

Gold Cup 2008 Black & Blue Marlin Tournament

Our team, "The Christina Michelle III" (named after our daughters) which included Vittoria Bossi, Andrea Olivarez, Roger Markowitz, Luis Lopez, Kiki Robles, & Mark Trivisonno. Andrea, Vittoria and Roger have been coming to La Paz from California for a long time. Luis Lopez, the longtime manager of James Curtis' Mosquito Fleet, and Captain Kiki Robles, one of the finest captains in La Paz! My wife Jamie and I fell in love with La Paz (City of Peace) so much that we recently purchased a condo at Marina Costa Baja. Our friends and family come to La Paz for the fishing but it is the people who bring us back. We can't describe it, we can only say it's magical here. Swimming with large whale sharks is also pretty cool.

Thursday- Prefish - Vittoria, Andrea, Roger & local Captain Juan Romero and I fish a couple miles off Espritu Santo Island. We see a group of feeders and have a couple of knockdowns, but nothing sticks however, we do land a couple of nice dorados. Dinner served. Talk on the dock is that the Ohco Ocho and La Reyna are slow.

Friday, First day - Christina Michelle III gets up front for the shotgun start. with well over 70 boats! Wildcatter, Rama 111 to the port and Fish Tales to the starboard. We didn't want to be in the soup (prop wash). We make some bonita at Espritu Santo Island on our way to El Charro, land one very nice Dodo on a new Blackbart blue marlin jig and have couple of knockdowns. Late afternoon we get one to stick, Luis a very gifted tournament angler grabs the rod and makes quick work of the striper. Kiki runs the Christina Michelle III, I grab the Marlin Bill and Vittoria gets the picture. We are on the board. Thirty minutes later we're on again! Luis grabs the rod, Captain Kiki drives the boat and I leader the striper, Andrea gets the picture while Roger gets some rest. I look over and the Good Karma from Cabo is close enough that I can see them releasing a nice sailfish. Two fish for the day and everybody is happy.

On Saturday (we miss the shotgun start, as one of my teammates runs out of gas on the way to Costa Baja.) We decide to start fishing inside the El Charro. The day before, there was a very nice mark at 300 feet. Several boats are in the area, and sometimes it is outrigger to outrigger. The morning seems slow, no feeders, tailers, or fish in the patten. Finally and afternoon delight, a blind strike on the stinger . I'm at the helm and gas it, and set the hook. Luis picks up the Calstar Rod Shimano-Torsa 30 combo with a KK Pono jig. Luis is fighting the Blue Marlin stand-up style, we have no chair and is worried that he is going to get spooled. In the next ten minutes, Luis manages to get a lot of line back . Kiki comes upstairs to run the boat and I go to the cockpit to leader and grab the marlin bill. After 20 minutes and the port engine stalling, Luis has the Blue Marlin along the starboard side of the Christina Michelle III. I grab the bill and Vittoria gets the photo. The blue then explodes and I let go as the Blue Marlin goes down. Kiki, Luis and Andrea are thinking that this fish is over the 200 pound limit - Roger, now well rested, does his calculations thinks its 215. There is a \$50 per pound penalty for any team weighing a fish under 200 pound minimum. I'm thinking 195 pounds. Luis gets the fish up and we notice that we have a broken swivel. Oh boy! Kiki comes down from the bridge and I run the Christina Michelle III from the cockpit. Kiki's idea is to not to gaff -

just open the door and pull the blue into the cockpit , is a great idea! The Blue dog had little fight left and we run to the scales at Marina Costa Baja. The Blue Marlin weights in at 213 pounds and the Christina Michelle III is in first place. With fours hours left to go we run east of the Bajo. trying for a couple more releases with no luck. Five O'clock lines out. On the way in we are all singing thinking we have a chance placing in the release division and winning the big prize with the only fish over 200 pounds at this point. At around 6:30, Chairman James Curtiss declares **US** the winner! Unbelievable! Kiki's wife, Cynthia joined us for a for a wonderful celebration dinner in town.

Sunday Night. The volunteers and developers put on a rockin' party on the beach at Marina Costa Baja. Samantha Rae and her band were over the top. Mr. Barbecue Ed, the auctioneer was fantastic. The three chosen charities, split between them one hundred thousand. Host Robert Hefner passes out the nice trophies and checks of \$131,000.00 usd, Jackpot 9800.00 usd and 3rd place release 1650.00 usd to Team Christina Michelle III, making this the biggest money tournament in La Paz. We dance into the night and are all so grateful to be a part of this is a special weekend. Thanks to my teammates, all the volunteers, sponsors, developers, James Curtiss, the Mosquito Fleet, Marina Costa Baja and the people of La Paz who's time and generosity made this a fantastic event.

How sweet it is! Capt Mark Trivisonno.