



FLOATING ON
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2019 Two Oceans Tuna Derby

Images courtesy Dale Staples and Gary Lategan.



By Kirsten Veenstra

NOVEMBER 2019 once again heralded the annual Two Oceans Tuna Derby which is held at the Atlantic Boat Club in Hout Bay.

The tournament has an interesting history going back to the turn of the century. During the 1990s it became increasingly evident that Hout Bay had a world class fishery on its doorstep. The idea of travelling to the deep to catch a tuna up to 100kg on rod and

reel with stand-up gear had become a reality and many a tuna commercial pole boat had seen this size fish swimming in their chum lines next to their vessels. Anglers and boat owners started to plan and get the correct gear together for this daunting task.



Team Cloud Nine, with Mark Delany of Two Oceans Marine Manufacturing and their winning prize.

The Atlantic Boat Club members recognised this interest, and the Tuna Derby was born in the Millennium year of 2000, with Two Oceans Marine Manufacturing coming onboard as the title sponsor from the fourth year. At the first Derby the winning fish only weighed 62kg, but in the years that followed the dream became a reality as a number of fish in the 100kg range were caught.

This year 29 boats carrying 110 anglers took part in the Two Oceans Tuna Derby with entries coming from near and far — Cape Town, Botswana, The Netherlands, Richard's Bay, Limpopo, Belgium and Canada.

The Two Oceans Tuna Derby has become known as one of the most prestigious annual sportfishing competitions on the South African sportfishing calendar. This year the prizes were worth over R800 000 and the winning team walking away with a Seacat ski-boat with a trailer and two Yamaha engines worth R325 000. Second prize got a Yamaha golf cart worth R125 000 and third place received Furuno sonar equipment worth R90 000.

Each boat could weigh in two yellowfin tuna over 30kg and one longfin tuna over 15kg for each day of fishing. This counted towards the overall prize. In addition prizes were awarded for individual anglers in the jigging and popping category and in the catch and release category.

The opening function was held on Friday 1 November, and the competition organisers had set aside a ten-day window in which to get in a few days of fishing. Saturday 2 November was a blow-out which worked out well as it

gave the anglers a chance to watch South Africa beat England in the Rugby World Cup final at the club, complete with a spit braai.

Sunday 3 November was the first day of fishing, with a mass start at 05h00. Most of the fleet headed 40 nautical miles or so south towards the Canyon where some trawlers and long liners were also hoping to get a good catch. It was a slow and tough day, both windy and with big swell.

All in all, it was not the best day of fishing for most of the boats only seven of the boats weighed in fish, with a total of nine yellowfin, and five longfin coming to the scales. *Cloud 9* was looking good at the end of the day, having weighed in two yellowfin over 70kg. Bob Deffossa on *Extravagance* had the top catch of the day with a 91.2kg yellowfin.

The Monday was blown out but all the anglers gathered at the club for a steak night and lucky draws.

The final day of fishing was on Tuesday 5 November. Sam Stuttgart on the *Cloud 9*, described the day's conditions very well in his blog on the event: "Tuesday's forecast was no oil painting, with the north westerly wind picking up in the afternoon making for a rather unpleasant run home from the Canyon. Thus, along with most of the competitors, we headed out into the west. The conditions turned out to be quite unlike the forecast, with flat seas and a hardly noticeable breeze, allowing for the 36-foot beauty (*Cloud 9*) to show us what she can do, and what a pleasure it was."

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Henry Hugo with this year's heaviest individual tuna. Photo by Gary Lategan.



Tarryn Hemmes was this year's individual lady winner. Photo by Gary Lategan.

in the country, and the second day of fishing in this year's Two Oceans Tuna Derby certainly was that. Most of the boats headed west/north west towards the Cables, with many of the boats following a trawler. Once she pulled up her nets there were a substantial number of yellowfin over a broad area, and most teams caught multiple yellowfin over 50kg.

In total 41 yellowfin over 50kg were weighed and 11 longfin. The biggest

fish of the day, a 92.8kg beauty, belonged to Henry Hugo on last year's winner, *Silver Fox*. The ladies' competition was close, but was won by Tarryn Hemmes who weighed in a 57.2kg yellowfin. *Reel Therapy* walked away with an amazing prize of five 44-inch LG TVs for the most fish in the catch and release category.

Carlos de Gouveia's team on *Cloud 9* took the overall prize. Their consistency over the two fishing days and

two yellowfin over 70kg on Day 1 set them up for a well-deserved win.

Sam Stuttgart later said, "Our game plan was simple, to be 'persistent and consistent'. On the first day, this found us lifting our heads, putting some music on and continuing to search the area — persistency. We also worked with the motto: chum and they shall come!"

The anglers on *Cloud 9* — Carlos De Gouveia (owner, skipper), Roberto Leão, Sam Stuttard and William Melck — fished with Shimano Tiagra 50W, 80 lb line class and Shimano rods, using sardines as bait.

Mark Delany of Two Oceans Marine Manufacturing, title sponsor of the event, commented, "The Two Oceans Tuna Derby is an event that we are proud to have supported for 16 years now. A big thank you goes to the team at Atlantic Boat Club in Hout Bay for all their hard work in putting together such a great event, to the anglers who enter and make the competition what it is, and to the incredible support from so many incredible sponsors who make the event possible. We look forward to another fantastic event in 2020."

The 2020 event window will be Friday 30 October to Sunday 8 November 2020.

A big thank you to the major sponsors of the event: Two Oceans Marine Manufacturing, Furuno/Radio Holland, Yamaha, Phoenix IDRS and Allianz, and The Lookout Deck.

For more information on the Tuna Derby email <tunaderby@atlanticboatclub.co.za> or visit <www.atlanticboatclub.co.za>.

To read Sam Stuttgart's blog on *Cloud 9*'s full experience at the 2019 Two Oceans Tuna Derby, go to the news section on <2oceans.co.za>.

RESULTS

Top winning boat teams:

1. *Cloud 9*, with total entered catch of 283.2kg, skippered by Carlos De Gouveia.
2. *Extravagance*, with total entered catch of 238.9kg, skippered by Sean Amor.
3. *Silver Fox*, with total entered catch of 238.9kg skippered by Heinie Strumpher.

Top individual catches:

1. Henry Hugo, *Silver Fox*, with a 92.8kg yellowfin.
2. Bob Defossa, *Extravagance*, with a 91.2kg yellowfin.
3. Marc White, *Kaskazi Too*, with an 84.3kg yellowfin.

Top lady anglers:

1. Tarryn Hemmes, *Mi Thyme*, with a 57.2kg yellowfin
2. Judith Roetman from the Netherlands, *Xtreme 1*, with a 52.2kg yellowfin.