

**1. REGISTRATION** - All boats must be registered with the Tournament Committee and entry fee paid to qualify for prizes and trophies. Any boat may be substituted but must be registered with the Tournament Committee prior to fishing. The tournament reserves the right in its sole discretion to deny entry to anyone for any reason. No entries or upgrades after 8:00 am.

**2. RULES MEETING** - At least one person from each boat should attend the Captain's Meeting for the Tournament, which is usually held on the Friday evening prior to the day of fishing on Saturday. Regardless, all participants in the tournament are responsible for knowing all Tournament Rules including any changes to the rules that may take place at the Captain's Meeting.

**3. FISHING TIME** - No lines or teasers are permitted in the water before official fishing hours. *The use of omnidirectional sonar technology will not be permitted before official fishing hours.* Official fishing hours are 8:00 a.m. until 2:00 p.m. This is a one-day billfish release/gamefish tournament scheduled for Saturday, June 11, 2022. The official time will be GPS time. Fish hooked prior to or after fishing hours are not eligible.

**4. ROD & REEL RULES** - This is a rod and reel, hook and line tournament. Double line and leader combined may not exceed 40 ft; neither of which may exceed 30 ft. The following practices are illegal in this tournament: a) use of handline or rope attached to the line or leader; b) shooting, harpooning, or lancing; and c) the transfer of any participant from one boat to another. After hook-up, only a female may fight the fish. Mate is allowed to adjust drag after the rod is passed to a female. Drones are not allowed in this tournament.

**5. REPORTING** - All billfish must be reported to TOURNAMENT HEADQUARTERS when hooked, lost, or released. Radiofrequency shall be VHF CHANNEL 71 and alternate channel 78a.

**6. BOUNDARIES** - All boats fishing in the tournament must fish between LORAN coordinates North 40275 and South 39200. All fish must also be hooked within those coordinates.

**7. FEDERAL AND STATE REGULATIONS** - All vessels and participants shall comply with North Carolina and Federal Fisheries laws and regulations regarding fishing licenses, vessel permits, fishing gear, season size limits, and bag limits. Participants shall also adhere to all Keli Wagner Lady Angler Tournament rules as contained herein.

**8. QUALIFYING BILLFISH** - All participants, fish, and boats must adhere to all State and Federal fishing regulations to qualify for prizes in this tournament. This is an all-release tournament. No billfish shall be boated. A fish is boated when any portion of the fish or gaff breaks the plane of the boat. In the event a billfish is boated, the boat will automatically be disqualified from the tournament.

**9. RELEASE POINTS** - A cash prize will be awarded to the boat that scores the most number of points. No release points will be awarded if the gaff breaks the outside vertical plane of the boat. In the event of a tie in total release points, the tie-breaker shall be the largest single gamefish (yellowfin tuna, dolphin, wahoo) by weight. If no gamefish are caught, the winner will be determined by the first boat to achieve the winning total. **In order to qualify as a release, the billfish must remain in the water (Federal Law).**

125 Release Points will be awarded:

1. For all billfish including blue marlin, white marlin, sailfish, hatchet marlin and

- spearfish and
2. When mate touches the leader or leader touches the rod tip before the fish is released and
  3. Team turns in a release form provided by the Tournament Committee attested to by the signature of the captain and mate or angler onboard the boat at the time of the release. This form may be submitted to the OFFICIAL WEIGH MASTER AT TOURNAMENT HEADQUARTERS, Hatteras Harbor Marina, or submitted electronically with the Big Rock app. Release forms must be turned in no later than 10:00 p.m. on the day the fish was released to qualify. Other than blue marlin, billfish forms may also be photographed and uploaded to the Big Rock App.

400 Release Points will be awarded for:

1. Blue Marlin if the team provides indisputable video or photo evidence to the Rules Committee. To qualify for the 400 points, teams must turn in a Release Form in person along with the SD Card, Micro SD Card, or Compact Flash Card from their camera. Forms and Media Cards can be turned in at the Official Weigh Station in Morehead City or to the Tournament Representative at the Hatteras Harbor Marina. The Media Card and Release Form must be returned in no later than 10:00 p.m. on the day the fish was released to qualify. The Media Card must show continuous video or a clear single photo of the mate touching the leader or leader touching the rod tip and clear and indisputable evidence that the fish is a blue marlin. It is the responsibility of the participants to ensure that their camera's Clock/Date is set accurately to reflect the time and date of the Release to qualify for the 400 points. All videos will become the property of the Big Rock Blue Marlin Tournament. If the rules committee is unable to see indisputable evidence that the fish is a blue marlin, the release will be scored at 125 points. The tournament will NOT allow photos or video from cellphones. The date and time stamp must be 100% accurate.

**10. DISQUALIFICATION** - A boat will be disqualified from the tournament if the boat, captain, and crew violate any rules of the tournament.

**11. GAMEFISH** - Winning gamefish will be determined by weight. In the event of a tie, the winner will be determined by the first fish weighed in. Fish must be in fresh edible condition and fit for human consumption. All gamefish must be weighed on the day they are caught. All gamefish to be weighed-in must be reported as soon as possible after 2:00 p.m. to the Committee boat. Only two gamefish per species per boat may be weighed in. Weigh Master has the right to refuse any fish. "Winner take all-dolphin" prize money will roll over if no qualifying fish is weighed. Gamefish are defined as yellowfin tuna, dolphin, and wahoo. If no qualifying gamefish are caught in Level I, the tournament will retain the money.

**12. WEIGH-IN** - All gamefish eligible for prizes must be off-loaded and weighed at the official Tournament weigh station from the boat landing the fish unless authorized by the weigh-master at the weigh station. The fish must be entered on the official entry form by the Tournament weigh-master. The same scales and weigh station will be used for all fish including those entered in the NC Billfish Series. Gamefish scales will close at 6:00 p.m. The Weigh station is located on the Morehead City Waterfront. The weighmaster has the right to refuse any fish in his sole discretion.

**13. MANDATORY HOOK REQUIREMENTS** - Non-offset circle hooks are mandatory when deploying natural bait or natural bait/artificial lures. "J" hooks are allowed on artificial lures only.

**14. PRIZE PAYOUT SCHEDULE** - Prize money checks will be made payable to the person

or entity so indicated on the registration form of the winning boat. Social Security number or Taxpayer I.D. number of the recipient must be provided on the entry form. All undisputed funds will be distributed 10 days after the tournament.

**15. PROTEST** - Any protest by any participant against the catch of another participant must be submitted in writing to the Tournament Rules Committee. No protests are allowed against the tournament. Any protest must be received by 9:00 a.m. on the day following the catch. Any member of the Rules Committee, or the weigh-master (in their sole discretion), retains the right to hold and keep any fish deemed questionable by him with respect to being qualified for any prize or cash award. If retention of the fish is refused, the fish is automatically disqualified.

**16. DISPUTE RESOLUTION** - A protest by one participant against the catch of another must be submitted in accordance with Rule 15. All other disputes, controversies, or claims of any kind arising out of or relating to the Tournament (hereinafter, "dispute" or "disputes"), including, but not limited to, all disputes concerning decisions by Tournament Officials, Boards, or Committees, must be submitted in writing to the Rules Committee no later than 6:00 p.m. on the last fishing day of the Tournament. Failure to submit any such disputes in writing by that date and time shall constitute a waiver and release of any and all such disputes. In the event of any dispute arising out of or relating to the Tournament in any way, the interested parties shall use their best efforts to settle such dispute by mutual agreement. To this effect, responsible, authorized representatives of the interest parties shall meet, consult, and negotiate with each other in good faith (with or without a third-party mediator, as they may choose) and attempt to reach a mutually satisfactory solution. In the event they do not reach such a solution within a period of five (5) days after the first notice by any party to any other of the existence of the dispute, then without waiving any other provisions in these Rules concerning the absolute discretion and finality of decisions made by the Tournament Officials, Boards, or Committees, the sole and exclusive means for resolution of any dispute shall be the procedures set forth below:

- a) The dispute shall be submitted to arbitration under the North Carolina Revised Uniform Arbitration Act, Chapter 1, Article 45C of the North Carolina General Statutes.
- b) All negotiations, mediations, and arbitration hearings shall take place in Morehead City, North Carolina, or such other places the interested parties may agree upon in writing.
- c) The arbitration shall be conducted by a single arbitrator who is a retired North Carolina state or federal judge or an attorney whose practice experience includes commercial litigation. The arbitrator must be a resident of the State of North Carolina. In the event the interested parties cannot agree upon an arbitrator, the decision shall be made by a Resident Superior Court Judge of Carteret County, North Carolina.
- d) Prior to any arbitration hearing, limited discovery shall be permitted for the purpose of obtaining production of documents and taking depositions. All discovery shall be governed by the North Carolina Rules of Civil Procedure. All issues regarding discovery requests shall be decided by the arbitrator. All discovery shall be completed within 90 days after the selection of the arbitrator; provided, however, that the arbitrator shall have the authority to extend or reduce the time for discovery in a manner consistent with a general desire for expedited resolution of the dispute.
- e) All fees and expenses for the arbitration shall be borne by the parties equally. However, each party shall bear the expense of said party's own counsel, experts, witnesses, and preparation and presentation of proofs. Only in the case of extreme abuse of the procedure may the arbitrator reallocate such costs and expenses among the parties.
- f) Any arbitral award may be enforced by an action in the Superior Court of Carteret

County.

The terms and conditions of this agreement shall be construed, interpreted, and enforced under the laws and judicial decisions of the State of North Carolina, notwithstanding any principles of conflicts of law. In the event, any part of this Agreement shall be declared illegal, invalid, or void, such declaration shall not affect the validity of any of the other terms or provisions of this document.

**17. WEIGHT ALTERATION** - Attempted weight alteration of any gamefish will automatically disqualify the boat from the tournament. IGFA rules apply regarding mutilated fish. The Rules Committee reserves the right to cut open anyfish for inspection of suspected weight-altering efforts such as inserted weights, ice, water, etc.

**18. POLYGRAPH** - Polygraph Tests maybe administered to Captain, Mates, and others as deemed necessary by tournament officials. Participants must make themselves available for polygraph testing in Carteret County within 24 hours following notice from Tournament Officials. Individuals that are required to take the polygraph test must not consume alcohol or any controlled substance within eight hours prior to the test. A participant's refusal to take a polygraph test or failure to answer test questions in a manner satisfactory to Tournament Officials, in their sole discretion, may result in disqualification. By entering the tournament, participants consent to the admissibility of polygraph results in any dispute or proceeding arising out of the tournament.

**19. WITHDRAWAL FROM TOURNAMENT**

- No fees will be refunded.

**20. REFUNDS** - *In the event that no qualifying fish are caught, the prize money will be retained by the tournament.*

**21. VIOLATION OF RULES** - Any boat violating any of these Tournament Rules or any boat containing a participant violating any of these Tournament Rules is subject to disqualification for the Tournament (unless another sanction for a particular violation is expressly set forth herein). By participating in the Tournament, all participants acknowledge that all Tournament Rules are material and that disqualification is permitted and appropriated sanction for any violation of any Tournament Rules. Decisions regarding the interpretation of Rules, violation of Rules, penalties, and the suspension of any Rules or penalties will be made by Rules Committee and/or Board of Directors in their sole discretion. All decisions by the Rules Committee and or Board of Directors are final and are not subject to further challenge by participants.