

2026 Blue Water Open Tournament Rules

DO NOT PROCEED TO WEIGH-IN UNTIL YOUR BOAT NUMBER IS CALLED!

NO RAFTING PERMITTED! Everyone must stay in their boat!

1. **BOAT NUMBER:** Your boat number will be printed on a laminated sheet and given to you at registration. This is how you will be identified by tournament staff. **REMEMBER THIS NUMBER AND BE PREPARED TO SHOW THE LAMINATED SHEET UPON REQUEST.**
2. **All fishing is subject to State and Federal Fishing Rules & Regulations.** This is a rod & reel event. **All fish must be legally caught. Calcuttas are prohibited.**
3. **No Formal Check-Out.** Captains may leave from any Inlet. (See #6 for Check-In rules)
4. **FISHING: NO LINES IN THE WATER BEFORE 6:00AM.** After entering the water & until your fish are weighed, you may not make landfall or transfer fish to another boat. In the event of a tie, the first boat to check in with the check-in boat will be the tiebreaker.
5. **Boat Breakdowns:** A boat may be towed to the weigh-in. The 5:00PM final check-in still applies.
6. **Check-In 2:00PM – 5:00PM:** (No late check-ins accepted.) After fishing, boats must proceed directly by water without any land stops to the check-in boat located near ICW Marker 66 in Sebastian. **You are NOT checked in until you receive confirmation from the check-in boat.**
7. **Weigh-In:** Tournament staff will direct you to the dock designed for weigh-in. Once at the designated dock, do NOT remove your fish from the boat for weigh-in until directed by BWO staff.
8. **FISH SIZE TO BE ELIGIBLE FOR PRIZE MONEY:** All fish in all categories is a 10Lb minimum. Please support conservation and release under weight fish.
9. **All fish may be subject to a freshness test by any and all appropriate means.** Captains are responsible for keeping their catch properly iced & fresh. Fish failing the exam may be disqualified at the discretion of the Rules Committee. Mutilated fish may also be disqualified at the discretion of the Rules Committee.
10. **WEATHER:** If a late cancellation becomes necessary, it will be announced on CH 72 immediately following the NOAA Saturday 4:30 AM update & on website www.bluewateropen.com. Saturday, June 6th is the weather date. No refunds if Tournament is canceled.
11. **Protests:** Must be in writing; include a \$200.00 cash deposit and notice given within 10 minutes of the last fish weighed. The deposit will be refunded if the protest is upheld.
12. **DISQUALIFICATION; TACKLE REMOVAL:** Any attempts to artificially increase the weight of fish (e.g., ice, weights, etc.) will result in immediate disqualification and a permanent ban from all future BWO competitions. You are responsible for removing all tackle from the fish you submit for weigh-in BEFORE the fish leaves the boat.
13. **Lady Angler & Junior Angler:** Catch must be the sole effort of the Lady or Junior Angler until a mate can handle the leader. Junior Angler is 12 years of age and younger. Fish entered under Lady or Junior Angler must be declared before being weighed, and may compete for other cash prizes.
14. **Communication: Tournament Channel is VHF CH72**
15. **Decisions of BWO Rules Committee regarding ALL tournament matters are final. This includes the enactment, amendment, and enforcement of tournament rules, the determination of fish species, and the declaration of winners.**

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