

2022 – G.R. TARR

Growing up in Florida and having parents that loved the outdoor life provided me with many opportunities. Both my mom and dad liked to catch scallops, crabs, and to spearfish. So when I came along, I was introduced to hunting and gathering at an early age. In fact, I shot my first fish before I learned to ride a bicycle. I began making spear gun shafts for my Arbelete Champion Spear gun when I was 10 years old and built my first spear gun when I was 14.

Hunting and fishing were a part of life that I really enjoyed. Spearfishing brought those two hobbies together into what would eventually become my passion over the past 50 years.

As I grew older my friends and I would spearfish in Tampa Bay, the Gulf of Mexico, the Florida Keys and the Bahamas. We would pretty much dive every week and get enough for our families to enjoy some fresh fish.

One day I was at the local dive shop and saw a flyer about a spearfishing competition. After reading the flyer I convinced my dive buddies that we needed to try this. This tournament was the Florida Skin Divers Association (FSDA) Florida State Free Dive Spearfishing Championships. When we showed up to this tournament, my team was overwhelmed by the number of competitors and how serious everybody was. When the competition began we headed out into the Gulf and worked our plan. At the end of the day we had a boatload of fish but had no idea how we were going to measure up against all the other experienced competitors. After all the fish were weighed our team finished in 3rd place, less than one pound away from 1st place.

Since that first tournament back in 2001, I have competed in over 200 spearfishing tournaments and have made lifelong friendships around the world throughout the spearfishing community. I became the President of the St. Petersburg Underwater Club and hosted the “The St. Pete Open” which is the World’s Largest Spearfishing Tournament and typically attracts over 300 competitors. Additionally, I became FSDA Free Dive Spearfishing Competition Chair and put on all of the FSDA Free Dive Spearfishing Tournaments in Florida for 10 years, including the Fall Free Dive Classic, Interbay Spearfishing Championships, Florida State Free Dive Spearfishing Championships, and the USOA Free Dive Spearfishing Nationals in Tarpon Springs.

Like many divers, my eyes were opened by Terry Maas’s famous book “Bluewater Hunting and Freediving”. This book really got me interested in hunting pelagic fish around the world. To date, I have hunted 48 different locations around the world in the Atlantic, South Pacific, North Pacific, Indian Ocean, Caribbean, Sea of Cortez, and Gulf of Mexico for Tuna, Wahoo, Dogtooth, Sailfish, and Marlin. These experiences have taught me much about the different blue water fish and their habits as well as how to properly prepare for and rig for successful landings.

Today, I am very active in the spearfishing community not only by competing in spearfishing competitions, traveling the world hunting big fish, but also as the owner of Red Tide Spearfishing. I created Red Tide Spearfishing back in 2008. Since the beginning, I have grown this business each year by designing and producing great products as well as supporting spearfishing tournaments and top divers across the US.

I would like to say thank you and give credit to some of my good friends that that have been a big part of my spearfishing passion over the years. Skip Ward, Daryl Minardi, Dale Sanders, Camy Middlebrooks, Hi Sierra, Ray Odor, Ritchie Zacker, Sasa Bratic, Gary Sanchez, Chris Gardinal, Brian Bennett, Rick Bettua, Daryl Wong, Dennis Haussler, Ben Fertic, Ryan Lacedonia, Austin Atkins and Cameron Kirkconnel. We have shared countless hours at sea and have gained so much knowledge from each other. I could not imagine being where I am today without these great wingmen in my life.

Notable Awards:

- Lou Bonsey Award: Presented by The St. Petersburg Underwater Club
- Norm Wyman Papa Taylor Award: For outstanding sportsmanship, and contributions made to the growth of spearfishing. Presented by the Florida Skin Divers Association.

Tournament Wins:

- FSDA West Coast Council
- FSDA Freedive Spearfishing Championships - both team (7 times) and individual (2 times).
- USOA Freedive Spearfishing Championships - both team and individual.
- St. Pete Open
- Southern Open Florida State Championships - both individual and mixed team champions
- FSDA Fall Freedive Classic
- Spearboard Open
- Key West Open
- Johnny Long Blades Open
- Clearwater Classic
- Helldivers Rodeo
- Bluewater World Cup (3 Times)

Famous Quote:

The best spear fisherman in the world is the one having the most fun.























