



## ***HURRICANE HOLE LOUISIANA OPEN, AUGUST 27-30, 2026***

# ***TOURNAMENT RULES***

### **TOURNAMENT ENTRY:**

- Entry Fee is \$6,000 per boat through April 1st and covers: 1 Boat, Crew, and 4 anglers. After August 1st there is a \$500 late fee. The entire team can attend all functions. Each additional angler can be registered for \$400 per person. Cash, check, or credit card (3.5% service charge) will be accepted for payment.
- All tournament entries are non-transferable and non-refundable. If your vessel is unable to compete in the event after submitting payment, your entry will be rolled over to the following year for full credit. 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, Weigh Master, and/or Committee.

### **REGISTRATION:**

Date: Thursday, August 27th, 2026

Time: 5:00 pm-10:00 pm

Location: Hurricane Hole Restaurant

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

### **CAPTAIN'S MEETING:**

Date: Thursday, August 27th, 2026

Time: 5:30-6:00 pm

Location: Hurricane Hole Club House at 1850 Highway 1 in Grand Isle, LA

Rules are Subject to Change. Any changes to the rules and final instructions will be given at the meeting. **A representative from each team is required to attend the Captain's Meeting** as each team is responsible for knowing the rules including any changes or clarifications made during the meeting.

### **FISHING HOURS:**

Each boat will be eligible to fish a maximum of 3 days, Friday, August 28th, Saturday, August 29th, and Sunday, August 30th, 2026.

All boats **must** depart from Hurricane Hole Marina in Grand Isle, Louisiana.

Teams will depart from Hurricane Hole Marina in Grand Isle at 10am on Friday and can continue fishing until scales close at 6:00pm on Sunday. Boats cannot be trailered during fishing hours and must return to weigh-in by water. All boats with catch & release videos and fish to be weighed, must pass under the Grand Isle Bridge and check-in on VHF Channel 72 by 6:00pm on Sunday.

### **WEIGH STATION HOURS AND PROCEDURES:**

Teams **MUST** weigh in at Hurricane Hole Marina.

**Friday:** By Request 5:00 pm - 7:00 pm

**Saturday:** By Request 5:00 pm - 7:00 pm

**Sunday:** 3:00 pm - 6:00 pm

On Friday and Saturday, you can request the weigh scales to be opened for you to weigh in between the hours of 5pm and 7pm. If you are not inside of the rocks entering Hurricane Hole Marina before 7pm you will have to hold your fish until the following day. You must text (985) 503-1706 to request a weigh in on Friday and Saturday and you must give advance notice with an ETA.

All fish caught during the tournament must be weighed before scales close on Sunday. All boats that desire to weigh fish or submit videos or enter the marina must radio (VHF Channel 72) tournament control, upon passing under (Not Before) the LA-1 bridge. You will be acknowledged and placed in the weigh station and video review que at that time. If you only have video or have nothing to weigh and no video to submit, please state so to receive further instructions.

For weighing fish, only 1 boat will be allowed at the weigh station at a time. You must have your tail tags and scorecard filled out prior to weighing in. The scales will close immediately after the last fish on the last checked-in boat is weighed. All billfish catch verification forms and video footage for boated blue marlin and catch and release fish must be turned into officials before the scales close.

Once the fish is weighed in at Hurricane Hole, the fish will be released back to the vessel.

**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.

Tournament scales will be located at Hurricane Hole Marina fuel dock.

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 angler.

### **TOURNAMENT AWARDS:**

Tournament Awards are based on 50 registered tournament teams. Payouts are based on 80% of the accumulated entry fee. Payouts are subject to change depending on the number of entries. Awards for Heaviest Fish will be presented to the angler/boat for fish caught in the following categories:

Blue Marlin	\$50,000	\$25,000	\$15,000
Catch & Release	\$30,000	\$20,000	\$10,000
Tuna	\$15,000	\$10,000	\$5,000
Wahoo	\$15,000	\$10,000	\$5,000
Dolphin	\$15,000	\$10,000	\$5,000

If no qualifying blue marlin are weighed, the cash award for blue marlin will be divided between the top 3 teams in catch and release. If there is no entry for another category, that category payout will be rolled over into other remaining categories and divided based on a 50/30/20 split.

## **OPTIONAL ENTRY**

Blue Marlin, Catch & Release, Tuna, Wahoo, and Dolphin will pay 1st, 2nd, and 3rd with a 50%, 30%, 20% split. Crew Jackpot is winner take all. 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, 2-3 teams will be winner-take-all, 4-6 teams will be 60/40 split, and 7 or more teams will be the standard 50/30/20 split.

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.

## **Crew Jackpot**

- Entry cost for the category is \$500
- Winner is determined by the heaviest fish caught in the tournament.

## **TOURNAMENT DESIGNATOR / IDENTIFICATION MARKERS:**

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

## **BILLFISH CATCH & RELEASE SCORING:**

A "Qualified Catch" is defined as:

1. Any blue marlin, white marlin, sailfish, or spearfish (all species) catch-and-release recorded by any Teammate during Tournament fishing competition hours, or,
2. The Fishing Team may record (harvest) one Blue Marlin as a Qualified Catch.

The Tournament awards Qualified Catch points using the following scoring system:

- Blue Marlin: 450 points
- White Marlin: 100 points
- Spearfish: 100 points
- Sailfish: 75 points
- Unidentified Billfish: 75 Points

The Tournament reserves the right to enforce independent video verification reviewed by the Tournament Director and polygraph test examination of any Team Members in order to preserve the integrity of the competition. The Tournament Director at its sole discretion may verify Qualified Catches or disqualify the Qualified Catch or a Fishing Team based on the results of video verification and/ or polygraph examination.

Hurricane Hole Louisiana Open competition officials support NOAA, ATCA, the Magnuson-Stevens Act and Code of Federal Regulations 50 CFR 635.21 (f) for the protection of Atlantic Migratory Species, which states: Anglers

fishing with natural bait (or natural/artificial combination bait) must only use non-offset circle hooks in billfish tournaments. Anglers may only use J-hooks in billfish tournaments if they are fishing with artificial lures.

The definition of "natural bait" means, any living or dead animal or vegetable substance which on account of the edibility, smell or taste thereof is used in angling to lure fish.

While fighting a fish, a Teammate is permitted to assist the Angler by adjusting a harness or chair so long as the Teammate does not make intentional contact with the rod, reel or line.

For the safety of all competitors, Teammates may reinforce the harness by pressing down on the back of the harness so long as the Teammate does not make intentional contact with the rod, reel or line.

A Teammate may pass the rod one time during the fight. If the rod is passed it must be done within the first minute after the hookup of the fish. Video verification may be applied to assure the rod was passed within 60 seconds of hookup.

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

Eligible for Weigh-in at Scales

- Blue Marlin-Minimum 112 inches LJFL (1 per vessel per day)
- Tuna – 20 lbs. minimum weight
  - \*Yellowfin Tuna, Blackfin Tuna, or Bigeye Tuna
- Wahoo – 20 lbs. minimum weight
- Dolphin – 20 lbs. minimum weight

For each day the scales are open (Friday, Saturday and Sunday), each boat will be allowed to bring to the scales a maximum of 1 blue marlin, 3 tuna, 3 wahoo, and 3 dolphin. You must text (985) 503-1706 to request a weigh in on Friday and Saturday between the hours of 5pm and 7pm.

The tournament committee reserves the right to reject any fish entry because of poor condition (must be in fresh edible condition), mutilation (defined as anything that would impair the fish's ability to swim away (being cut by the propeller or bit by a shark) 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 committee. THEIR DECISION IS FINAL.

### **VIDEO VERIFICATION:**

For boated Blue Marlin and catch and release marlin, Video submitted must include the following technical elements to award a Qualified Catch: Verifying a Qualified Catch:

- A) Angler fighting fish, including video of rod and reel during the fight and prior to fish being released or boated
- B) The leader connection is wound to the tip of the rod, or,
- C) A Teammate makes contact with the leader in hand, and,
- D) Video verification includes the live fish swimming away.
  - \*Either (B) or (C) AND (D) must occur and be verified by a Qualifying Event Video Official to register points in the competition.***
- E) Tournament designator
- F) Video of Billfish for species identification. (Judges use dorsal, anal and pectoral fins for fish identification)

**G)** Cockpit pan after the fish is released or boated (If a double hookup, please declare and pan the cockpit during the fight and after each release)

**H)** Clear video of GPS date & time after the fish is released or boated to be used for official boating time or release time. Hold the camera steady for several seconds to allow clear focus of GPS Date & Time (This is critical). GPS must display in CDT.

\*\*\*If the date and/or time are not clearly displayed or displayed at all, but the indicator is clearly displayed in the video, the date/time will be set to the date/time that the vessel passes under the LA-1 bridge and checks in with tournament committee.

Verification Videos become the property of the tournament. Verification videos and billfish scorecards must be turned into the video judges at the designated judging location near the weigh station between the hours of 3:00 pm - before the scales close on the last fishing day.

The video must be continuous on a single video device. You may video on a GoPro, camera, Ipad, or Iphone as long as all of the video requirements are met.

### **REPORTING A 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 at Registration.

Report all boated Blue Marlin on the form. Be prepared to give the following information:

- Name of Boat
- Name of Angler
- Length of boated Blue Marlin
- ETA of a boated Blue Marlin to scales
- Time and date released or boated

The tournament committee will be monitoring the marina cellphone (985) 503-1706. Teams are asked to make best efforts to report their Qualified Catch (boated blue marlin, released Marlin, tuna, wahoo, or dolphin) within 10 minutes of recording the catch via text at the number above. It is explicitly noted by the Hurricane Hole Louisiana Open competitors that the Tournament requests catches to be registered with Tournament Officials within (10) minutes either via Satellite Phone, inReach communication, or other to the number above. It would be greatly appreciated if you send a short video and/or pictures with the reported catch.

### **CODE OF CONDUCT:**

The Hurricane Hole Louisiana Open 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 <https://www.wlf.louisiana.gov/page/recreational-saltwater-finish>.

### **PERMITS & LICENSES:**

An Atlantic Highly Migratory Species (HMS) Angling Permit is required and participants must be familiar with and follow HMS regulations.

<https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/permit/atlantic-highly-migratory-species-angling-permit-open-access>

Anglers must obtain a Louisiana Basic Fishing License, a Saltwater Fishing License, and Saltwater Landing Permit. All of which can be obtained locally or online at [www.wlf.louisiana.gov](http://www.wlf.louisiana.gov)

### **PAYMENTS FOR 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. Hurricane Hole Louisiana Open LLC accepts no responsibility for the division of any cash awards between team members.

### **WEATHER: TOURNAMENT DELAY OR CANCELLATION:**

In the event the tournament committee feels in their best judgment that fishing is unsafe due to severe weather, high seas, or any cause beyond the control of the Hurricane Hole Louisiana Open Committee, the tournament may be canceled or delayed. If delayed, a new start time or date will be announced should weather conditions improve. If canceled, entry fees will be rolled over to the following year in their entirety. If one day is fished, the tournament goes on.

Entrants shall have no claim against Hurricane Hole Louisiana Open for return of paid entry fees.

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

### **TIE BREAKERS:**

For Catch and Release: Team placement is determined by the first team to reach the highest total points as verified by the boat's GPS time and date on the video.

For kill Blue Marlin: Team placement is determined by the boat's GPS time and date on the video.

For Tuna, Wahoo, and Dolphin Weighed: Tuna, Wahoo, and Dolphin brought to the scales, placement is determined by the order of weigh-in at the scales. The recorded time of weigh-in determines placement.

### **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 Committee. Their decision is final.

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

### **WAIVER/DISCLAIMER:**

It is understood that all participants in the Hurricane Hole Louisiana Open 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 Hurricane Hole Louisiana Open 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 Hurricane Hole Louisiana Open, officers and directors, and all persons from injury, loss or damage which may result.

All entrants agree to submit to a polygraph examination at the request of the tournament 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 committee.

#### **RELEASE OF CLAIMS:**

In consideration of being accepted for participation in the Event, each Teammate hereby releases, forever discharges, and agrees to hold harmless Hurricane Hole and its officers, directors, employees, agents, volunteers, partners, members, and or attorneys (collectively the "Releases") for any and all losses, claims, or demands of any kind or character whatsoever arising from the negligence or gross negligence of the Releases or from any other cause connected with or occurring during any Event. Each Teammate expressly acknowledges that he/she has received, reviewed and agrees to abide by the rules and regulations and this release. Furthermore, each Teammate expressly acknowledges that activities relating to deep sea fishing are extremely dangerous and involve the risk of serious injury or death, and each Teammate hereby assumes full responsibility for the risk of bodily injury or death due to the negligence of the Releases or any other cause connected with or occurring during any Hurricane Hole Event.

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

## **Thank You to Our Sponsors**