

2023 Wrightsville Beach Sailfish Tournament Official Rules

- 1) Registration – All participating boats must be registered with tournament headquarters and all entry fees paid to qualify for prizes. Entry fees are to be paid via cash or check only. The tournament and its committee reserve the right, in its sole discretion, to deny entry to anyone for any reason. No entries or upgrades will be accepted after 8:00AM October 20th 2023.
- 2) Substitution – Any registered boat may be substituted during the fishing days, but the substituted boat must be registered with the tournament committee prior to fishing. Registration and substitution forms are available at Intracoastal Angler or via email.
- 3) Rules and Captain’s Meeting – At least one member from each participating boat is responsible for knowing all tournament rules and is highly encouraged to attend the captain’s meeting, as changes or amendments to the rules may be made at the captain’s meeting.
- 4) Fishing Days/Times – Fishing time will be 8:00AM-3:00PM GPS time from Friday, October 20th, thru Saturday, October 28th. No lines, teasers or sonar technology may be used prior to 8:00AM or after 3:00PM each day. Fishing days for each registered boat shall be any two of the nine total days of the tournament (captain’s choice). Each participating vessel **must declare their fishing day to the tournament committee by 7:00AM of the day of fishing using the provided declaration form** via email or text. Any boat not declaring their fishing day will not have any fish or releases counted and will be assumed to be laying. Laydays are not required to be reported. No participating boat may fish more than 2 days in the tournament.
- 5) Rod & Reel Rules – This is a rod & reel, hook and line tournament only. Double-line and leader total may not exceed 40 feet with neither individual section exceeding 30 feet. The use of handlines, ropes, shooting, harpooning, lancing, drones, or any practice other than traditional rod and reel use are illegal and will result in disqualification from the tournament. No participant is allowed to transfer from one boat to another for aid in landing or releasing a fish.
- 6) Boundaries – All participating boats must fish between Loran coordinates 39400 North and 39025 South; all fish must be hooked within these coordinates during fishing hours. There is no East/West boundary.
- 7) Hook and Tackle Requirements – **Non-offset circle hooks are MANDATORY** when using any natural or live bait – no exceptions. “J”-style hooks are only allowed with artificial lures/hard baits.
- 8) Reporting/Weigh-In – All billfish must be reported to the committee boat via VHF Channel 80 when hooked, lost and/or released during fishing hours. In the event of a fishing day with no committee boat, each participant is responsible for recording their own releases, which must match the time stamped release media (Rule 11). Any fish hooked outside of the fishing hours are not eligible to be weighed or counted towards release points. All eligible gamefish are to be weighed at Intracoastal Angler. Scales are open from 7:00AM-12:00PM (noon) the following day of fishing, with the exception of the final Saturday when scales are open 3:00PM-7:00PM. Fish may be transported via vehicle to the weigh station by a participating boat member. Weighmaster reserves all rights and may refuse any fish at their sole discretion.
- 9) Reporting/Weigh-In Clause – If a participating boat decides to fish two days in a row, they must report all release information (Rule 11) and weigh all gamefish by 12:00 Noon to tournament headquarters the day following their second fishing day. Boats fishing two days in a row **still must declare they are fishing the next day** to tournament headquarters by 7:00AM of their second fishing day.
- 10) Gamefish – Prizes to be awarded for Wahoo and Tuna will be determined by weight. Yellowfin and Blackfin tuna are both eligible to be weighed, but each will count towards the same single tuna category. In the event of a tie where two fish weigh the same, time will be the tiebreaker with the first of the two fish weighed being declared the winner. All gamefish must be in fresh, edible condition fit for human consumption and adhere to state and federal regulations.

11) Billfish Release – This is a total points, release only tournament. All billfish must be released to obtain points. No release points will be awarded if the gaff breaks the outer vertical plane of the participating boat. All qualifying releases require the billfish to remain in the water at all times. Any billfish boated or attempting to be boated will not be counted.

- a. 100 Release Points will be awarded for all sailfish released meeting the following criteria:
 - i. Verified release of sailfish with time-stamped video or digital photograph showing date, time, leader in mate's hand or inside the rod tip, the assigned day's tournament marker (found in the registration packet), and the identifiable species in one single picture or continuous video segment.
 - ii. Team must turn in a release form provided by the tournament committee attested to by signature of the captain and mate or angler on board at time of release.
 - iii. Team must submit all materials to the tournament headquarters by 12:00PM (noon) the following day of the boat's declared fishing day, with the exception of the final Saturday of fishing, where materials must be provided by 7:00PM (see rules 8 & 9).
- b. 100 Release Points will be awarded for all white marlin, blue marlin, and spearfish meeting the following criteria:
 - i. Verified release of identifiable species with time-stamped video or digital photograph showing date, time, leader in mate's hand or inside the rod tip, the assigned day's tournament marker (found in the registration packet), and the identifiable species in one single picture or continuous video segment.
 - ii. Team must turn in a release form provided by the tournament committee attested to by signature of the captain and mate or angler on board at time of release.
 - iii. Team must submit all materials to the tournament headquarters by 12:00PM (noon) the following day of the boat's declared fishing day, with the exception of the final Saturday of fishing, where materials must be provided by 7:00PM (see rules 8 & 9).

In the event of a tie, the first boat to achieve the winning point total will be declared the winner. Indisputable video/picture evidence proving the criteria outlined above must be provided to the tournament committee in the specified time frame. It is the participating team's responsibility to ensure the camera or video recorder's clock/date is set properly to reflect that of the release. Tournament committee reserves all rights to refuse a release for points if indisputable evidence is not provided proving the criteria outlined above.

- 12) Daily Markers – Each boat will be responsible for using the correct daily marker provided in their registration packet. There is a specific marker for each day of the tournament as indicated by the date on each provided marker.
- 13) Federal/State Regulations – All participating boats must comply with all North Carolina and Federal Fisheries laws and regulations in regards to licensing, permits, fishing gear, season size limits and bag limits, in addition to the rules outlined by the tournament committee.

- 14) Prize Payout –Prize money will be made payable to the person/entity so indicated on the registration form of the winning boat. SSN or TIN must be provided on the registration form to receive prize money. All undisputed funds will be mailed to the provided address on form after all checks have been cleared by the bank. 10% of all entry fee monies will be retained by the tournament directly for donation to charity. 90% Payout of entry fees within each level as per the following:
- a. Level 1 Billfish Release – 1st 60%; 2nd 25%; 3rd 15%.
 - b. Level 2 Outboard Only Billfish Release – 1st 60%; 2nd 25%; 3rd 15%.
 - c. Level 3 Billfish Release – 1st 80%; 2nd 20%.
 - d. Level 4 Daily (Single Best Day Billfish Releases) – Winner take all
 - e. Level 5 Gamefish – Heaviest Tuna 50%; Heaviest Wahoo 50%.
 - f. Level 6 High Roller Billfish Release – Winner take all
- All participants MUST enter Level 1 or 2 to participate in Levels 3-6. Payout schedules for Levels 3-6 include ALL participants regardless of Level 1 or 2 entry (not split by boat type).
- 15) Protest/Weight Altercation – Any protest by any participant against another must be provided to the tournament committee in writing by Saturday, October 28th, 7:00PM. No protests are allowed against the tournament. The tournament committee and weighmaster reserve the right, in their sole discretion, to hold and keep any fish deemed questionable with respect to being qualified for any prize/award. If retention of fish in question is denied, the fish will be disqualified. Rules committee and weighmaster reserve the right to cut open and inspect any fish. Attempted weight altercation of any fish will automatically disqualify the boat/team from the tournament in its entirety. IGFA rules apply in regards to a mutilated fish.
- 16) Dispute Resolution – All disputes/protests not outlined above must be submitted in writing to the tournament committee prior to 6:00PM on the last fishing day. Failure to submit any such dispute in writing by this time frame shall constitute a waiver and release of any and all such disputes. If a dispute relating to the tournament arises, the interested parties shall use their best efforts to resolve said dispute via mutual agreement. In such an event, authorized representatives of each party shall meet and negotiate with one another with or without the presence of a third-party mediator at their choice in an attempt to reach a mutually acceptable solution. If no such solution can be met within a week from the date of the written dispute, such dispute shall go to arbitration, in Wilmington NC only by a judge or attorney of commercial litigation. All fees and expenses of such arbitration shall be split by the parties equally, with exception to each party's own counsel, experts and witnesses.
- 17) Polygraph – Polygraph tests may be administered to captains, mates and others as deemed necessary by the tournament committee. By signing the registration form, all team participants agree to the final decision of said polygraph test. Refusal to submit to a polygraph will result in automatic disqualification from the tournament and its prizes.
- 18) Withdrawal – Withdrawals are permitted until 8:00AM Friday, October 20th. 90% of entry fees paid will be refunded after completion of the tournament upon all checks clearing the bank. Fees will be mailed to the address on the registration form.
- 19) Violation of Rules – Any boat or participant breaching or deemed to violate any of the tournament rules shall be disqualified. By signing the registration form and participating in the tournament, all participants acknowledge that they agree to and understand all tournament rules outlined within. Decisions made by the tournament committee are final and not subject to challenge by tournament participants.