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## **Manu'a Flag Day Festivities Commence With DMWR's Fishing Tournament**

*Day 1 of Manu'a Cession Day Festivities 2023*



The 2023 Manu'a Cession Day festivities commenced with the Flag Day Fishing Tournament spearheaded by the Department of Marine Wildlife (DMWR) on Thursday, July 13, 2023. A soft opening ceremony was conducted with a welcome address by DMWR Deputy Director Selaina Tuimavave, followed by a prayer from Reverend Pa'u Young. Special remarks were delivered by Sualevai N. Sualevai, Manu'a Office.

The competition consisted of a specific number of anglers competing for various categories such as SkipJack, Yellow Fin, Dogtooth, Wahoo, Masimasi, and Barracuda. Five boats competed this year: one from Faleluanu'u, one from Tutuila, and three from Ta'u.

The fishing tournament began at 5:00 a.m. and culminated at 5:00 p.m. with an award ceremony. Lieutenant Governor Talauega was given the honors to distribute prizes to the victors.

Lieutenant Governor Talauega extended a proposition to the fishermen in the Manu'a district who have their boats docked at the wharf and are not taking part in this year's competition. The proposal encourages them to guarantee their participation in next year's tournament. Director Taotasi Soliai, Deputy Tuimavave and the Department of Marine & Wildlife Resources were praised by the Lieutenant Governor Talauega for their efforts in coordinating Manu'a's annual fishing tournament.

In contrast to previous years, this year's competition had a new component - it welcomed the participation of young individuals. The objective was twofold: First, to increase awareness about the decreasing number of fishermen; and second, to encourage involvement in this particular activity among the younger generation.

This year's competition winners were as follows:

#### **Youth Categories & Winners**

Biggest Fish: Leaoga; Aiga Maui; Adonai Gaoa; William Lauina

Most Fish: Kamaaina Toeaina; Steve Maui

Youngest Fishermen: Ma'atoa Leifi

Young Fisherwomen: McKayla and Siliona

Early Bird: Maatoa Leifi & Kelvin Lauofo; Kamaaina and Sele Toeaina

#### **Adult Categories & Winners**

Yellow Fin: Double Trouble (21.12); Double Trouble (16.7)

SkipJack: Queen Seta; Queen Seta

Barracuda: Tevesi; Faipule Fau

Wahoo: Faipule Fau

Dog Tooth: Faipule Fau; Faipule Fau

Masimasi: None

Total Catch: Queen Seta (539.19); Double Trouble (160.19); Team Ofu (142.13)

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