

UP

Diesel engines break nights calm.
Captain tweaks throttle controls, synchronizing.
Bertram backs away from dock.
Bridge bristles with powerful rods
ready for deployment when needed.
Planning hull carves through sea.
Anticipation and determination mark moment.
T.I.F.T. tournament begins in earnest.

PLAYING THE CALCUTTA BOARD AT T.I.F.T.

Captain Charlie plays the board.
Years spent trolling the baits.
No substitute for his experience.
Big boys play the Calcutta.
Confidence grows with pots size.
Now out-riggers are spread wide
and the search has begun
for the monster blue marlin.

SPORTS FISHING TRADITION

Hemingway would have been proud.
Many years spent at sea
in quest of blue marlin.
Successful baits spread behind Bertram
as flying fish sail by
denying gravity, wings spread wide.
Eyes scan horizon for sign,
fin or bill behind baits.

IT TAKES A TEAM

Engines roar, spinning twin screws.
Bertram grayhounds through Gulf waters.
Bubble lines distinguish baits course.
Francis waits by fighting chair.
Surely patience will be rewarded
when blue strikes, creating chaos.
Francis, Captain and deck hands
await sound of screaming reel.

BATTLE LINE, T.I.F.T.

The battle lines are drawn.
Cobalt blue Gulf waters roll,
rocking Bertram side to side.
Water churned into white froth
as twin screws spin powerfully.
Five, bait spread pops surface,
dragging bubble trails when diving.
Dance of baits is hypnotic.

ENGINES ROAR

Which whitecap hides marlin fin?
Boats progress, over rolling swells.
White caps dance to nature's tune.
Baits weave, avoiding golden Sarageso.
Engines roar a special tone.
White foam slides by hull.
Penn 80's shine bright gold.
Monofilament spools glisten in daylight.

BIG BLUE APPEARS

Seas are running disjointed today.
Bertram powers over cobalt surface
wallowing in choppy, blue waters.
Blue marlin sighted behind baits.
Crew races down from bridge
into fighting cockpit, working baits.
Marlin ignores all excited presentations.
Giant, fish leaves, monotony returns.

HORIZONS

Clouds join water at horizon.
Flying birds disappear into it.
Competing boats emerge from it.
Comforting shadow of watchful radar
appears through bimini, tautly out-stretched.
Captain continues his hunt for
big, blue marlin, glory delivering.
Strategy evolves with passing hours.

FLY AWAY, DEAD IN WATER

Fly away dead in water
thirty nine miles from shore.
T.I.F.T. ended early this day
for young captain and crew.
Powerful Bertram comes to rescue.
Nylon, tow rope stretches taut.
Bessie Bell's captain and crew
save these single engine fools.