

## Miami International Boat Show

Wow I am sure glad I live on the west coast. Driving is such a chore and pretty dangerous I might add once you get to the east coast. Admittedly I got a late start and arrived in Miami Beach on Friday morning around 10:30. Two hours late at least to be sure. I had been reading about low attendance numbers and so I was somewhat surprised at how difficult it was to obtain parking. It wasn't easy nor was it cheap but I got parked and headed out to the show. Silly me I forgot to ask my editor for a press pass so I had to fork over a (very reasonable) 16\$ in admission then into the show I went.

I love the Miami show for perhaps a reason different than most. I love the little goodies, and big game toys, and gadgets and doo dads of all flavors. Heck I even watch the cooking and super glue demonstrations. Boats? Yeah I will look a few but frankly I look boats every day and the variety is so vast I could write an epic and not even scratch the surface. It's the gear I like. The catwalk and the tents are where it's at for me. All the new stuff, old stuff and what the heck is that? Stuff. I have learned to treat the show a little like a casino. I put a certain amount of cash in my pocket, lock down the plastic and when the cash is gone I'm done shopping. A few cool things I saw this year were a new collection of professional grade rods from Chaos Tackle all in pink with really nice guides and reel seats. Kaitlin Rose is only three but she may be getting a very nice combo for her birthday next year (shhhh!). I also tripped over a local guy some of you might know. Jeff Dawson from Scuba Ventures on Marco was manning the booth for the new Anchor Saver device. This is a pretty innovative little gadget that takes the place of the tie straps we have been using for years and is intended to allow release of your expensive anchor when it becomes fouled or stuck. Stop by the dive shop and let Jeff show you how they work. There were some really cool new graphics companies offering customized graphics and lettering on everything from your boats transom to customized dishware. It did my heart good to see dozens of lending companies offering finance for new boat buyers as that source of money has tightened up in recent months. Generally I buy the years supply of cargo shorts for work at the show. Cheaper by the dozen as they say. I saw a slick set of hand tools made of 100% titanium. Amazing stuff, they will never rust, weigh almost nothing and oh yeah, you might need that financing I mentioned to buy a set! Crocs have some new competition, there is new waterproof shoe that provides more security / stability and is bit more stylish. Sorry I didn't get the brand name but I'm sure Google can find them. As usual in that type of setting there are some good and not so good deals to be had. The savvy shopper knows about what things should cost and is not afraid to negotiate a good deal. Tackle storage was a popular theme. New innovative ways to stack and store Plano boxes, lure storage, rod racks and leader organizers were in abundance.

Due diligence to my readership mandates this reminder: The Dania Beach Marine Flea Market is coming!! Whooo Hoo! March 19-22 at the Dania Jai Alai. We are talking acres of stuff, new and used stuff. Trash and treasure! Mark your calendar now. I have been a couple of times in the last few years and this place is a Mecca for water fun stuff and good deals are very real. They have guys with new and used T-tops, leaning posts and consoles, tackle, electrical, electronics hookah rigs, tackle and electronics. West Marine sets up tent chock full of discontinued and clearance stuff. The cool thing about Dania is that there is a strong showing, in fact a strong majority of average Joes with stuff

from their garage. The commercial displays are a minority. The way a flea market should be. I'm taking my truck and a battery with jumper leads for testing. I have room for two more if anyone wants to car pool.