

{ A Word With...

CAPT. ART DELLA SALLA >>

Brett Bailey and Art DellaSalla spent their teenage years surfing, wakeboarding, and boating on the Jersey Shore. At the end of high school, they got into off-shore fishing, with Bailey particularly interested in makos. The friends went on regular fishing trips together for the next ten years. Then on Sept. 11, 2001, Bailey was killed at the World Trade Center. He was 27. Devastated by the loss of his friend, DellaSalla and the Bailey family started an annual fishing tournament to honor him. Six years later the Brett T. Bailey Mako Rodeo (www.btmakorodeo.com) raises more than \$20,000 for charities every summer. *PMY* recently talked with DellaSalla about his friend's legacy.

Q: How did the Brett T. Bailey Mako

Rodeo come about?

A: After Brett's memorial, lots of people made donations to organizations in his name. He was a very charitable person from a young age, and so many people loved him and wanted to do something for him. So we wanted to have an event to focus on that. Fishing was such a big part of Brett's life, and he really enjoyed big-game fishing, makos most of all. The makos run in June, so the summer after 9/11, we organized a big fishing trip out of Brielle, New Jersey, where he and I used to go boating. So many people wanted to be part of it that we decided to turn it into a weekend charity tournament.

Q: Were you surprised how popular the event became?

A: I wasn't surprised how many people cared about Brett, but it was pretty amazing how much word of mouth got around.

Q: Besides the actual fishing, how is Brett remembered at the tournament?

A: Well, on Friday night we have a captains' meeting. A lot of us grew up with him, and we spend time remembering him. After the tournament, we hold a big dinner at Simko's Restaurant, where Brett used to hang out after long days on the



Art DellaSalla (right) with buddy Brett Bailey.

water. That's where we all share our memories of him and the impact he had.

Q: Where do the donations go?

A: To various local charities. This year we donated about \$20,000 to the New Jersey National Guard and Reservists, specifically to the families of people serving in Afghanistan and Iraq. A lot of people don't realize how much it can hurt a family financially when their mother or father is serving abroad. I think it's something Brett would have been proud to support.

Q: What does this event mean to you personally? Does being on the water bring back old memories of your friend?

A: Well, I think about him every day, whether I'm on the water or not. But yes, the tournament is a very special event for me. It's one day every year when we can all come out and remember Brett together. That's pretty special.

ANSWERS

(from page 42)

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2. the boat is aground
3. four

2.0.0.7 Agenda

September

6-9

The In-Water Boat Show in Atlantic City, New Jersey. (215) 732-8001. www.acinwaterboatshow.com.

13-16

The Newport International Boat Show in Rhode Island. (401) 846-1115. www.newportboatshow.com.

20-23

The Norwalk International In-Water Boat Show in Connecticut. (312) 946-76200. www.discoverboating.com.

SOMETHING HE ATE

If you're a casual fisherman who's been thinking about stepping up from a day cruiser to a full-fledged battlewagon, here's something to chew on: The 13-year-old boy who took home the Scripps National Spelling Bee trophy this summer says he owes his victory to fresh fish. Evan O'Dorney says he maintained a strict ritual of eating fresh fish before spelling bees because he believes it is "good for the brain." That might be, but the Danville, California, native also owes his championship to seafood in general. In the final rounds, he had to spell "yosenabe," which is a Japanese seafood stew, as well as "rascacio," which is a Spanish word for scorpion fish. Of course, to win the \$35,000 prize money, O'Dorney had to go off the fishing map. He won the bee when he correctly spelled "serrefine," which is a medical instrument akin to small forceps.

