

## THE INTERNATIONAL LIGHT TACKLE TOURNAMENT ASSOCIATION

by Phillip Kuypers, Past Board Member, ILTTA 1991-1993

### THE ESPRIT DE CORPS OF ILTTA

"Sport angling transcends all political and ideological boundaries. To fish as a recreation or as a sport is a God-given right to all those who participate according to the ethics of the sport. This means observing its rules and regulations, and the laws of the land, and refraining from needless killing". These were the words of Elwood Harry, deceased president of the International Game Association (IGFA) and for many years director of International Light Tackle Tournament Association (ILTTA).

Sport angling is a way of life. It never has, as prime motive, acclamation and acceptance or awarding of colors or insignia. This recognition follows as a natural result of a deep and on-going commitment to close relationship and camaraderie of anglers from all walks, within an awareness of the social, economic, recreational and aesthetic importance of - and a great respect and reverence for - the marine environment, its ecology and marine animals.

The sport angler will be a frequent visitor to the marine environment, not always to catch a fish, but often to observe, to ponder, to appreciate. The force behind his desire to catch a fish is the experience of the fish's physical capabilities, measured against his own, tempered and constrained by conservation promoting angling methods.

A competent sports angler is never wasteful of the fishery resource. He will want to catch the biggest fish, and he will only take and kill when it is the interest of his sport, science or a personal best or record.

He will conserve where necessary, and be ever mindful of the sensitivities of the habitat and environment of the fishery. His prime motive is to test and employ the knowledge that he has accumulated and to translate his abilities into actions, with the prime desire to have a positive fishing experience, built on a positive attitude toward the fishery.

Tournament fishing, as practiced by ILTTA, is epitomized by physical abilities, acquired through strenuous exercise and the pursuance of competency of the highest order. This is honed to perfection by a desire to win whilst observing fair and uniform fishing rules and regulations, according to the ethics of the sport.

A person who strives to be afforded the opportunity to participate in an ILTTA tournament will be recognized by his thirst for the knowledge of the ILTTA game fish species (sailfish, white martin, striped marlin and blue marlin), its habitat, its feeding habits and its biology. Such a person will take every opportunity to be informed - by reading or by attending discussions or by obtaining electronic and other visual material - to acquaint himself with all aspects of the environment and ecology around the subject of ILTTA game fish species.

Tournament angling is not an armchair experience. It is not living out fantasies as a mental exercise. An ILTTA angler will have continuous hands-on experience of the marine environment and all that goes with it. He will be knowledgeable about the

feeding and social habits of the various target species. He will know their fighting habits, their antics. He will know how to best handle his equipment and will have experienced the thrill of billfish angling so many times that it has become a part of his being.

The presents of the gods of the Greeks still contains in Pandora's Box - exhilarating friendships, exotic places, wonderful positive experiences, and hope - widens the horizons for the sport angler when his fishing is internationalized through participating in the ILTTA tournaments. No sport angler who has shared positive experiences with his counterparts from other countries can claim ignorance of the tremendous depth of friendship and understanding of those who experience angling - in all its nuances - as sacrosanct.

It therefore goes without saying that the real benefit to be derived from ILTTA is that after one has successfully prepared oneself and polished one's abilities to perfection, one is allowed to move into a truly international sphere of sportsmanship.

Membership of ILTTA is only available to clubs subscribing to the Beliefs and Philosophies of SGFA. The symbiotic relationship between ILTTA and IGFA extended over many, many years. These clubs must be duly constituted with a minimum membership. Before membership of ILTTA is bestowed on a club an application for membership must be approved by the Board of Directors of ILTTA.

ILTTA's annual tournaments are hosted by member clubs in exotic places such as Acapulco and Cancun in Mexico, Mayaguez and Boqueron in Puerto Rico, Flamingo Beach and Los Suenos in Costa Rica, Cabeza de Toro in the Dominican Republic, Puerto Azul and Playa Grande in Venezuela and Brazil, Iztapa in Guatemala, Watamu, Kenya, in East Africa; places world famous for light tackle bill fish angling.

The rules and regulations of ILTTA have been copied and adopted by many major international tournaments because of its unsurpassed ethical and competitive standards. What else can be expected - ILTTA has for more than 61 years consecutively held its annual tournament and its rules and regulations have been honed to perfection during the years. The organization and administration of the annual tournament are continually updated to provide maximum fishing pleasure and camaraderie for its participants. It is a non-profit service organization in an old world fashion based on integrity, equality and fellowship.

The Membership Committee of ILTTA wishes to facilitate the learning process, the striving for excellence and participation in ILTTA tournaments of interested amateur sportfishing enthusiasts.

**All membership enquiries must be directed to:**  
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