

Louisiana Billfish Classic

JUNE 10-16, 2019

RULES & REGULATIONS



1. TOURNAMENT ENTRY

Entry Fee is \$3,000 per boat through May 5, 2019 and covers four anglers. The Captain and Mate can attend all functions. Each additional angler is \$300. After May 5, there will be a \$500 late fee per boat and \$50 late fee for each additional angler. The \$300 additional angler fee is waived for junior anglers (16 years old and younger).

All tournament entries are non-transferable and non-refundable. Payment of the entry fee constitutes a representation by each entrant that he/she has read and fully understands the tournament rules that he/she will abide by such rules and the decisions of the Tournament Director and/or Committee.

The Louisiana Billfish Classic is a sportfishing tournament where participants agree to fish in a fair and ethical manner. While the tournament does not strictly enforce the use of IGFA rules, it certainly expects that only minor technical differences will be employed by anglers. One noted exception is the allowance that the rod may be handed off one time within the first minute of the fight.

The full page of State Saltwater Fishing Rules can be found at <http://www.wlf.louisiana.gov/fishing/saltwater-finish>.

2. CAPTAIN'S MEETING

The Captain's Meeting will be held on Wednesday at 5:30pm at the Hurricane Hole. The captain, owner or designated team representative must sign-in and be present at the captain's meeting if you are departing from Grand Isle. If you are departing from another Louisiana Port, you must have registration and optional bets placed and acknowledge all rules by Wednesday at 8:00pm.

Rules are Subject to Change. Any changes to the rules and final instructions will be given at the meeting.

All participants are invited to attend the Kick-off Party following the meeting at 6:00pm.

3. PERMITS & LICENSES

An Atlantic Highly Migratory Species (HMS) Angling Permit is required and participants must be familiar with and follow HMS regulations. http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/sfa/hms/compliance/guides/documents/hms_rec_compliance_guide.pdf

Anglers must obtain a Louisiana Saltwater Fishing License which can be purchased locally or online. <http://www.wlf.louisiana.gov/recreational-fishing-licenses>.

4. TOURNAMENT START

In the interest of true sportsmanship, the start of the tournament will be as follows:

Boats must depart by water from Hurricane Hole Marina in Grand Isle, Louisiana at 11:00am on Thursday or any time after that OR from any Louisiana Port by submitting a photo of the time, date, and location at 11:00am on Thursday.

Fishing begins at 11:01am. All boats please check-out by calling Robbie (337) 849-8642 or Crystal (337) 802-5525 or using VHF channel 78.

5. FISHING HOURS

Boats may begin fishing at 11:01am on Thursday and continue fishing until 6:00pm Saturday. All boats, including those with catch & release videos only, must check in at Hurricane Hole Marina at the scales before 6:00pm on Saturday. Boats must check-out at departure time and return to the scales by water.

6. WEIGH STATION HOURS

Scales will be open 3:00-8:00pm on Friday and Saturday. All fish caught during the tournament must be weighed before scales close on Saturday night. Boats must be checked in at Hurricane Hole Marina by 6:00pm on Saturday to have their fish weighed in. Scales will close immediately after the last fish is weighed. All billfish catch verification forms for boated and/or released fish must be turned in to officials before the scales close.

7. QUALIFYING FISH

The following species are eligible for competition when caught by registered anglers in accordance with tournament rules:

Eligible for Catch & Release

- Blue Marlin
- White Marlin
- Sailfish
- Spearfish



Eligible for Weigh-in at Scales

- Blue Marlin – 112” minimum (LJFL)
- Tuna – 20 lbs. minimum weight
- Wahoo – 20 lbs. minimum weight
- Dolphin – 20 lbs. minimum weight

Boated Blue Marlin must measure at least 112 inches in length from the tip of the lower jaw to the fork of the tail (LJFL).

No angler or boat may be in possession of more than one blue marlin per day. Any angler in violation of this rule will be banned from further participation in the tournament without refund.

For each day the scales are open (Friday and Saturday), each boat will be allowed to bring to the scales a maximum of 1 blue marlin, 3 tuna, 3 wahoo, and 3 dolphin.

The tournament committee reserves the right to reject any fish entry because of poor condition or one that does not meet the eligible requirements set by this tournament. The condition of the fish will be left to the scrutiny of the Tournament Director and/or Committee. THEIR DECISION IS FINAL.

8. REPORTING BILLFISH

Each boat is required to record all billfish that are boated or released in the order in which the fish are caught on the Billfish Scorecard. The order of the recorded releases should match the order that appears on the boat's Catch & Release video. The Billfish Scorecard will be available in your boat information packet. Report all boated billfish on the form.

Be prepared to give the following information:

- Name of Boat
- Name of Angler
- Species of Fish (Blue Marlin, White Marlin, Spearfish, Sailfish)
- Time released or boated

DO NOT report Tuna, Dolphin, or Wahoo on the catch & release form.

Committee boats will be used for conservation and informational reporting only. Please contact a committee boat to report boated or released marlin.

Names of Committee boats and any changes to communication frequencies will be announced at the Captain's Meeting. Please use alternate frequencies for conversations not related to the reporting of billfish.

Your committee boats will be monitoring VHF Channel 78 and weigh station phones (TBD) 000-0000.

9. WEIGH-IN PROCEDURES

IMPORTANT: A tail tag with the boat name and registered angler's name must be attached to each fish before unloading at the weigh scales. Tail tags will be given before fish are unloaded off the boat.

Tournament scales will be located at the Hurricane Hole Marina. Boats having fish to weigh must be at Hurricane Hole Marina and checked in by 6:00pm on Saturday.

Anglers must remain with their fish until completion of the weigh-in procedure. The angler must sign the weigh-in stat sheet to verify the weight, at which time will make the weight official.

All fish weighed at the scales must be returned to the boat.

Boats with blue marlin to weigh in will be unloaded at the main dock at Hurricane Hole.

Boats having meat fish only to weigh in must dock at the designated slips and tournament staff will escort you to the scales.

10. TOURNAMENT AWARDS

All Tournament Awards are based on 60 registered tournament boats. Payouts are subject to change depending on the number of entries.

Catch & Release Awards will be presented to the boats with the most accumulated catch and release points utilizing video verification for Optional Entry only.

Awards for Heaviest Fish will be presented to the angler/boat for fish caught in the following categories:

Blue Marlin	1 st	\$50,000	2 nd	\$20,000	3 rd	\$10,000
Tuna	1 st	\$10,000	2 nd	\$7,000	3 rd	\$4,000
Wahoo	1 st	\$10,000	2 nd	\$7,000	3 rd	\$4,000
Dolphin	1 st	\$10,000	2 nd	\$7,000	3 rd	\$4,000

If no qualifying blue marlin are weighed, the cash award for blue marlin will roll down and be divided evenly between the Catch & Release awards.

If no other qualifying meat fish are weighed in a given category above, the cash award assigned to that category will be added to the cash awards of the qualifying fish in the other categories in a proportional manner as determined by the Tournament Director and/or Committee.

Top Lady Angler and Top Junior Angler Awards will be presented to the one lady angler and one junior angler with the most accumulated points based on the following:

- Points per pound for Blue Marlin weighed at the dock
- 600 points for released Blue Marlin
- 250 points for released White Marlin, Sailfish and Spearfish
- 250 points for any unidentifiable released marlin

If no billfish are brought to the scales or released by a lady angler or junior angler, the heaviest meat fish will be used to determine the prize for top angler.

Polygraphs may be administered at the discretion of the Tournament Director and/or Committee.

11. CATCH & RELEASE DEFINITIONS

Billfish Catch: A billfish is considered caught when the leader connection is shown wound to the tip of the rod, or a team member is shown touching the leader.

Billfish Release: The billfish is considered released when, after being caught by the above definition, the rod and angler are shown with the fish no longer connected to the line or the billfish is shown in the water, no longer connected to the line.

12. TOURNAMENT DESIGNATOR / IDENTIFICATION MARKERS

Designators will be assigned at the mandatory Captain's Meeting. These markers must appear in all video submissions.

13. VIDEO VERIFICATION AND POINTS AWARDED FOR CATCH & RELEASE

Points for catch and release are awarded when, in the process of the catch and release as defined above, all technical elements are shown on video. Tagging is not required for points and billfish removed from the water or boated will be disqualified.

Video submitted for consideration for points must include the following technical elements:

- Angler fighting fish, including video of rod and reel
- Cockpit panoramic view
- Tournament designator
- The Catch (swivel at rod tip or team member touching the leader)
- Video of Billfish for species identification. (Judges use dorsal, anal and pectoral fins for fish identification)
- The Release (the Billfish being released or video of the rod and angler with the fish no longer connected to the line)
- Secondary cockpit panoramic view after the release
- After the secondary cockpit panoramic view, a clear video of GPS date & time to be used for official release time. Hold camera steady for several seconds to allow clear focus of GPS Date & Time (This is critical.) GPS must display in CDT. Show designator alongside GPS if possible.

Verification Videos become the property of the tournament. Verification videos and billfish scorecards must be turned in to the video judges at the designated judging location near the weigh station between the hours of 3:00-8:00pm on either Friday or Saturday.

14. BILLFISH SCORECARD

All billfish released or boated must be logged on the Billfish Scorecard in the sequence in which they were caught; scorecards must be signed by the Boat Captain indicating they agree to the information as recorded. The scorecard must include boat name, angler's name, species, date and time of release. Detailed instructions are printed on the billfish scorecard which is included in the team packet handed out at registration.

All billfish must be recorded on the Billfish Scorecard regardless if you enter the Optional Entry for Catch & Release or not. In case there are no blue marlin that qualify for the minimum size requirements and no awards are issued for that division, the money will be divided and roll over to the teams with the most points on the scorecard.

15. POINT VALUES FOR CATCH & RELEASE

Catch & Release placements are determined by points awarded as follows:

- 600 points for Blue Marlin
- 250 points for White Marlin, Sailfish and Spearfish
- 250 for any unidentifiable marlin (billfish excluding swordfish)

Only billfish caught and released according to these Rules are eligible for Awards as described herein.

The Billfish Scorecard must accompany the Catch & Release video to the weigh-in dock. The form must be completed with all required information. Catch & Release verification videos and scorecards must be turned in to the video judges at the weigh-in dock between the hours of 3:00-8:00pm on Friday or Saturday.

Polygraph Test may be administered at the discretion of the Tournament Director and/or Committee.

16. PAYMENT OF CASH AWARDS

Prior to fishing, each tournament boat must designate a representative payee to receive payment of all cash awards. Payment of cash awards is by check. A single check will be written to the boat's representative payee for the combined total of tournament cash awards and optional cash awards.

Checks will be written after the Awards Ceremony on Sunday.

Louisiana Billfish Classic accepts no responsibility for the division of any cash awards between team members.

17. OPTIONAL ENTRY AWARDS

This is a separate entry. The Optional Entry is not required to compete for Tournament Awards.

Participants may pay an Optional Entry fee in one or more of the following:

CATEGORY	DIVISIONS			
	1	2	3	4
Catch & Release	\$5,000	\$2,500	\$1000	\$500
Blue Marlin	\$5,000	\$2,500	\$1000	\$500
Tuna	\$5,000	\$2,500	\$1000	\$500
Wahoo	\$5,000	\$2,500	\$1000	\$500
Dolphin	\$5,000	\$2,500	\$1000	\$500

Payout amounts will be the total amount of the monies received, less 10% deducted for administration fees with the remaining 90% to be awarded.

All divisions will pay 1st, 2nd, and 3rd with a 50%, 30%, 20% split.

In the event of limited participation in any category listed above, the payouts will be modified as follows: One team entered will be refunded in full, two teams will be a 66%, 34% split, and three or more teams will be the standard split.

Participants who wish to pay an Optional Entry Fee prior to June 1, may pay by personal or company check made payable to the Louisiana Billfish Classic.

Participants who wish to pay an Optional Entry Fee after June 1 must pay by cash, credit card (additional 3.5% charge) or cashier's check during registration hours on Wednesday at 3:00-9:00pm of tournament week or make payment arrangements with the Tournament Director.

Optional Awards for Catch & Release divisions are determined by points according to Tournament Rules.

Optional Awards for boated Blue Marlin, Tuna, Wahoo, and Dolphin are determined by weight according to Tournament Rules.

In the event that no qualifying fish are weighed by an Optional Entry participant in a given Division eligible for an Optional Award, 90% percent of the Optional Entry Fees collected for that division are returned to the participant(s) who paid Optional Entry Fees for that division.

18. SUBMISSION OF VIDEO RECORDINGS

Verification video recordings must be submitted not later than the closing of the scales on final day of fishing. Recordings should be submitted immediately upon return to the marina.

All recorded images and sounds become the property of the tournament and may be used by the tournament for display purposes during weigh in and future marketing campaigns. Images will be copied from digital hard drive cameras onto tapes, CD's and/or DVD's, etc.

Video Tips and Recommendations

- Use fresh, new SD cards
- SD type Sony and GoPro, etc. cameras which generate consumer type files allowing the judges to quickly copy the recording to a computer which facilitates slow motion and segment by segment scoring
- Files with .MXF filename extension cannot be opened or viewed by the judges.
- Judges will not score from your laptop computer or iPad type tablet.
- Judges will accept more than one video of the same release from a different camera (of the same type), provided the same previous video requirements are met.
- If possible and without harm to the fish, have the mate display the dorsal fin on the video at the time of release to assist with identification.
- Underwater video of the release is helpful with identification. Ensure video is adequately long to allow identification.
- Limit recordings to only video release recordings from this tournament with the segments staged, cued and ready for scoring. Before entering the scoring room, know where images are located on the recording. Have the SD card ready to be inserted into scoring computer.
- It is critical the person sent to scoring clearly understands how to provide the video digital media to the scoring judge. One person per team is allowed in video scoring.
- Understand how to properly display the GPS date and time on your boat GPS prior to the tournament. This is critical for a tie-breaker.
- Cell phones are not acceptable for digital video submission, or for date and time of release.

Remember: Report releases to a Committee Boat on VHF Channel 78 so we can track them for unofficial reporting to the media and the verification committee. Releases may also be reported to weigh station phones (TBD) 000-0000.

19. WEATHER: TOURNAMENT DELAY OR CANCELLATION

In the event the tournament committee feels in their best judgement fishing is unsafe due to severe weather, high seas, or any cause beyond the control of the Louisiana Billfish Classic, the tournament may be cancelled or delayed. If delayed, a new start time or date will be announced should weather conditions improve. If cancelled, entry fees will be rolled over to the following year in their entirety or may be refunded to entrants less the \$750 non-refundable deposit and a pro-rated share of tournament expenses as solely determined by the Tournament Director and/or Committee. If one day is fished, the tournament goes on.

Entrants shall have no claim against the Louisiana Billfish Classic for return of said entry fees less pro-rated share of tournament expenses.

All teams and participants should make their decision to fish based solely on their own judgement. Fish at your own risk.

20. TIE BREAKERS

For Catch and Release, team placement is determined by the first team to reach the highest total points as verified by the boats GPS time.

For fish weighed in, any category of fish brought to the scales, placement is determined by the order of weigh-in at the scales. The recorded time of weigh-in determines placement.

In case of a tie for Top Lady Angler or Top Junior Angler on points, placement is determined first by the heaviest fish and then by the first angler to reach the highest total points as verified by the boats GPS time. If it comes down to weighed fish only to determine tie breaker, placement will be determined by the recorded weigh-in time at the scales.

21. PROTEST

Any protests relating to the tournament must be submitted in writing along with a \$1,000 deposit by the team captain to the tournament committee no later than 15 minutes after the last fish is weighed on the final day of the tournament. All entrants agree to abide by tournament rules and regulations.

All disputes are decided by the Tournament Director and/or Committee. Their decision is final.

Poor sportsmanship will be grounds for disqualification from the Louisiana Billfish Classic. Any violation of these rules resulting in disqualification will result in forfeiture of entry fee and prize money.

22. WAIVER / DISCLAIMER

It is understood that all participants in the Louisiana Billfish Classic enter at their own risk, and that the officers, committee members, sponsors, directors, tournament venue and all persons connected directly or indirectly with the operation of said tournament, shall be exempt from any liability for libel, slander, loss, damage, negligence, harm, injury or death suffered by any participant, entrant, anglers, his/her companions, boat captains, mates, crew members, vessels and equipment which may occur during or in conjunction with the tournament. By tournament entry, the captain consents that the Louisiana Billfish Classic may use without payment or restriction, any photographs in which he/she or any of their crew may appear for any purpose whatsoever; including, but not limited to resale, advertising, commercial or promotional material. The captain and his crew further release the Louisiana Billfish Classic, officers and directors, and all persons from injury, loss or damage which may result.

All state record winners must submit to and pass in a conclusive manner, a polygraph examination administered by a licensed polygraphist provided by tournament officials. All entrants agree to submit to a polygraph examination at the request of the Tournament Director and/or Committee if there is a conflict involving said entrant. Failure to submit to such an examination will result in disqualification of the entrant at the sole discretion of the Tournament Director and/or Committee.

The Tournament Director and/or Committee reserves the right to refuse entry of any anglers. In the event that an angler is refused after signed up, a full refund will be issued.

ALL DECISIONS OF THE TOURNAMENT DIRECTOR AND/OR COMMITTEE WILL BE FINAL.

BILLFISH CLASSIC CUP

The Billfish Classic Cup (BCC) was developed to reward competitive teams fishing in the Mississippi Gulf Coast Billfish Classic (MGCBC), Louisiana Billfish Classic (LBC), and the Texas Billfish Classic (TBC).

The winning Team will be presented the Billfish Classic Cup Trophy and \$17,500 Cash Award at the conclusion of the Texas Billfish Classic on August 3, 2019 in Freeport, TX.

Full list of Rules for BCC and information found online at www.billfishclassiccup.com.