

# PLAYBOY

ENTERTAINMENT

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PIRANHA 3D'S

**KELLY  
BROOK**

THE U.K.'S  
HOTTEST  
EXPORT

**NUDE**

THE INTERVIEW

**PAUL  
REUBENS**

THE  
**BIRTH**<sup>OF</sup>  
**COOL**

A HISTORY OF  
PLAYBOY PADS

**PLUS:**

BIG GAME FISHING  
IN GUATEMALA

WILL SELF ON  
MANTIGUES

KINKY FRIEDMAN'S  
TEXAS DISPATCH

JOHN VARVATOS 20Q

ONE MAN'S  
**FIGHT**  
AGAINST

**AL QAEDA  
AND THE FBI**

OUR **2010**  
**PIGSKIN  
PREVIEW**

A NEW TRANSLATION  
OF FLAUBERT'S

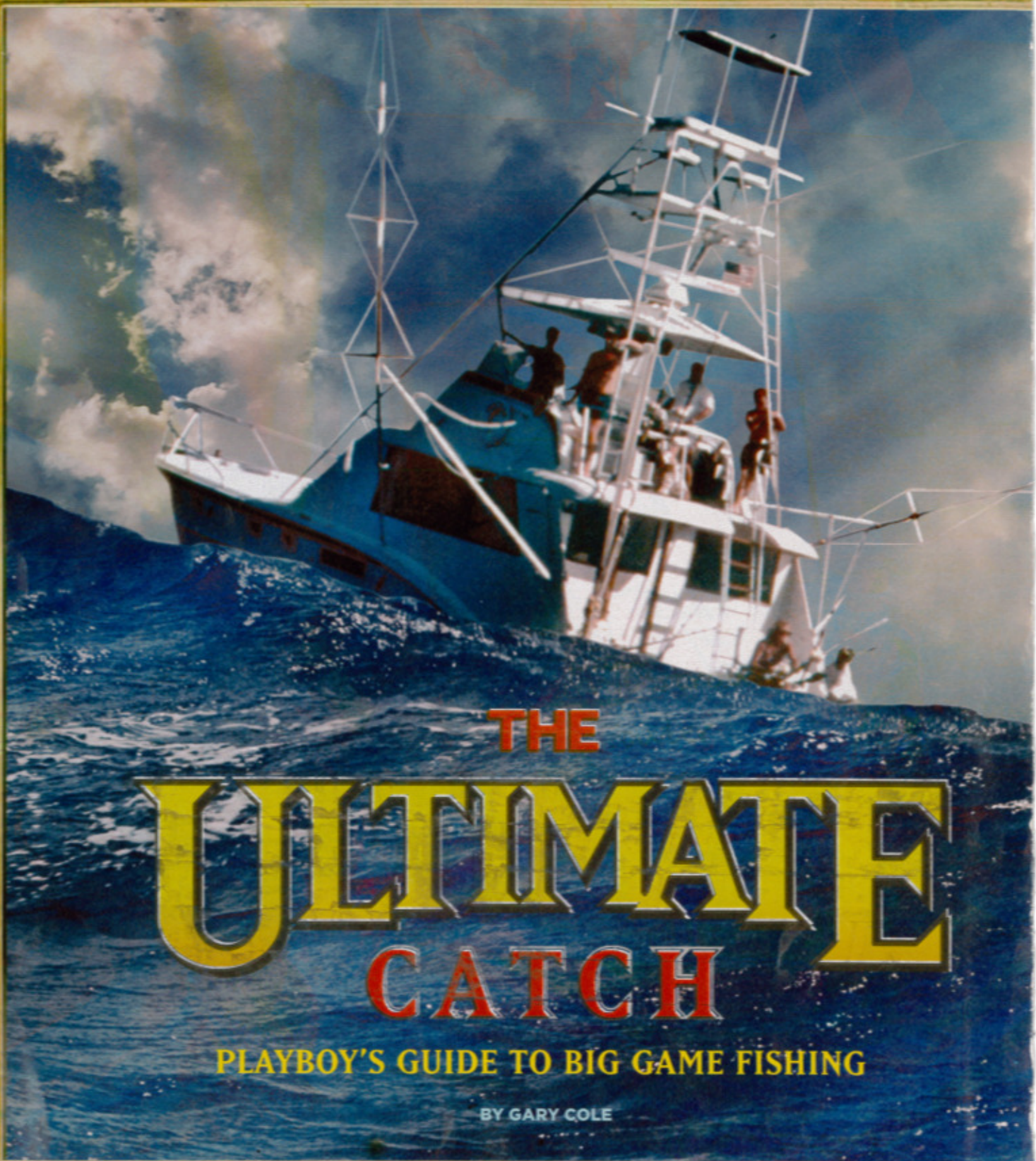
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BOVARY**

THE MOST  
SCANDALOUS  
NOVEL OF  
ALL TIME

\$5.99







# THE ULTIMATE CATCH

PLAYBOY'S GUIDE TO BIG GAME FISHING

BY GARY COLE

I'm sitting in a classroom floating on the azure surface of the Pacific Ocean 47 miles off the coast of Guatemala. My professor is Peter Wright, oceanographer and hall of fame member of the International Game Fish Association. Our classroom is a 35-foot sportfishing charter boat. The subject is billfishing—marlin and sailfish. The professor is explaining the finer points of free spooling and the importance of lightly feathering the free-spinning reel of line with your thumb as you attempt to feed dead bait, in

this case a six-inch ballyhoo with a circle hook protruding from its head, to what could be a 400-pound blue marlin.

"You touch it as you would the arm of a first-date girlfriend—just a caress. Press harder and it'll either let go or you'll have a quarter-size blister on your thumb," Wright says.

Deep-sea fishing is a manly sport. We know that from seeing photos of guys like John Wayne standing next to their catches. The chair a person sits on while attempting to land one of these beasts





is called a fighting chair. If the opponent on the other end of the line is the champ, he's a blue marlin, the uncontested ruler of the sportfishing scene. Directly under him are his marlin brethren—black, white and striped marlins and then the sailfish, any of which are capable of providing an adrenaline rush just short of a date with Megan Fox.

Like golfing, fishing gets exponentially more rewarding when it involves (1) travel to an exotic destination and (2)

#### LOVE BOAT

TALK ABOUT THE ULTIMATE CATCH: HEF CRUISING THE CARIBBEAN WITH THE INIMITABLE BARBI BENTON.



*Hef in Jamaica  
1970*



gaining skill and knowledge of the sport. Enrolling in Marlin University provided the chance to accomplish both. MU offers four days of intensive deep-sea fishing with instruction at a choice of venues—Costa Rica, Isla Mujeres, Hawaii, the Galápagos, Australia or, in my case, Guatemala. No textbooks required, just a plane ticket to Guatemala City, deck shoes, sunglasses and plenty of sunscreen. At the airport a van picked me up along with 15 other students—two of whom had traveled all the way from Angola—and drove us to the Casa Vieja fishing lodge on the coast, 90 minutes away.

The next morning we were up at six, on boats by seven and had lines in the water by eight. During each of the four days, we were on a different boat with a different instructor. In addition to Peter Wright, our tutors were Pat Dineen, a top charter boat captain from Shalimar, Florida; peripatetic Walker Holcomb, winner of the 2002 Rolex/IGFA Offshore Championship; and Dave Ferrell, editor of *Marlin Magazine*.

The sport involves subtlety. The fish are initially attracted by the boat's wake, which they likely mistake for a school of baitfish. The boat is also trolling teasers, plastic creations that resemble squid. A couple of teasers may trail hooks with ballyhoo, but most are there to do what their name suggests: tease the fish closer.

Now comes the skill part. When a fish is sighted, usually by the experienced eye of the captain on the bridge, the fisherman picks up his rod and drops his bait back where the fish is. At the same time one of the mates reels in the teaser. It's truly a bait-and-switch routine. The bill hopefully sucks the bait into its mouth, crushes it and swallows. The fisherman offers no resistance, leaving the reel free and disengaged so the fish doesn't sense anything is amiss. If it were to sense danger it



Left: Ernest Hemingway with a black marlin in Mexico in the 1950s. The old man and the sea, indeed. Below: Actor John Barrymore with his wife, Elaine Barrie, in Alaska, 1934.



Above: Fred Astaire with his son Fred Jr. and a 222-pound marlin in Mexico, circa 1963.



*The Hunt*  
On board, 47 miles off Guatemala

# THE BIG FIVE

Deep-sea fishing's most coveted beasts, with their world-record catches



**BLUE MARLIN**

1,402 pounds; Vitória, Brazil; February 29, 1992



**STRIPED MARLIN**

494 pounds; Tutukaka, New Zealand; January 16, 1986



**WHITE MARLIN**

181 pounds; Vitória, Brazil; December 8, 1979



**PACIFIC SAILFISH**

221 pounds; Santa Cruz Island, Ecuador; February 12, 1947



**BLACK MARLIN**

1,560 pounds; Cabo Blanco, Peru; August 4, 1953



would spit the hook out. The fisherman meanwhile keeps his cool and counts slowly—some advise to three; others say to five. Then he throws the drag. Resistance pulls the hook back from the fish's stomach. Because the hook has an ingenious circular design, it doesn't catch on anything until it gets to the mouth (thereby avoiding internal injury). Then all hell breaks loose for both fish and fisherman.

For hours that first morning I am lulled by the blazing sun and the rocking of the boat. Then it happens: a call from the captain above—Ron Hamlin, who's been at it since 1959 (see below). A Chinese fire drill ensues. Mates jump to their

## THEN IT HAPPENS: A CALL FROM THE CAPTAIN.

feet. As I flirt with the hook and play my first sail, Dave Ferrell is at my side instructing, cajoling.

Billfish love to jump. They can be observed free jumping, sometimes for food but usually just for fun. A hook in the mouth further incites their instinct to jump as they try to throw the snare. If dancing across the water on their tail six or seven times doesn't get it done, they take a deep dive or two. The angler's arms weary, but the adrenaline felt by fish and fisherman makes for an unforgettable experience. Once I get the sailfish to the boat, it's released, having never been lifted from the water.

Unless there is a question of a world record, no good sport fisherman keeps his catch. Replicas are available for the wall. Photos and video display fish leaping rather than hanging from a rope on a dock.

MU is one way to experience the sport, but there are a multitude of possibilities, from Cape Cod to Tahiti. Instead of using your thumbs to play video games, try feathering the spool of a reel as you play out line to that big one swimming behind your boat. If it takes the bait, it's the memory of a lifetime. Even if it doesn't, the boat ride isn't all that bad.



Ron Hamlin is the world's greatest charter billfish captain. In the 1990s he pioneered use of the controversial circle hook. Its shape makes it far less likely to damage a fish's vital organs. The circle hook is now standard for billfishing charters around the globe. It has saved the lives of tens of thousands of fish over the past 15 years.

**THE MAN  
WHO  
SAVED  
BILLFISH**

## NICE TACKLE

IN THE FIGHTING CHAIR, YOU'LL WANT ONE OF THESE BETWEEN YOUR THIGHS

**PENN 50VSW,  
\$600**



HAS FOUR AIRCRAFT-GRADE STAINLESS STEEL BEARINGS.

**PENN GLD50II,  
\$400**



PULLS IN SWORDFISH AND TUNA WITH EASE.

**SHIMANO TIAGRA  
50A, \$580**



WITH OFFSET ERGONOMIC POWER-GRIP HANDLE.

**SHIMANO TIAGRA  
130A, \$1,250**



WEIGHING IN AT OVER 50 POUNDS, THIS ONE COULD HANDLE MOBY-DICK.

# OFF THE HOOK

WHERE TO GO TO FIGHT THE MIGHTIEST SPORT FISH, ALL A FEW HOURS FROM HOME

### COSTA RICA

Costa Rica offers some of the world's best light-tackle action. World-record seekers come for the Pacific sailfish and the swarms of small blue and striped marlin that move in from December through March. A stable government and an eco-friendly national policy make Costa Rica an attractive destination whether you decide to wet a line or not. Sand, surf, beer and bikinis await. **STAY AT:** Hotel Guanamar on the white-sand Playa Carrillo on the Pacific Coast. Rooms from \$100 ([guanamarhotel.com](http://guanamarhotel.com)). **YOUR BOAT:** Richard Chellemi's custom-built 31-foot *Gamefisher II* is outfitted with a big pair of turbocharged Volvo engines and enough line to twine the globe ([gamefisher2.com](http://gamefisher2.com)).



### ST. THOMAS, U.S. VIRGIN ISLANDS

No place on earth provides a more consistent blue marlin bite than the famed North Drop off the eastern end of St. Thomas, the Atlantic Ocean's deepest spot. Anglers fishing for three days during the weeks before or after the full moons of summer (June to September) will almost certainly come away with a blue marlin capture. Fish here average around 300 pounds, though 500-pounders are not uncommon. **STAY AT:** the luxurious Ritz-Carlton, St. Thomas, a palatial hotel on the Caribe. Rooms from \$379 ([ritzcarlton.com](http://ritzcarlton.com)). **YOUR BOAT:** Do your battling in the fighting chair of Eddie Morrison's *Marlin Prince*, a 45-foot Viking ([marlinprince.com](http://marlinprince.com)), or Red Bailey's 44-foot *Abigail III* ([visportfish.com](http://visportfish.com)).



### GUATEMALA

Another Central American hot spot, Guatemala hosts a ridiculous amount of Pacific sailfish from December through March. Blue marlin and yellowfin tuna make their appearance in these waters as well. **WHERE TO STAY:** Casa Vieja Lodge in the Port of Quetzal is a one-stop fisherman's paradise. When the day is done the hotel's pool and bar offer the perfect respite. See [casaviejalodge.com](http://casaviejalodge.com) for package rates. **YOUR BOAT:** The queen of the seven-boat fleet is the *Release*, a 37-footer built in 1961 to be the perfect fishing boat. She was restored in 1999, and her twin 450 hp engines power her to a 24-knot cruising speed.



### OCEAN CITY, MARYLAND

You can find great billfish action directly off the Eastern seaboard in summer, and Ocean City becomes the epicenter of the offshore scene in August. Pods of hungry white marlin, blue marlin and tuna move into the offshore canyons, and fishermen willing to make the 80-mile runs are sometimes rewarded with double-digit days. Those willing to wager can enter the *White Marlin Open*, one of the world's richest tournaments, with more than \$2 million in prize money. That's more than the winner of the Masters gets. **WHERE TO STAY:** Inlet Lodge, on the old boardwalk. Rooms from \$90 (410-289-7552). **YOUR BOAT:** Get on any of the great boats working out of Sunset Marina. —Dave Ferrell

