Festival, named for Nova Southeastern University's mascot, the mako shark, has designated a \$2,500 entry fee (three anglers) for inshore competition.

Whether fishing offshore or backcountry, teams are eligible for the \$10,000 first prize and the perpetual Blazing Mako trophy, not to mention bragging rights as a top tournament angler. Jensen said tournament scoring will be based on a point system.

"With all of the great backcountry guides in the Florida Keys, this is a great opportunity to charter a captain and greatly increase the odds to be in the running for the top prize," Jensen added.

These specially skilled guides employ techniques learned from some of the area's fishing legends such as Ted Williams, Jimmy Albright, Cecil Keith and Stu Apte.

Situated between the saltwater wilderness of Everglades National Park and Florida Strait, the backcountry and bays continue to provide great fishing on light tackle. Many anglers stalk the prized tarpon, whose season runs from April through July.

Jensen said corporate team registration is also underway for the tournament's offshore division. The fee is \$5,000 per team (six anglers). To register for the inshore/offshore division, go to <http://www.guyharveyoutpost.com/blazing-mako/fishing.html>.

Available to fishing teams and local guides will be free downloads of the IGHOFish app powered by iAngler, which will collect valuable information for fisheries management.

One of the Tournament and Festival highlights will be the lighting of a steel framed sculpture of a mako shark. The Blazing Mako, created by Islamorada artist Pasta Pantaleo, is a signature of tournaments managed by Guy Harvey Resort Outposts, which has created a series of bonfire tournament events in the Bahamas over the past several years.

In addition to the not-for-profit fishing tournament, expansive plans also are underway for innovative art exhibits, live music, conservation organization displays and local vendors, all showcased in a 100-tent "Conservation Village" to be located a host property, The Islander, a Guy Harvey Outpost Resort.

The event will also raise funds for marine sciences scholarships at the NSU Halmos College of Natural Sciences and Oceanography. For more information, visit www.blazingmako.com.



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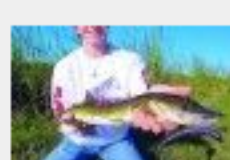
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