

Strong Start Leads Blue Time to Sailfish Cup Title

Victory gives Blue Time early lead in the Sailfish Pro Series

Buoyed by a first-day total of 12 releases, Team Blue Time was able to withstand a slow second day of fishing as Capt. Bill Wieteha and his crew took home the prestigious Bill France Jr. Memorial Sailfish Cup trophy and the win out of Miami Beach.

Team Blue Time finished the World Fishing Tour's season opener with a total of 13 releases, easily outdistancing runner-up Team Reely Tight, which had six releases, and third place teams Sea Hunter, Rock Star and Kimbuku/IGX, who all finished with five.

The win earned Blue Time \$114,330 of the just under \$400,000 total purse. Adding to the crew's haul was Team Blue Time's Lisa Leon earning the tournament's Top Lady Angler award with 6 releases to her credit.

"That tournament went about as good as it could have gone," Capt. Wieteha said. "It was awesome. This is actually my second year fishing on this boat but this was our first tournament with this team. We did very well."

Wieteha said pulling out of the docks with a six-fish lead was comforting, but he knew the tournament wasn't over as he headed out for Day Two. He guided the 68-foot Viking to the same area they fished a day earlier and found good fishing early in the day.

"We hooked up around 8:40, got the release and then hooked up with another fish about 45 minutes later," he said. "Then the bite completely shut off. I could tell the conditions were deteriorating but we didn't want to leave that spot because of those two fish, so we sat for a while."

A couple of boats south of where Blue Time was set up reported some action, so Wieteha moved to that area, to no avail. It turned out that large Day One lead was enough to carry them to the title.

The win – and large margin of eight releases – puts Blue Time comfortably atop the Sailfish Pro Series standings with 103 points, most likely enough to qualify for the season-ending tournament, which will determine the series champion. Reely Tight is second with 85, followed by Sea Hunter (79), Rock Star (73) and Asian Pearl (67), to round out the Top Five.

The Sailfish Pro Series is a season long points race culminating with a post season playoff and Finale. The next Sailfish Pro Series event is the Sailfish Open in West Palm Beach, Feb. 1-3.

For more information on the Sailfish Pro Series, go to www.SailfishSeries.com.

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