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## Guatemala 10 for 12 and...

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Buena Vista Sportfishing Lodge

*Article by Bill Pino*

Guatemala, 10 for 12 and free jumpers being sited everywhere. One mid-sized sail got so close it almost hit the bow of our 26 ft cat boat. I looked at the captain and proudly asked what he thought of our day. He smiled and answered that it was a little slow and we will do better tomorrow. Then he apologized!

I was invited to fish the Central American sailfish mecca as the guest of friend Connor McNulty and **Buena Vista Sportfishing Lodge** owners Monte and Jody Elswick. The plane had not hit the tarmac but I was already counting the dozens of sails we would see. All the articles and Sunday morning TV shows touted Guatemala as THE place for pacific sailfish. So I knew the numbers would be there. What I wasn't ready for was the resort like treatment and hospitality of the owners and staff of **Buena Vista Sportfishing Lodge**. We'll get to that but first the fishing.

Saturday 7:30am and a hearty breakfast packed away we all loaded into the van and headed for Marina Pez Vela in Iztapa, Guatemala. The 10 minute ride to the marina had us passing Guatemalan girls cooking tortillas on the side of the road. The air was clear on this warm morning and we could see the smoldering volcano in the distant background. We passed over a bridge and to our right was the busy commercial fishing fleet of pangas being loaded for a day on the river. We're not in Kansas anymore Toto. This place is cool.



When we arrived at the marina we loaded up the 26 ft cat boat and headed out 38 miles to the sailfish grounds. Typical of the thorough Buenavista Sportfishing Lodge hospitality, I had already spoken with the captain so we knew the ride would be a little longer than normal. The captain had already rigged the Roddy Hayes Legend Lures

that I had given him as well as a couple special squid chains that I wanted to try. Our Captain Marcial explained the process and suggested that we should be leaving our baits in the water when we hook up because multiples are common. He pointed out leaping manta rays, 100's of sea turtles, schools of bonitas and tailing sailfish. Then the throttles were pulled back and we were ready for action.



Our spread consisted of two TLD 15's on the flat lines with 20lb test Moi Moi diamond hi vis green, medium ballyhoo and 7/0 eagle claw circle hooks flossed on top of the head.

Two long riggers bait fished on Shimano TLD 25's and medium ballyhoo rigged with 7/0 eagle claw circle hooks rigged with a swivel coming out of the mouth. Our teasers were a Roddy Hayes Piper 16 on the left center, a Roddy Hayes Krakatoa 16 on the right center, a Squidnation 9 inch pink squid teaser on the right flat teaser and a Squidnation green squid teaser on the left flat teaser. Each of the squid teasers had a large ballyhoo on the end.





The action commenced after about an hour of searching and working the radio with Capt. Marcial's network of charter buddies. It didn't take long to understand the coded radio chattered. Most of the conversation took place in numbers and obviously in Spanish. I could understand 5 raised, 3 hooked, 2 released, 53 and 32, gracias amigo. That meant we raised 5 fish, hooked 3 and released 2 and were at the 53 and 32 which are partial GPS coordinates. The lines were in the water for about 30 minutes before the first victim was spotted behind the pink teaser. I was lucky enough to be standing by the pink chain and was able to get the hook up on the smallish Pacific Sail.

Capt Marcial would keep the boat in a turn and remained calm as he scanned the spread looking for other sailfish. After about a two minute count he would order the lines be brought in and we would work on the fish. Thus went the routine fish after fish except for a beautiful bull dolphin that invited himself to our dinner table. Although the bite was a bit slow on our first day, we did manage to take advantage of our bites.



Our final tally on the day was 10 for 12 on the sails and a beautiful dolphin for the table. 9 of our 12 bites were picked off of teasers. There is nothing more exciting then picking a hot sailfish off of a teaser 20 feet behind the boat.



We had worked our way inshore all day and ended the day only 24 miles from the inlet. So our ride home was considerably shorter. When we arrived back at the Buenavista Sportfishing Lodge we were greeted with an ice cold beverage and fried fish fingers. What a way to end the day. A quick dip in the pool, a stroll around the grounds and nice hot shower and then it was time for a world class meal with our crew as well as Jody and Monte. Tomorrow would come quickly and the promise of a better day suggested we better hit the hay early since we would be busy.



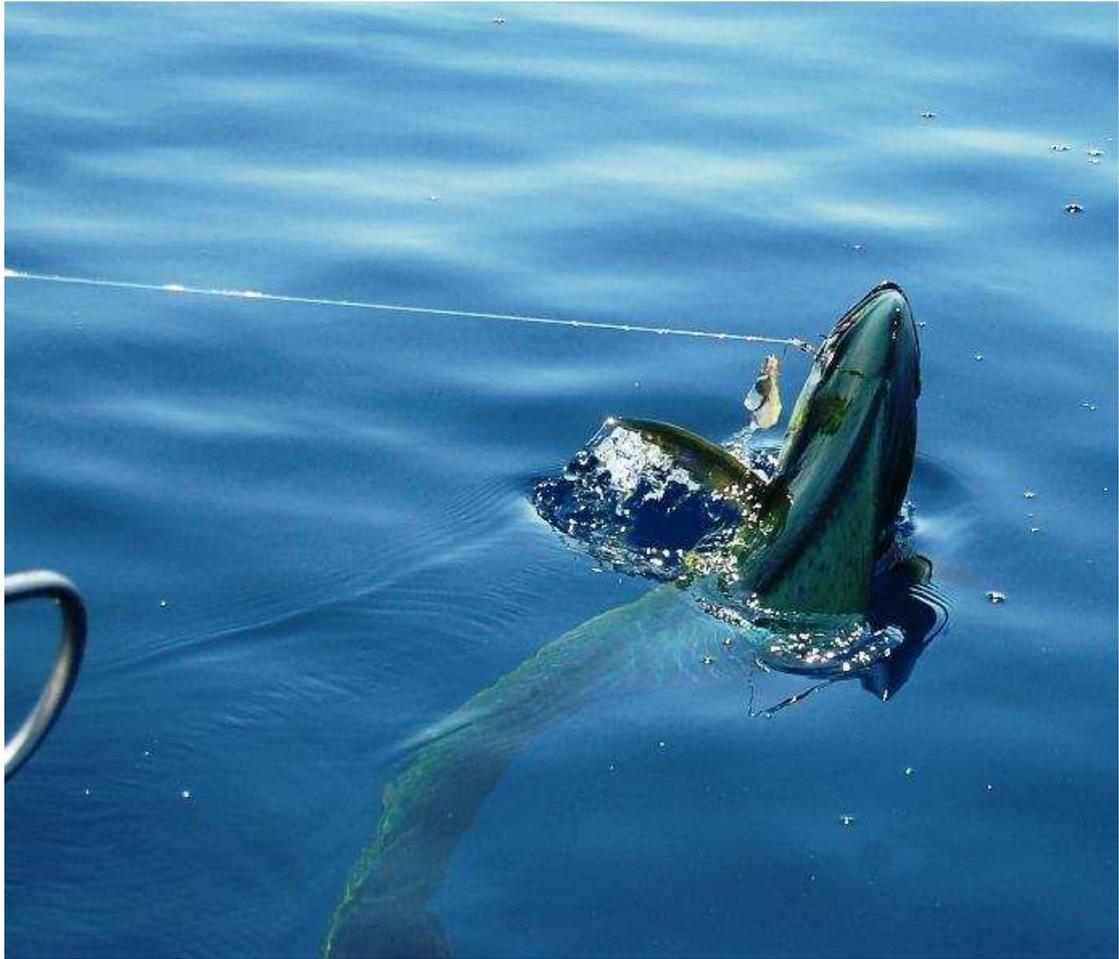
Part II of this series will highlight the world class Buena Vista Lodge as well as some sites around the beautiful country of Guatemala.

Just a few more shots - I should have some more stuff later



HitnRun Bill and LC. I am guessing this was not a sailfish 🐟





Boatside in water



LC at boatside prior to release

Pirates Cove Fleet - gautemalan style 🇬🇹

