

*While all efforts are made to keep this information current, all published rules shall be considered unofficial. Official rules will be distributed and announced at the registration check-in and captains meeting. All participants agree to the terms of these rules by participating in the tournament.*

## **Sea Horse Anglers Club Billfish Tournament Official Rules 2024**

### **The Tournament**

The Sea Horse Anglers Club Billfish Tournament is a three-day, billfish team event with top-team honors going to the team that tallies the most points during the tournament. Prizes pay down to third place (first, second and third). The tournament will award cash and prizes to the team(s) that catch the largest blue marlin and game fish (by weight). Billfish release trophies and cash prizes will also be awarded to the team(s) with the most billfish release points for the tournament. A trophy and prize will be awarded to the high-point angler. Eligible species for the tournament include blue marlin, white marlin, spearfish, sailfish, yellowfin and bigeye tuna, wahoo and dolphin.

### **Base Entry Fee**

The Base Entry Fee is \$3,500 per team. This basic entry fee covers the participation of all registered anglers, captain and mate. It also covers attendance at all planned entertainment and social activities. The tournament committee reserves the right to deny tournament entry to any individual, organization or corporation. A final registration, captains meeting and kickoff party will take place from 5 to 8:30 p.m., July 19, at the Docksider Pub in Hamilton. All teams that are preregistered and teams needing to register must send at least one representative to obtain tournament credentials and the team captains' bag. All anglers and boat captains must attend the scheduled anglers/captains meeting at 7:00 p.m., July 19, at the Docksider Pub. If they do not attend, they accept and agree to be bound by all instructions and/or rule changes made orally or in writing during that meeting. In an effort to maximize participation, registrations will be accepted until 8:29 a.m. on July 20.

### **Cancellation Policy**

In an effort to receive early registrations, the tournament will allow participants to cancel their registration until the deadline of 10:00 p.m. on July 19. The tournament will refund all entry fees less a \$100 processing fee.

### **Angler, Crew and Boat Requirements**

Without exception, each boat must have on board one designated boat captain and at least one designated mate. Captain and crew changes are allowed but should be communicated to the tournament committee prior to any days fishing. There is no limit to number of anglers per boat in this tournament. Guests are allowed on the boats. Boats may receive aid from other boats in the form of towing in the event of mechanical failure. Teams and boats are not allowed to receive assistance in landing or releasing fish. All participants must exercise good and courteous sportsmanship whether at the dock, underway or fishing.

### **Boats with Sonar**

Sonars are not permitted to be deployed prior to lines in at 8:30 AM.

### **Schedule of Events**

**Event location:** Final Registration at the Docksider Pub. Weigh-ins at the Barr's Bay Park. Awards at the Royal Bermuda Yacht Club.

**July 19** — Final registration, captains meeting and kickoff party from 5 to 8:30 p.m. at the Dockside Pub Hamilton. Captains meeting will be held at 7:00 p.m.

**July 20** — Fishing Day 8:30 a.m. start, 4:30 p.m. lines out. Private Dark & Stormy Gosling's bar at weigh station, Barr's Bay Park

**July 21** — Fishing Day 8:30 a.m. start, 4:30 p.m. lines out. Private Dark & Stormy Gosling's bar at weigh station, Barr's Bay Park

**July 22** — Fishing Day 8:30 a.m. start, 4:30 p.m. lines out. Private Dark & Stormy Gosling's bar at weigh station, Barr's Bay Park

**July 23** — Sea Horse Billfish Awards Banquet at the Royal Bermuda Yacht Club 6:30pm – 9:30pm. Bermuda Triple Crown Awards presented following Sea Horse Awards.

### **Rules**

IGFA angling and tackle rules apply in this tournament (see tournament release rules for scoring billfish release points). It is the responsibility of each registered angler and crew member to know, understand and abide by IGFA and tournament rules during this competition. Any angler, captain or mate who deliberately breaks any IGFA or tournament rules will be deemed ineligible for any prize, award, honor, or recognition and may be immediately expelled and disqualified from this and future tournaments without a refund of any jackpot or registration fees. For a complete list of IGFA angling and tackle rules, go to [igfa.org](http://igfa.org).

### **Billfish Release Rules**

All teams must provide their own video camera(s) to verify releases. All video recording equipment must be set to the proper Bermuda time and date and must be synchronized to the official tournament time. To verify a catch, you must use release cards provided. Teams will be informed of the release card to use prior to each day's start of fishing. To score an official release, the video footage must include sufficient footage to (1) clearly identify the species; (2) show a team member, angler or crew touching the leader while the fish is still hooked; (3) display the release card provided by the tournament; (4) identify the time and date of the catch; and (5) show the catch and full release of the fish. The video must identify all of these elements. Do not delete any video taken during fishing hours, even if it does not include the above elements and will not be used to prove a catch. After the release video is taken, the time, species, release card number and angler name must be written on the catch-report affidavit. Each registered angler and boat captain must then sign the catch-report affidavit. At the end of the day's fishing, the camera, camera connections, catch-report affidavit and all video footage taken must be brought to the weigh station for verification of official release points. Catch reports should be turned in by 7 p.m. unless a team is fighting a fish after lines out at 4:30 p.m.

### **Scoring Billfish**

Five hundred (500) points awarded for every blue marlin officially released, or one point per pound for every blue marlin weighed and verified at or over the 500-pound minimum. One hundred (100) points for every white marlin, spearfish or sailfish officially released. If a blue marlin brought to the scales fails to make the minimum weight limit, the team that caught the fish will be penalized 500 team points, plus two points per pound that the fish is under the minimum weight. For example, if a fish weighs 480 pounds, that team will be penalized 500 points for not meeting the weight requirement and another 40 points for the 20-pound difference. The total penalty would cost them 540 points, and they would receive no other points for the fish. Any blue marlin boated for any reason must be weighed. Failure to weigh a boated blue marlin will result in immediate disqualification for the remainder of the tournament.

and forfeiture of all points previously earned. Only one blue marlin may be taken per day, per boat. All white marlin, sailfish and spearfish must be released. Once a marlin is boated, the team must take a picture or video of the fish while measuring the short length and girth of the fish. The measurements of the fish must be reported to the tournament committee. In the event of a tie the team reaching the highest score first wins with the other team assuming the next award position. This is based on the time of release and boated time of billfish.

### **Game Fish Division**

Eligible species are yellowfin and bigeye tuna, wahoo and dolphin. This is purely a single biggest-fish category, with scoring calculated to the tenth of a pound to 200 pounds and to the pound for fish over 200 pounds. The largest yellowfin or bigeye tuna, dolphin or wahoo caught over the three-day event will win a percentage of the base-entry cash and prizes. Minimum weight for this category is 25 pounds. Once a game fish is boated and the intent is to weigh it you must notify tournament control. Teams must use the release card of the day and take a photo or video of the fish with the designated card. In the event of a tie the team reaching the highest score first wins. This is based on the time of boated fish.

### **Line**

The maximum line strength allowed is 130-pound-test. Tournament and/or non-tournament lines are eligible. If the line test stated on the label is 130 pounds or less, the line will be allowed in the tournament. The catch shall be classified under the breaking strength of the first five meters of line directly preceding the double line, leader or hook. This section must be comprised of a single, homogenous piece of line.

### **Leader**

The length of the leader is the overall length, including any swivel, lure or hook arrangement. In all line classes exceeding 20 pounds (10 kg), the leader shall be limited to 30 feet (9.14 meters). The combined length of the double line, swivel, hook set and the leader shall not exceed 40 feet (12.19 meters) total. The tournament committee holds the right to examine any hook sets, line and/or leaders at any time during the event. Refusal to allow the committee to examine any hook sets, line and/or leaders will result in immediate disqualification from the event without a refund of any jackpot or registration fees.

### **Rods**

Unlimited in use or numbers.

### **Teasers**

Unlimited in use or numbers.

### **Baits**

Live bait, dead bait, lures and any combination thereof are permitted in this tournament.

### **Hooks**

All tournament participants must use non-offset circle hooks for all species whenever natural baits or natural-bait/artificial-lure combinations are used.

### **Fishing Hours**

Fishing will commence at 8:30 a.m. and end at 4:30 p.m. on July 20, 21 and 22. The tournament control's time will act as the official time for the start, catch-and-release and end of fishing each day. The tournament committee reserves the privilege of changing starting and finishing times for any reason it

deems necessary. A radio start will take place each morning at 8:30 a.m. The official tournament channel will be 7 International.

### **Fighting Times**

In the event of late hookups all fish to be weighed or release videos must be back at the weigh station and in the slip by 11:59 p.m. on the day of fishing.

### **Weigh-In/Release-Video Check-In**

The weigh station and release-video check-in station is at Barr's Bay Park.

### **Catch-Report Affidavit**

All catches must be recorded on the catch-report-affidavit sheets provided. The official time, species, release number card and angler's name must be written on the catch-report affidavit. Each registered angler, mate and boat captain must then sign the catch report affidavit. The catch-report-affidavit sheets must be turned in at the weigh station each day.

### **Radio/Communications**

All billfish hookups, releases and lost fish must be reported to tournament control, along with the boat name, angler name and fish species. The tournament control's time will act as the official time for the start, catch-and-release and end of fishing each day without exception. The official tournament channel is 7 International. An International cell phone number of 407-533-0123 can also be used to communicate. During the last hour of fishing each day, all hookups must be reported.

### **Weather**

There is no weather committee. The tournament is conducted on a fish-at-your-own-risk basis. If any portion of the tournament is fished and a team or teams land or release fish that match the tournament's eligible species and minimum weight limits, then prizes will be awarded.

### **Sportsmanlike Conduct**

All participants are expected to maintain a reasonable and sportsmanlike demeanor at all times throughout the tournament. Unsportsmanlike or threatening conduct towards tournament organizers or other participants, or any other behavior which the tournament organizers deem inappropriate, in their sole discretion, will result in immediate disqualification of the entire team with no refund of entry fees.

### **Protests**

Participants may lodge protests against any catch which they believe was not made in accordance with these rules. All protests must be stated in writing and accompanied by \$500. The tournament committee may call a protest hearing in their discretion; a protest hearing is not guaranteed. All protests will be settled on the day of the incident. All protests on July 20, 21 and 22 must be in the hands of the tournament's designated rules committee by 7 p.m. on the day of the alleged incident unless there is a protest regarding a fish that comes to the scales late. The protesting party, as well as the accused team members, captain and crew, must be present at any official protest hearing. The tournament committee may refuse to consider any protest evidence not submitted at the protest hearing in the presence of the protested team. If the protesting or protested team fails to show up for the protest hearing, that team forfeits its right to submit evidence. Decisions of the tournament organizers with regard to protests are final, nonappealable, and nonjusticiable.

**Polygraph**

Each participant agrees to submit to a polygraph examination at a time and location as determined by the Tournament management, and at the discretion of Tournament management, following the end of the competition. Failure to successfully pass such an examination may result in a test of a second team member; in the event of failure by the second team member, the team shall be disqualified.