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# Los Gatos family places fourth in Florida fishing tournament

## Mitty alum Alexis Bowcock, 19, named Top Female Angler

The Los Gatos-based Bowcock Family traveled to the Florida Keys to participate in the first annual Marathon Premier Sailfish Tournament where they placed fourth out of 17 teams. From left to right: Clark, Lynsey, Alexis and Jennifer Bowcock. (Courtesy: Jennifer Bowcock)

By **HANNAH KANIK** | hkanik@bayareanewsgroup.com | Bay Area News Group

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While most families wouldn't choose to fly cross-country for a weekend of fishing on rough waters during intense, windy weather, the Bowcocks are definitely the exception.

The Los Gatos-based family of four traveled to the Florida Keys last month to participate in the first Marathon Premier Sailfish Tournament. They placed fourth out of the 17 teams that competed, and one family member earned top honors.

Clark and Jennifer Bowcock and their daughters Alexis, 19, and Lyndsey, 18, have been fishing for years, but this was their first-ever tournament. Jennifer said it definitely won't be their last. Alexis is a Mitty High School alumna, while Lyndsey still attends the private San Jose high school.

"We are hooked for sure. We are already registered for the next sailfishing tournament next April, and we'll see what's next," she said.

The family was out on the water from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. for the two-day tournament held April 21-22. The catch-and-release competition scored anglers on who caught the most fish by the end of the weekend.

The Bowcocks' team name was "Sail's Call" in honor of Jennifer's father, an avid off-shore fisherman and former salesman who passed away a few years ago.

The family came close to placing third until another team caught two sailfish in the final 30 minutes, Jennifer said.

"Everyone works off the same channel on the radio, so you're hearing this happen," she added. "There's a really great anticipation."

The weather at the tournament was intense, with winds reaching 30 miles per hour and lots of rain.

"We had literally the worst weather possible for this first year tournament; it was crazy," Lewis said. "To say that all the anglers that participated were troopers is a complete understatement. … They really went out every single day and gave it their all. They were in rain and winds and high seas, and they were just trudging through it."

Despite the bad weather, college freshman Alexis caught her first two sailfish during the tournament, earning her the Top Female Angler award in a field of 11 competitors.

“The trophy is so big, we couldn’t fly back with it!” Jennifer said, adding that a taxidermist organization is shipping Alexis’ prize to her.

Alexis and the other anglers at the tournament had to bring in their fish, which can range from 70 to 100 pounds, on their own. Her mom said the 19-year-old’s victory was particularly sweet since she was up against women with years of fishing experience.

“It’s predominantly a male-dominated sport, so it was nice for her to get that recognition,” Jennifer added.

Proceeds from the tournament went toward nonprofit Mission Fishin’, a Florida-based charity that helps families with special needs children go fishing. Katie Lewis, founder and tournament director, said the tournament raised $10,000 for the charity. She and her husband own a charter company that got involved in Mission Fishin’ a couple years ago.

“It’s pretty awesome,” Lewis said of the nonprofit. “The fact that you get to meet these different kids and their families and you get to see them smile, it’s like no other. You can’t buy that feeling.”

Anglers from across the country came to compete in the tournament. Lewis said there hasn’t been an annual fishing tournament in Marathon, Florida, since Hurricane Irma swept through town in 2017.

“My primary goal was to bring (a tournament) back for our town, for our city, and to showcase the local talent, obviously bring in tourism for Marathon, and then also to do it for a good cause,” Lewis said.

“For us, it was just nice to have this as a family event. Because being in a tournament at the sports fishing capital of the world was amazing, but we were also able to contribute to a great nonprofit, Mission Fishin,” Jennifer said.

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