



TOURNAMENT RULES

CONSERVATION

The MBGFC and its Tournament Committee vigorously support Catch and Release in all of its tournaments. Representatives of the National Marine Fisheries Service may be on hand during the tournaments to view and study all fish, obtain catch information, and, if need be, prepare the fish for further study. All anglers are responsible for the proper disposal of any and all fish that they bring to the weigh dock. The tournament committee may at its discretion elect to retain any fish for display, testing, or further study.

Registration and Mandatory Captain's Meeting

Tournament Registration can be done online at www.mbgfc.org or on site at the MBGFC Clubhouse located on the grounds of Orange Beach Marina. For the Memorial and Labor Day Tournaments, including Outboard Shootouts, onsite registration is Thursday evening from 4-8pm. Registration is closed Friday and the mandatory Captains Meeting will be held at 12pm Friday with sign out to follow. Onsite registration for the Ladies, Billfish Limited, and Junior Angler tournaments will be held on Friday evening from 4-8pm with mandatory Captains Meeting at approximately 8pm and sign out to follow. The **captain, owner, or a registered angler** must attend the mandatory Captain's Meeting. Only the **captain, owner, or a registered angler** can sign out their boat. If proper sign-out is not performed after the Captain's Meeting,

the offending boat will be disqualified from the entire tournament **without refund of entry fees and will receive a 90% refund of any cash awards placed**. Any rules changes will be discussed at this meeting. By signing out at the Captain's Meeting, the captain, owner, or registered angler acknowledges that they:

- 1) Have received the tournament guide and the tournament designator.
- 2) Understand and agree to abide by all rules in the tournament guide.
- 3) Have a copy of the rules applying to optional awards for breaking an Alabama State Record. (if applicable to that tournament)
- 4) Understand all topics discussed at the Captain's Meeting.
- 5) Understand that all Anglers, Captains, Mates, Crew ("Participants") and Guests fish in the Tournament at their own discretion and at their own risk. All Participants and Guests agree to indemnify and hold harmless the Mobile Big Game Fishing Club ("MBGFC") and its Members, the MBGFC Board of Directors, Orange Beach Marina ("OBM"), Sponsors and their agents and employees and all other persons directly or indirectly connected with the tournament from any liability, loss, personal injury or property damage, including Attorney's fees they may suffer arising from their participation in the Tournament and all other activities occurring at the MBGFC facility and/or OBM.

No tournament refunds will be made after the official sign out.

Tournament Start, Fishing Times, Eligible Ports of Departure:

Boats may depart after the captains meeting **AND** the owner, captain, or registered angler has signed out on the official sign out sheet. Boats may only leave from Mobile Pass, Perdido Pass, or Pensacola Pass for all tournaments. **Boats are to remain in the water from the time of departure after the captains meeting until returning to the weigh dock. Boats are not permitted to be placed on a trailer during the tournament.** Departure from Florida

will disqualify anglers for any Alabama State Record Prizes. Fishing may begin after the captains meeting unless otherwise specified at the captain's meeting. On the last day of the tournament, boats must be at the designated check point before 4pm for Memorial Day, Ladies, and Labor Day Tournaments, 7pm for Junior Angler, and 8pm for Billfish Limited,(or an alternative time designated at the Captains Meeting). Boats returning via Perdido Pass must be inside the Perdido Pass Rocks before the designated time. Boats returning via Mobile Pass or Pensacola Pass must be in the channel immediately north of the Perdido Pass Bridge before the designated time. Upon arrival, boats must immediately contact MBGFC on VHF channel 72 so that Tournament officials can visually verify time of arrival and, for the Memorial and Labor Day tournaments, issue a weigh in number to determine the order in which you will proceed to the weigh dock. No fish will be entered into the tournament for any boats that are not verified by the MBGFC to be at the designated check point before the designated time. If you return before the weigh dock opens, it is your responsibility to complete weigh in before the designated check in time or otherwise contact MBGFC tournament committee before the designated check in time ~~8pm~~ to confirm your on time arrival and, if applicable, obtain your weigh in number for subsequent weigh-in.

The Junior Angler Tournament may have different starting and fishing times to be discussed at the Captains Meeting.

Licenses, Permit Requirements, and Regulations:

All fish must be caught in accordance with IGFA rules. Federal law requires you to be in possession of a Highly Migratory Species permit in order to land and possess any tuna or billfish or to catch and release billfish. A valid HMS permit must be available to tournament officials at weigh-in. Information regarding HMS permits may be obtained from the NMFS or [visit www.nmfspermits.com](#). Registered anglers are also responsible for obtaining a valid Alabama State Fishing License. Registered anglers fishing on charter boats are responsible for verifying that the charter boat provides a valid Alabama state saltwater fishing license. Registered boats

and anglers must comply with all Federal and Alabama state laws and regulations regarding fishing licenses, size limits, and bag limits. MBGFC has its own minimum weights in the Tuna, Wahoo, and Dolphin Categories and a minimum Blue Marlin lower jaw to fork length of 106 inches.

ELIGIBLE FISH

In the interest of conservation the MBGFC has set a Blue Marlin lower jaw to fork length (LJFL) minimum of **110** inches which is above the Federal minimum. There is a limit of one Blue Marlin per boat, per day in possession at any time. **While a participating boat can catch a total of one Blue Marlin per tournament fishing day, such a boat can only be in possession of one Blue Marlin at any time. An eligible Blue Marlin to be weighed and entered into the tournament must be brought to the dock and weighed before the same boat can catch and retain an additional Blue Marlin on the second day of the tournament.** Blue Marlin below the MBGFC **110** inch minimum length will not be weighed. The possession of a Blue Marlin below the **110** inch minimum will subject the offending boat to disqualification from the entire tournament without refund and also the forfeiture of all other prize winning fish, including cash awards, or points. The possession of an undersized Blue Marlin by Federal standards will be reported to the proper conservation authorities. No retention of White Marlin, Spearfish or Sailfish at any tournament will be allowed. The Junior Angler and Limited Tournaments are Catch and Release only for all Billfish species.

The MBGFC minimum weight for all Tuna, Wahoo, and Dolphin is 20 pounds. Yellow Fin and Big Eye Tuna must also have a curved fork length of 27". Blue Fin Tuna are eligible as current federal regulations allow. The **Junior Angler Tournament** has additional eligible fish categories and also has its own minimum size requirements for Tuna, Wahoo, and Dolphin.

All caught Blue Marlin and released Billfish shall be reported to a committee boat and a verification number obtained. Video verification is required for **ALL** Blue Marlin categories and catch and release billfish; refer to the video verification section of the rules for details.

PRIZE CATEGORIES AND TIES

1st, 2nd and 3rd Place Blue Marlin*, Wahoo, Tuna, and Dolphin. In the event of a tie, the first fish to the dock will be declared the winner.

1st, 2nd, 3rd, and 4th Place Catch and Release **Prizes** are awarded to **BOATS** according to total catch and release points including line class multipliers. In the event of a tie, the **BOAT** to reach the point total first as determined by GPS time of release will be declared the winner. Additional categories are included in the Junior Angler Tournament; one prize per category per angler.

Top Club Member, Top Male Angler**, Top Lady Angler **, Top Junior Angler ** (must be 18 years of age or younger at the start of the tournament), Top Small Boat ** (32 feet and under), and Top Large Boat ** (Over 32 feet).

* Not awarded during the Junior Angler and Limited Tournaments.

** Not awarded during the Junior Angler Tournament.

Top Club Member, Male, Lady, Junior, and Boat awards will be determined by **TOTAL POINTS** including catch and release points with line class multiplier and points from all other eligible fish (1point per pound). Ties will be broken using GPS time of release. If no billfish are released in a prize category, the first fish to the dock will be used to break any ties.

Catch and Release Rules

Points will be awarded for catch and release billfish. The catch and release tournament **PRIZES** are awarded to **boats** according to catch and release point totals including line class

bonus multipliers. The catch and release **Cash Awards** are awarded to boats according to catch and release point totals **WITHOUT LINE CLASS BONUS MULTIPLIERS**. All released billfish shall be reported to an official committee boat in order to obtain a verification number. All catch and release video submissions will be reviewed and, if verified, documentation of video verification will be given to the angler or boat representative by the weigh master, dock staff, or member of the tournament committee.

Billfish Points and Line Class Bonuses; Line class applies to prizes only.

Line class bonus points are awarded for the use of smaller line as defined by IGFA rules. Total points are computed by multiplying the base Billfish points times the line bonus multiplier. Base Billfish Points are: Blue Marlin 500 Points, White Marlin, Spearfish or Sailfish 200 Points. Line samples may be requested. The line bonus multipliers and points are:

Blue Marlin White Marlin/Spearfish/ Sailfish

130 lb test line - 1.00 500 200

80 lb test line - 1.25 625 250

50 lb test line - 1.50 750 300

30 lb test line - 1.75 875 350

20 lb test line - 2.00 1000 400

Video Verification Requirements

Video verification is required for **All Eligible Billfish**, both **Catch and Release** and **weighed Blue Marlin** to be entered into the Blue Marlin category. The video requirements for Catch and Release and weighed Blue Marlin are different and defined below.

All **Catch and Release** videos should **clearly** show the following elements utilized in the process of billfish video verification:

1. Angler fighting the fish.
2. Rod and reel being used for the catch.
3. Tournament designator*
4. Species of billfish **caught** - video of the dorsal, anal, and pectoral fins **AFTER THE FISH IS CAUGHT** will assist in clear billfish species identification. (In the event the verification video does not provide adequate information for billfish species identification, 200 points will be awarded.)
5. "Catching" of the fish - one of the following must occur:
 - a. Swivel at the rod tip
 - b. Mate touching the leader
 - c. Wind-on leader onto the rod tip

NOTE: Once the fish is "caught", the video should NOT BE TURNED OFF until steps 6-7 are complete.

6. Release of the fish in healthy condition
7. Video of GPS time clearly showing time and date; GPS must be set to **Central Daylight Time (UTC minus 5 hours)**. GPS time will be used for determining ties in the catch and release prize categories only. Failure to record the GPS time of release will result in the time of release being 11:59pm on the day of the release as determined by the committee boat verification number and date.

*If an additional video camera is used, tournament designator **MUST** be shown again. It is always a good idea to show the designator when the fish is being filmed at the boat.

In accordance with federal regulations, **BILLFISH MAY NOT BE REMOVED FROM THE WATER AND ANY BILLFISH REMOVED FROM THE WATER WILL NOT BE ELIGIBLE FOR CATCH AND RELEASE POINTS.**

Any of the following can result in a video being ineligible for catch and release verification and therefore will not qualify for catch and release points for tournament prizes or cash awards:

1. Failure to show the tournament designator.
2. Failure to show the tournament designator if additional video camera is used.
3. Failure to show the “catching” of the fish.
4. Failure to show the release of the fish in healthy condition.
5. Turning off video after “catch” before the fish is released.
6. Removal of a billfish from the water.

For gaffed Blue Marlin, video is required to have the following clearly shown.

1. Angler fighting the fish.
2. Rod and reel being used for the catch.
3. Tournament designator; failure to show designator (in the primary video or video from additional camera/cameras) is the only video criteria that would make a billfish ineligible for points in the Blue Marlin Category.
4. “Catching” of the fish - one of the following must occur:
 - a. Swivel at the rod tip
 - b. Mate touching the leader
 - c. Wind-on leader onto the rod tip

All videos must be shown on equipment at the MBGFC clubhouse grounds and must be submitted before the close of the weigh dock at the end of the tournament. Verification judges will not board any boat to judge video. For a digital video recording device, the original digital video files from your recording device must be made available and submitted for verification purposes. It is your responsibility to have necessary cables or connection that will allow your camera to play back on a larger screen for judging. All video verification submissions become the property of MBGFC; see disclaimer section of rules. All tournament committee decisions are final.

BILLFISH REPORTING

You are required to report any caught Blue Marlin or Catch and Release billfish to an official tournament committee boat or tournament official after the fish is released or gaffed. Tuna, Wahoo, and Dolphin do not need to be reported. Committee boats will monitor VHF Channel 72 or you can call the phone number designated at the Captains Meeting. You must contact a committee boat or tournament official as soon as possible. Billfish reporting to committee boats can be relayed when necessary. You are responsible for recording your verification number.

Be prepared to give the following information:

1. Name of Boat
2. Name of Angler
3. Species of Billfish
4. Pound Test Line
5. Time of release.
6. Classification of Angler (M, F, or Jr.)

PROTESTS

All protests must be submitted in writing to the Vice-President of Tournaments or Tournament Chairman no later than 30 minutes following the closing of the weigh dock after the conclusion of the tournament. Protests must be accompanied with a \$500 protest fee. Only a successful protest will result in the refund of the \$500 protest fee. All decisions of the Tournament Committee are binding and final. MBGFC reserves the right to make exception to any rule when the Tournament Committee decides it is in the best interest of the participants, spectators and or the MBGFC.

WEIGH DOCK

The official weigh dock for all tournaments is the MBGFC dock. Weigh dock times vary with each tournament and are subject to change. Any changes will be discussed at the captain's meeting. See separate schedules for specific times. All fish brought to the dock must be in edible and fresh condition. Any evidence of freezing will disqualify any fish. **The weigh master has the right to refuse any mutilated fish or fish considered to be in poor condition. All fish must be brought to the weigh dock on the boat upon which they were caught unless granted permission by the tournament committee in the interest of the safety of the participants or spectators and or the MBGFC.** Someone from each boat must at all times remain with the fish to be weighed. **Catch card documentation will be provided at weigh dock.** The angler must sign and verify the weight before it becomes official. Any angler who wins may be subject to a lie detector test, and winning billfish anglers in the cash awards will be asked to furnish video verification (as described in the video verification section of the rules) that that fish was indeed caught by them during the tournament. Members of the NMFS may be on hand at the weigh dock to sample various contents of any and all large fish presented to them. Please cooperate in the interest of science, and help us obtain as much information as possible for the future of offshore fishing and this magnificent resource. **The weigh board does not necessarily reflect the official standings of the tournament.**

INSTRUCTIONS FOR WEIGH-IN

Memorial Day and Labor Day Tournaments only

- Boats returning via Perdido Pass must be inside the Perdido Pass Rocks before 4pm. Boats returning via Mobile Pass or Pensacola Pass must be in the channel immediately north of the Perdido Pass Bridge before 4pm unless otherwise designated at the Captains Meeting. You must call the MBGFC Tournament Committee on channel 72 once you reach the designated check point to confirm your time of arrival and be assigned a weigh-in number if needed. Your weigh-in number will determine the order in which you are called to the weigh dock.
- The weigh dock will be open Saturday from 5pm to 9pm.
- The MBGFC will begin monitoring VHF Channel 72 at 3:30 p.m. for assignment of weigh-in numbers to allow boats needing to weigh fish access to the weigh dock.
- On Sunday, the weigh dock opens at 12:00 p.m. and will close after all eligible boats have completed their weigh in and/or video verification.
- After you obtain your weigh-in number, position your boat in the channel outside the entrance to the Orange Beach Marina Canal and wait for your number/boat name to be called.
- All fish to be weighed must arrive by boat on the boat upon which the fish were caught **unless granted permission by the tournament committee in the interest of the safety of the participants or spectators and or the MBGFC.**
- All verification videos must be brought to the designated check point on the boat upon which they were caught. Verification videos can subsequently be brought to the clubhouse by car or other means. A weigh in number must still be obtained and such videos must be presented for review before the close of the weigh dock. Please notify the Tournament Committee if you plan to hand deliver videos for verification and do not need to weigh any fish.
- Depending on conditions, MBGFC will have boats 36' and under come to the side of the weigh dock. Boats over 36' will be accommodated on the front of the weigh dock.

- The MBGFC may have boats waiting in the marina canal to fill empty places at the weigh dock, but please do not enter the marina canal until your boat number/ name is called.
- All boats in line for the weigh dock should leave enough room for boats entering Orange Beach Marina (and not going to the weigh dock) to be able to pass freely. (This means boats needing fuel and/or going to their assigned slip.)
- Please – NO WAKE - Idle speed only - to minimize damage to spectator boats due to surge. Experienced operators use one engine in gear.
- Please cut your engines once you are tied to weigh dock. Diesel fumes are hazardous to the health of the dock crew and spectators.
- **All** boats that require video verification (**with or without fish to weigh**) should drop off the angler/ boat representative with the video equipment and all cables at the designated video verification dock in Terry Cove. A shuttle will take the angler or representative to the clubhouse for video verification.
- **Boats that only require video verification have the option to come to the weigh dock to be acknowledged by tournament officials and spectators and are encouraged to do so.**
- Keep Tournament Channel 72 clear during weigh dock operation hours, Boats waiting to be called to weigh dock should carefully monitor Channel 72 and when your boat/number is called, respond to dock master that you are proceeding as directed. If a boat does not respond when called, dock master will call next boat in line.
- Once your boat is at weigh dock, do not get off of your boat until instructions are given to determine when your fish will be weighed. If you are weighing tuna, have tuna permit ready before coming to weigh dock. Once all fish on your boat are weighed, the dock master will tell the captain/owner and you will be asked to depart and make room for the next boat.
- “Catch card” documentation for all eligible fish will be issued at the weigh dock.

- Please help us to minimize the time required to weigh fish by following directions. We will allow you time to have pictures made but please clear the dock immediately afterwards. This is a courtesy to your fellow fishermen who are waiting in the harbor.
- Tournament participants should not use channel 72 to inquire about the results of the tournament.

For the Ladies, Junior Angler, and Limited Tournaments, weigh-in and video verification will all occur at the MBGFC dock and there will be no video verification drop off in Terry Cove. Otherwise, the weigh-in procedure is identical for the Ladies and Limited Tournaments.

The Junior Angler Tournament has its own weigh in procedure and fishing times that will be discussed at the Captains Meeting.

AWARDS PRESENTATION

An official awards presentation will be held following each tournament. Updates may be obtained from the weigh board on the weigh dock during each day's weigh-in. For the Junior Angler and Ladies Tournaments, awards will be presented in the clubhouse at the conclusion of the tournament. The awards presentations for the Memorial Day, Limited and Alabama Invitational Labor Day Billfish Tournaments will take place on the day following the tournament at approximately 9:30 AM following the awards brunch.

CASH AWARDS

These categories are separate and are not included in the entry fees. Payout is determined by total money received for each category minus 10% for MBGFC expenses with the remaining 90% split 50%, 30%, 20% for 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place in each category. If only 2 fish are eligible

the remaining 90% will be divided 60%, 40% for 1st and 2nd place. If only one fish is eligible the 90% will go to that fish. In the event there is only a single entrant in a particular cash award category, a 100% refund will be issued. For any cash award category in which there are 2 or more participants and there are no eligible fish, a 90% refund will be issued. **All winners are subject to a polygraph examination at the discretion of the Tournament Committee; see polygraph policy section of rules.**

In the event of a TIE in ANY cash award category, cash awards will be split equally among the winners as follows;

Three or more ties for 1st place will evenly split 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place cash awards. Two ties in first place will evenly split the 1st and 2nd place cash awards and second place winner(s) receive the 3rd place cash award. If there are no ties in first place, 2nd place ties will evenly split 2nd and 3rd place cash awards. Third place ties (without ties in 1st or 2nd place) will evenly split 3rd place cash awards.

CATCH AND RELEASE

Color Video movie confirmation is mandatory; see video verification section of rules.

Catch and Release cash awards are awarded according to the total catch and release points accumulated for each boat and not the individual angler.

Categories are **\$100, \$300, \$500, \$1500*, \$1000, \$2000, \$3500*, \$5000, \$10,000, \$25,000, and \$50,000. (*award based on C+R points accumulated SATURDAY ONLY for Memorial, Ladies, and Labor Day Tournaments ONLY.)** All Catch and Release must be verified under the rules as stated under general Catch and Release rules. Payout is 1st, 2nd and 3rd places in each category. There will be **NO LINE BONUS POINTS** when calculating catch and release point totals for Cash Awards. Each verified blue marlin caught and released is 500 pts and all White Marlin, Sailfish, and Spearfish are 200 pts. If video verification committee cannot verify the species of your billfish, it will be classified as a white marlin.

TUNA, WAHOO, DOLPHIN

Categories are **\$500 and \$1000** for the Tuna, Wahoo, and Dolphin with 1/3 of total money for 1st place in each category. Tuna, Wahoo, and Dolphin each have a **\$100, \$300, \$500, \$1000, \$2500, \$5000, \$10,000, and \$25,000** category. Payout is 1st, 2nd and 3rd places in each category.

LARGEST FISH ON DOCK

Winner take all for largest fish on dock, **\$1,000**.

BLUE MARLIN

Winners are required to verify a caught billfish with color video movie proof (not digital pictures) and are subject to a polygraph examination; see video verification section of rules

Categories include: **\$100, \$300, \$500, \$1000, \$2000, \$5000, \$10000, \$25,000, and \$50,000**.

Top Captain and Crew Cash Award (\$500) is awarded to first place only according to Catch and Release points without line class multiplier and points from all eligible fish.

Cash Award Payments

Cash award winners will be announced at the end of the awards ceremony. Results as read at the awards ceremony are unaudited. Cash award checks will be issued within 2 weeks after the tournament is complete **provided there are no outstanding appeals or disputes**. No cash award checks can be issued unless the cash award sheet is completely filled out including a valid Driver's License Number and Social Security or tax ID number. An IRS form 1099 will be sent to all Cash Award Winners at the year's end.

WITHDRAWAL POLICY

(A) If pre-registered and withdraw prior to 4:00 p.m. registration, you will be refunded everything less credit card fees.

(B) If pre-registered and withdraw prior to sign out and after 4:00 p.m., you will be refunded all cash award less credit card fees and entry fees less credit card fees and \$75 fee for food, ditty bag, per angler.

(C) If you withdraw after sign-out at Captain's meeting, no refund will be given.

DISCLAIMER

Registrants accept the following conditions: Participants enter the tournament at their own risk.

The MBGFC, its members, officials, committee members, and all persons directly or indirectly connected with the tournament shall be exempt from any liability for loss, damage, negligence,

harm, or injury to any participant, entrant, sports fisherman, his companions, boat captains, crew members, vessels, and equipment, which may occur during registration or during the

tournament. By completing the tournament application the participant acknowledges that such recordings become the property of the MBGFC and gives consent for the MBGFC to use

without payment or restriction any photograph, video, or audio recording in which any participant may appear, for any purpose whatsoever, in regards to but not limited to advertising,

promotional material, and/or sale. All winning entrants agree to submit to a polygraph

examination (lie detector test) at the request of the Tournament Committee. Failure to submit

will subject the entrant to disqualification at the Tournament Committee's discretion. One day of

fishing constitutes a complete tournament. In the event of inclement weather any part of the

tournament may be canceled, postponed or continued. All participants and boats shall exercise

good sportsmanship and courtesy whether at the dock, underway, or fishing. Any participant

that violates federal or state law will be disqualified. If the tournament shall be canceled for any

reason beyond the control of the MBGFC, entrants will be refunded a prorated share of their

entrance fee at the discretion of the tournament committee. No refund will be made after the

official start of the tournament (discussed at the captain's meeting). **Payment of an entry fee,**

completion of the tournament application form, and sign-out at the captains meeting by the designated boat representative constitute a representation by each angler, owner, captain, and crew member that he/she has read and fully understands the Tournament Rules and that he/she shall abide by such rules and the decisions of the Tournament Committee.

MBGFC Polygraph Policy

In consideration for the MBGFC's processing each tournament participant's registration acceptance of his or her entry, each registered angler specifically agrees and consents to voluntarily submit to a polygraph examination(s) that will be conducted by a polygraph examiner selected by the MBGFC, at any time until all prize winners and awards are determined and announced. Further, each registered angler agrees to obtain the agreement and consent of each and every occupant of the boat from which he or she fishes during the tournament (including but not limited to the captain and crew) to submit to a polygraph examination or examinations as described above. The method and conduct of all polygraph examinations, and the interpretation of the results thereof, shall be in the sole judgment of the polygraph examiner appointed by the MBGFC whose opinion shall be final. If any registered angler or occupant of a vessel refuses to submit to a polygraph examination, or if any registered angler or occupant gives a response which, in the sole opinion of the polygraph examiner, is untruthful, then the offending angler(s) on the boat shall be immediately disqualified without further notice from the tournament in question. **Any registered angler(s) that is disqualified shall not be entitled to any prizes, awards, or refund of the entry fees or cash award fees.**