

BLUE WATER

CURRENTS

50 Florida Sails in One Day

When you hear of a boat catching 50 sailfish in a day, you probably assume it happened in Guatemala or Isla Mujeres, Mexico, but Key West? That's not usually the first location that comes to mind.

On April 9, the crew on *Vitamin Sea Too* found a huge body of sailfish tailing down-sea while pre-fishing off Key West for the World Sailfish Championship.

"I've never experienced anything like it," says Tim Maddock, who owns the 33 Contender. "The conditions had them up on the surface tailing with an east wind."

The team, which includes Mike Dinnen, Mike Reisert, Jon Krieg, Chris Meeks and Chris Zidar, are expert kite fishermen, yet they hardly used the kites on this phenomenal day. "We caught six on the kites. The other 44 were tailers," Maddock says.

As the numbers began to rack up, the crew made some phone calls to see if they could potentially set a new state record for sailfish releases. "We heard that back in 1970 some-

one released 47 sailfish in a day," Maddock says. "It was a team effort to make this day possible, and it will never be forgotten."

While the International Game Fish Association does not keep records for releases, the 50 catches does appear to be a new record for the Florida Keys. Capt. Marty Lewis held the previous Keys record, releasing 37 sailfish in one day back in May 2005 on *Main Attraction* off Marathon. In their five days pre-fishing for the tournament, *Vitamin Sea Too* released 109 sailfish.

TBF Makes Headway in Central America and Mexico

The Billfish Foundation recently announced that all seven countries of Central America approved an agreement to create a sustainable management plan for billfish and other popular game fish.

The announcement comes on the heels of similar ongoing work in the countries of Mexico, Peru and Costa Rica. TBF



Vitamin Sea Too happened upon a massive body of sailfish off Key West and released 50 in one day.

says it has worked for the expansion of conservation measures and laws to protect billfish in these countries for a decade, hoping to curb overfishing coastal fisheries by commercial interests and implement tag-and-release programs.

The agreement between TBF and the Organization of Fisheries and Aquaculture for the Isthmus of Central America (OSPESCA) was signed in late February by OSPESCA president Steadman Fagoth Muller and TBF's Russ Nelson. (The text of the agreement can be found in Spanish and English at www.billfish.org.)

"We now look for-

ward to the hard work of establishing a regional data-collection protocol and moving on with improved conservation measures for billfish in the region," says TBF president Ellen Peel.

TBF also reported good news from Mexico, where a move to strengthen fishing and conservation laws gained support from all political parties in a vote by members of the Congress of the Mexican State of Baja California Sur (BCS).

This move came after TBF unveiled a 2007 study that showed 354,013 people fished in Los Cabos and spent an estimated \$633.6 million for lodging, charter boats, food, transportation,