

35TH ANNUAL BAHAMAS CRUISING GUIDE

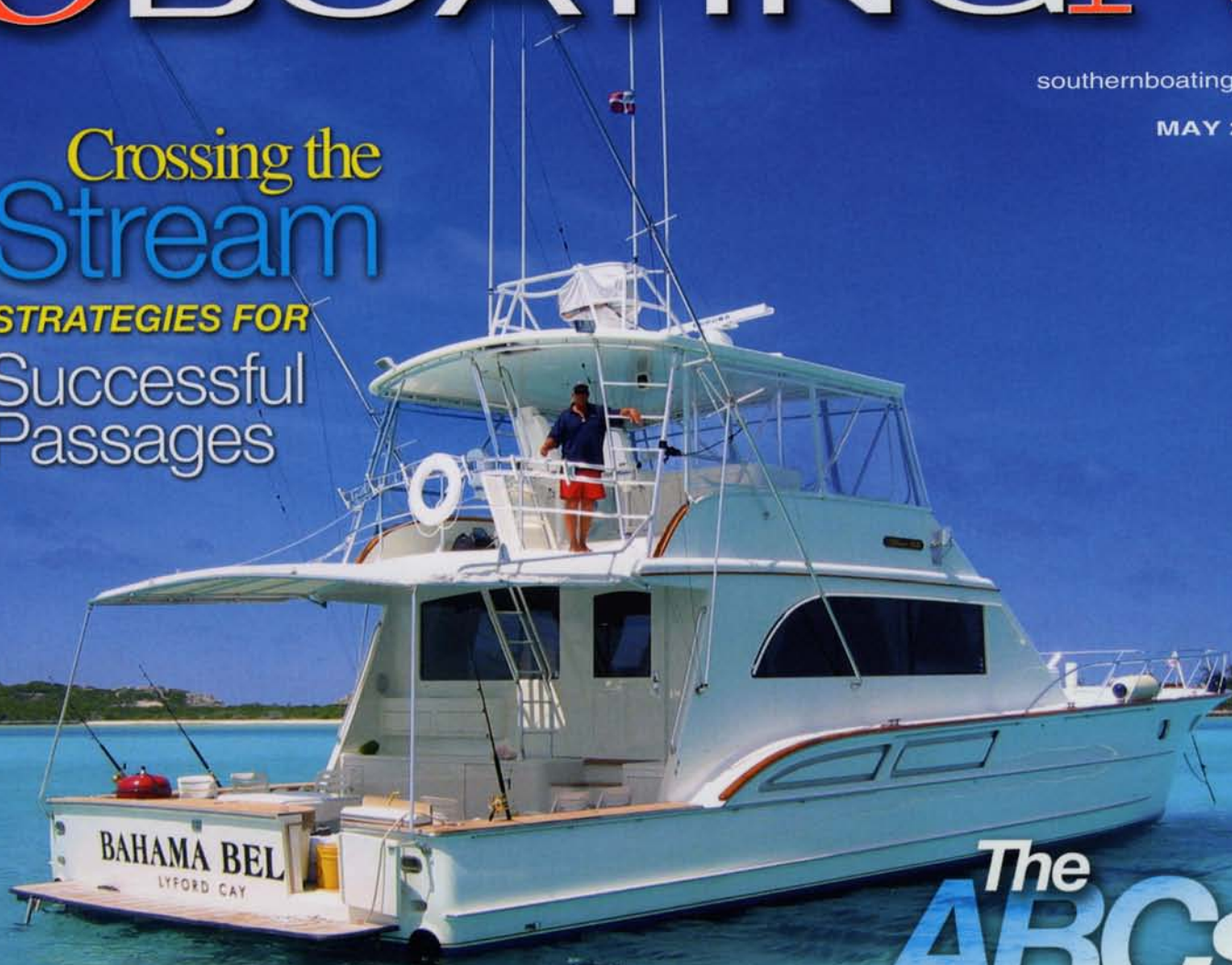
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Blue Marlin Tournament Set for B.V.I.

Inaugural A. H. Riise event seeks to put North Sound on the map as marlin hot spot

PHOTO COURTESY OF THE BITTER END YACHT CLUB

The rich fishing grounds of North Drop are just 12 miles from the Bitter End Resort.

While the British Virgin Islands are well known in sailing circles for spectacular yacht racing events and sublime cruising among 60 sheltering islands, the crown colony has been off the radar screen of most international fishing tournament organizers. Perhaps the laid-back beauty of the place subdued their senses, after all, Virgin Gorda sits at the edge of North Sound where nearby Prickly Pear and Necker Islands dampen the action of Atlantic waves. Straddling Anegada Passage and Sir Francis Drake Channel, North Sound marks the drop to deep water and Caribbean currents that serve as highways for pelagic fish.

Through the combined efforts of A. H. Riise Stores, the government of the British Virgin Islands and the Bitter End Yacht Club, an IGFA-qualifying all-release marlin tournament will be held off Virgin Gorda July 31-August 4.

The BVI Billfish Tournament is concurrent with Riise's entry into the B.V.I. with a new Rolex Boutique in Road Town, Tortola. Sebastiano Paiewonsky-Cassinelli, of A.H. Riise noted, "This is our first venture in the fishing world and we're off to a great start."


A company rich in tradition, A.H. Riise opened its doors in St. Thomas as an apothecary in 1838. One hundred years

later, Isador Paiewonsky, who was born in the islands while they were under Danish rule, purchased the shop. Paiewonsky—together with his brother, Ralph, who later became governor of the U.S.V.I.—were instrumental in developing legislation that created the island's duty-free retail industry.

"We are proud to partner with our newest business in the islands," said Chief Minister of the B.V.I., D. Orlando Smith.

"The event will allow us to showcase the unsurpassed beauty of our islands, as well as demonstrate the fact that our waters provide some of the best fishing in the Caribbean."

Bitter End Yacht Club is a natural partner for the event, and not just because the facility can accommodate up to 95 vessels at a time. "Fishing is what first brought my grandfather to the North Sound some 40 years ago," said Dana Hokin, owner and managing partner.

Al Behrendt Enterprises, which manages the successful Bahamas Billfish Championship, will coordinate the tournament. Behrendt promises, "uncomplicated rules, great food and activities." The event encompasses three days of fishing in North Drop and a lay day so anglers and their guests can cruise the B.V.I., take in the sights and shopping at Road Town, or get in some great diving. 

FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT THE TOURNAMENT, VISIT THE EVENT WEB SITE AT BVI-BILLFISHTOURNAMENT.COM, OR CONTACT AL BEHRENDT ENTERPRISES AT (954) 920-7877. CONTACT FOR THE BITTER END YACHT CLUB IS BEYC.COM, (800) 872-2392.