

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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**2012 Billfish Invitational to Present Tim Choate with Achievement Award
at Bimini Big Game Club**



Ft Lauderdale, FL, USA – January 25, 2012—Captain Ned Stone, Tournament Director for the 2012 Billfish Invitational confirmed today the Bimini Big Game Club, a Guy Harvey Outpost Resort will host the tournament on May 30 – June 2. At a special dinner event on May 31st, renowned conservation advocate and international sport fishing angler and entrepreneur Tim Choate will be presented the Frank Johnson Trophy for *Personal Achievement in the Advancement of Big Game Sport Fishing*. The Billfish Invitational was launched last year to celebrate the reopening of the legendary Bimini Big Game Club, now operating as a Guy Harvey Outpost Resort.

In announcing Choate's selection, Guy Harvey, Chairman of Guy Harvey Outpost Resorts added, "Tim's visionary and passionate commitment to billfish conservation and the operation of top-of-class sport fishing operations in Costa Rica, Guatemala and more recently Brazil and the Galapagos have pretty much shaped international recognition and respect of these countries for their robust conservation practices and dedication to healthy and sustainable recreational fisheries."

Choate is a co-founder of the prestigious Billfish Foundation, an organization dedicated to billfish research and conservation and the promotion of circle hook fishing techniques. "He has been and continues to be a driving force behind today's worldwide Billfish conservation movement" notes Harvey. "Every marlin angler today owes a debt of gratitude to Tim for his tireless work to protect billfish from irresponsible fishing practices."

Commenting on his nomination, Choate noted, "The honor of receiving this perpetual trophy at the Bimini Big Game Club brings me full circle with my passion for marlin fishing and growing up in South Florida. I caught my first blue marlin

here in Bimini in 1962.” A big game fishing enthusiast by nature, Choate is angling to win the tournament outright. “I have probably some 50,000 billfish catches to my name and those of our boats, but I’m leaving nothing to chance. I’ve got legendary charter captain Bouncer Smith and my daughter Stephanie as an angler. We fish together around the world, but winning this tournament in Bimini at the Big Game Club would be a truly memorable accomplishment for me and my family.”

The winning billfish team is presented the Hemingway-Lerner Trophy, a Kent Ullberg sculpture commissioned by the Club to recognize “*Friendship, teamwork and the pursuit of Excellence.*” Both trophies are on permanent display at the Big Game Club. The tournament is a charity event that donates all net proceeds for the exclusive benefit of conservation and education programs in Bimini. The Guy Harvey Ocean Foundation administers the funds in concert with the International Game Fish Association.

About Tim Choate.

Tim Choate has been an ardent angler since moving to Islamorada from New York City as a boy in the mid-1950s. His Florida Keys childhood fostered an enthusiasm for offshore fishing, particularly in Bimini and Cat Cay. While earning his law degree from the University of Miami in 1974, his 19- foot center console was a fixture at the Big Game Club. Choate gave up a successful Miami law practice in 1982 to form Artmarine, Inc. to pursue the sport fishing business and travel the world in pursuit of big game records. In 1984 he acquired Striker Aluminum Yachts and through the years his Artmarina subsidiary has managed numerous charter fishing operations and lodges throughout Central and South America, including Guatemala’s famed Fins ‘N Feathers. Choate pioneered the use of socioeconomic studies by governments and conservation groups to validate the correlation of billfishing conservation and tourism. These efforts lead to the creation of the Billfish Foundation which he co-founded with the late Win Rockefeller and the establishment of the Presidential Challenge Conservation Series, Central America. He remains a tireless advocate of billfish conservation legislation both in the United States and worldwide.

About the 2012 Billfish Invitational

Tournament Dates & Location:

The tournament will take place May 30 – June 2, 2012. Fishing days will be May 31, June 1, and June 2 on the front side of the full moon. Historically, this has been prime time to catch large (500+ pound) blue marlin. The tournament will be based at the Bimini Big Game Club, a Guy Harvey Outpost, and all participating boats must be registered at the Club for the duration of the tournament.

Eligible Species:

Blue Marlin, White Marlin, Sailfish, Spearfish and Swordfish.

Fun Fish Division

Dolphin, Wahoo, Kingfish, Tuna (Yellowfin & Blackfin).

Licenses & Permits

All participating vessels/anglers must possess the necessary licenses and permits. All boats must abide by all local and international laws. **Note: Clearance fees for a participant's boat's cruising/fishing permit (good for four) may be reimbursed by the Club upon checkout (This is a government promotion and reimbursement is subject to continued government participation.).**

Entry Fee

An entry fee of \$5000 covers tournament entry, meals, parties and gifts for up to 6 team members. For vessels less than 40' in length an entry fee of \$4000 covers tournament entry, meals, parties and gifts for up to 4 team members. Early entry discounts of up to 20% are available.

May 30, 2012 – Captain's Meeting and Welcome Dinner

This meeting will be from 6pm to 7pm. At least one representative from each team must be present. All anglers and crew are encouraged to attend. Familiarity with IGFA Rules is expected of all participants. Tournament rules may be amended verbally or in writing at the time of the meeting. Anglers are responsible for being well informed of all rules.

May 31, 2012 – Dinner Roast Presentation of the Frank Johnson Trophy to Angler/Entrepreneur Tim Choate

The Frank Johnson Trophy is awarded annually by Guy Harvey Outpost, LTD to that individual whose personal achievements have contributed to the advancement of international big game sport fishing. Celebrated sculptor Ed Pang cast the bronze marlin attacking a Moldcraft lure. The tournament looks forward to having Tim's close friends and colleagues assembled to recognize and reminisce about Choate's personal and professional accomplishments. The stories of this evening will be certain to make Hemingway proud. This trophy will remain on display at the Club for generations of visiting anglers and guests to enjoy.

June 1, 2012 – Benefit Auction & Dinner

A live and silent auction to benefit the Guy Harvey Ocean Foundation and its commitment to Conservation and Education programs specific to Bimini. The foundation in cooperation with the International Game Fish Association, will administer these funds. Among the items auctioned in 2011 were trips, original art work by Guy Harvey, limited edition photographs by Scott Kerrigan and Marc Montocchio, and sculpture by the world renown Kent Ullberg.

June 2, 2012 – Awards Dinner and Presentation of the Hemingway-Lerner Trophy

Kent Ullberg' stainless steel sculpture embodies the spirit and passion of Ernest Hemingway and Michael Lerner, men who loved the adventure of Big Game Sport Fishing

so much that they founded the International Game Fish Association to ensure its sporting integrity. Established by Guy Harvey Outpost to celebrate *big game sport fishing, friendship, teamwork, and the pursuit of excellence*, this magnificent sculpture of a rising blue marlin will be awarded to the Top Billfish Team in recognition of their accomplishments. The trophy will remain on display at the Club for generations of visiting anglers and guests to enjoy.

Awards

First, Second, Third Place Billfish Team

First, Second, Third Place Billfish Angler

Top Lady Angler

First Blue Marlin

Last Blue Marlin

First, Second, Third Place Fun Fish Division

Largest Dolphin

Largest Wahoo

Largest Tuna (Yellowfin & Blackfin)

Largest Kingfish

Most Unusual Catch (& Release. If you can't eat it, don't kill it. Bring us a picture.)

Hard Luck Trophy

Best Tournament Photograph

Conservation

The Billfish Invitational is an ALL RELEASE tournament. In the interest of conservation, Guy Harvey Outpost and the Tournament Committee ask that all inedible and undersized fish be released as quickly as possible. Should a participant have a mutilated fish or a non-target species that is otherwise unable to survive, the Bimini Shark Lab will be pleased to accept donations. Please use the trash barrels at the fish cleaning stations for your old bait, fish heads and carcasses.

The Guy Harvey Ocean Foundation, in cooperation with the International Game Fish Association, is proud to announce that the net proceeds the Billfish Invitational will be invested in Bimini and surrounding waters. Among the programs to be supported are: satellite telemetry tagging to study migratory patterns of local billfish populations, marine science curriculum and field study programs within the local Bimini schools, with curriculum to be developed jointly by the Guy Harvey Ocean Foundation, IGFA and Nova Southeastern University/Guy Harvey Research Institute, and creation of an artificial reef system offshore of North Bimini.

www.BillfishInvitational.com