



Invitational Billfish Tournament 2019

Tournament Rules & Guidelines

Bohicket Invitational General Rules:

1. State, Federal, SC Governor's Cup Billfishing Series & IGFA rules shall apply to this tournament and are made a part of these rules and guidelines. Participants are encouraged to review these International Angling Rules prior to the start of fishing. In addition, all Federal and South Carolina Game Laws shall apply except where noted. After a fish strikes, the rod may be passed to one angler one time as soon as possible. All anglers may have the rod passed one time to them. After the rod has been passed, only the angler is allowed to touch the rod/reel/mainline. Once the leader is brought within the grasp of the crew member or is wound to the rod tip, then the angler may have assistance to catch and release or boat the fish. Series points will accrue towards Series awards for these fish. Boats may provide assistance to other boats for boating fish. **Violations of state or federal law will lead to disqualification of all fish caught on that fishing day and the day will be counted as an eligible fish day for the tournament.**
2. The tournament fishing days are Thursday, May 9 through Saturday, May 11. Boats may compete a maximum of two out of the three fishing days. If all three days are non-fishable then Sunday, May 12 will become a fish day. One day of fishing constitutes a tournament. Any day a boat leaves the dock will be considered a fishing day, unless withdrawal and/or a lay day is communicated to tournament staff before 8am that same day.
3. VHF channel 71 shall be the primary radio channel during this tournament. In addition, an alternate VHF channel will be chosen at the captain's meeting. The primary channel is to be reserved for all official tournament announcements and angler reports of hookups, releases and boated fish meeting minimum requirements.
4. Fishing hours are from 8am-3pm. Overnight fishing is not permitted. No fishing, lines or teasers in the water before 8am or after 3pm during tournament fishing days.
5. Scales will be open from 3pm-7pm for each fishing day. You must be in line to weigh your catch by 7pm for it to qualify. Any exceptions are at the discretion of the Tournament Committee.
6. All fish weighed must be accompanied to the scales by the angler who caught the fish.
7. Any landed fish must be weighed in during the weigh-in time. If a vessel has serious mechanical issues or medical problems, they must notify the Committee Boat and Tournament Committee and an extension may be granted. All others must meet scale closing times. Weighmaster will be as flexible as possible in allowing eligible fish to be weighed when an exception has been granted.
8. All fish must arrive at the marina aboard the boat on which they were caught, unless special permission is granted by the Tournament Committee.
9. In the event of a fish hook-up prior to close of fishing, the fish may be fought to completion outside of tournament fishing hours, provided the Committee Boat has been notified.

10. It is the captain's discretion to fish on any given day; however, if Small Craft Advisories are posted on local NOAA Weather Radio at 6am, that day will not be considered a tournament fishing day. *In consideration for the safety of all participants, all series tournaments have adopted the use of a posted NOAA Weather Service "Small Craft Advisory" (Winds 25-33 knots and/or seas 6 feet or higher) to cancel that day's fishing. The safety of the participating vessel is ultimately the responsibility of the captain.*

11. The eligible billfish species in this tournament are Sailfish, White Marlin, Spearfish and Blue Marlin. Other eligible species are Dolphin, Wahoo and Tuna. Tuna are only eligible if caught aboard a boat which has a current Federal Tuna Permit.

12. There are no territorial limits set for this tournament.

13. **Affidavits and pictures must be turned in to DNR staff no later than an hour after scales close on the day the fish was caught.** A designated DNR check station may be located at the host marina to receive/qualify affidavits, photos and videos. If fishing out of an alternate marina, affidavits, photos and videos must be delivered to DNR staff or may be emailed to Amy Dukes at DukesA@dnr.sc.gov. No call-ins or text messages will be accepted. In the event of a medical emergency or engine trouble, affidavits and pictures may be turned into DNR staff the next day.

14. Only a registered boat's owner or captain may protest any fish entered in the tournament. All protests must be submitted in writing to the Tournament Committee on the day of the protested catch no later than one hour after scales close. The Tournament Committee will convene to consider a protest. The ruling of this Committee is final. All protests must be accompanied by a nonrefundable fee of \$1,000. The individual(s) who submit any protest must provide indisputable evidence to prove the infraction.

15. Tournament participants enter at their own risk. All sponsors, officials, committee members and all persons connected with the tournament shall be exempt from liability for loss, damage, negligence, harm or injury suffered by participant, entrant sport fisherman, his companions, boat captain, vessels and equipment which may occur during the tournament.

16. Any rule changes or additions at the Captain's Meeting will take precedence over these printed rules.

17. The official tournament judges are the Tournament Committee. Violation of the tournament rules will subject the boat or angler to disqualification from the tournament without a refund.

18. In the event your boat breaks down, the Tournament Rules Committee may allow you a substitution of boat provided the originally registered boat has not entered any fishing lines into the water.

Billfish Rules:

1. Bohicket Marina encourages all participants to release their billfish. The point system for this tournament is in keeping with the SC Governor's Cup Billfishing Series standards. In the interest of promoting conservation, White Marlin, Spearfish and Sailfish are catch and release only.

The use of 130 lb class line is allowed.

Points for billfish:

Blue Marlin release	600 Points
White Marlin/ Spearfish	300 Points
Sailfish	200 Points

2. To encourage catch and release fishing, a minimum size has been set for Blue Marlin, 105" measured in a curved line along the body from the tip of the lower jaw to the fork of the tail. To qualify for catch and release points, a billfish must be fought to the boat according to Series guidelines. (*Note: The Blue Marlin minimum exceeds the Federally-mandated minimum by 6 inches and under Federal regulations, no Blue Marlin may be brought on board a boat under 99" in length.*)

A billfish is considered caught and points will be awarded when all the following has occurred:

1. The leader is grasped by the crew or the leader is wound to the rod tip (a leader may be no longer than 30 feet).
 2. The billfish is positively identified to species through digital photo/videography. If species can not be determined, yet is identified as a billfish, 200 points will be awarded.
 3. The billfish is released in a healthy condition and the billfish is no longer attached to the boat/line. Boats should attempt to remove the hook or to sever the leader as close as possible to the hook, without removing the billfish from the water.
3. Registered anglers will have the option of boating only Blue Marlin over the course of the event, providing the billfish meets or exceeds the prescribed tournament minimum length requirement (105"). Boats will earn one point per pound and fraction of a pound for the SINGLE heaviest landed Blue Marlin weighed. A billfish may not be brought into the boat unless it is to be brought to the dock for weigh-in. A penalty of 600 points will be assessed against a boat for each Blue Marlin brought to the dock not meeting the minimum SC Governor's Cup Series size requirements.
4. Billfish may not be brought into the boat unless it is to be brought to the dock for weighing. A penalty of 600 points will be assessed against a boat for each billfish if it is determined that the billfish was boated and subsequently released. Any White Marlin, Spearfish or Sailfish boated will be disqualified. All catch and release efforts must be done outside of the boat.
5. All landed fish are to be iced or refrigerated until such time as the edible tissue can be processed and the carcass disposed of. Boats landing Blue Marlin will have a maximum of three hours to complete this task after the billfish is released by the Series Staff.
6. Boat found guilty of wanton waste will be disqualified.
7. Any billfish gaffed, harpooned or otherwise injured in an attempt to boat the fish will not qualify for catch and release points. Additionally, if the gaff crosses the vertical plane of the boat in an attempt to land a Blue Marlin yet it is unsuccessful, the boat will not qualify for catch and release points.
8. For boats to qualify for any billfish points, every person aboard the boat 18 years of age or older must sign an official Governor's Cup Released/Tagged and Released Billfish Affidavit or Landed Billfish Affidavit swearing that all rules and regulations were observed in reference to the described fish. Failure of any person to sign the affidavit, for any reason, disqualifies the fish. In addition, all released billfish must be clearly digitally photographed or videoed (preferably including visible dorsal fin) at time of release by each boat using a digital/video camera provided by the boat. The image must include a date and time stamp that corresponds to the date and time of release recorded by the designated tournament committee boats. All photographs and videos must be submitted on a removable storage device.
9. Boat points are awarded at the time of release or landing. Ties between points are broken by the time of release/landing. The date of the release/landing is based on the boats fishing day (day 1 or 2) as opposed to the tournament fishing day (day 1-2-3).
10. A Committee Boat must be notified on the radio immediately after a registered angler hooks-up and releases, or boats a billfish. Release and boated times will serve as a tie-breaker. The tournament Committee Boat will acknowledge the report over the airways and keep a log of all hook-ups, losses, tag and releases and boated fish. Boats which can not make radio contact with the Committee Boat for any reason should contact another boat for a relay. Radio failure will not disqualify a participant. Those boats not notifying a committee boat will be given the latest time as a release time.
11. Prizes will be awarded to the boat accumulating the most points during the competition. In the event of an exact tie, the boat accumulating the most points *first* will be the winner.

Meat Fish Rules:

1. Meat fish do not need to be reported to the Committee Boat.

2. Prizes will be awarded for the heaviest eligible meat fish species measured to the nearest tenth of a pound. Eligible species include Dolphin, Wahoo and Tuna. Eligible species of Tuna include, Yellowfin, Bluefin, Blackfin and Bigeye. The tournament encourages self-imposed “bag limits” and the release of smaller meat fish. *(Note: Size or creel limits will automatically be changed in SC Governor's Cup Billfishing Series tournaments to reflect changes in Federal or State laws.)*

- Creel limits for Dolphin are 10 per angler per day with a limit of 60 per boat per day, with a minimum size limit of 20 inches fork length.
- Creel limits for Yellowfin Tuna are 3 per angler per day with a minimum legal size of 27 inches curved body for length. See current Federal size and creel limits for other Tuna species.
- Creel limit for Wahoo is 2 per person per day.

3. Awards will also be given to 1st, 2nd and 3rd place Youth and Lady Anglers. The tournament awards for Youth and Lady Anglers will be awarded for the heaviest Dolphin, Wahoo or Tuna, if, no Youth or Lady Angler has landed or caught and released a legal billfish. Billfish caught by Youth or Lady Anglers will earn regular Series points for the species.

Youth Anglers:

Any angler who has not passed his/ her 16th birthday by April 1, 2019 may fish in the youth angler division. Any angler in this category is only fishing in this category (i.e. an angler that is female and under sixteen years of age on April 1st of the current tournament year is a Youth Angler, not a Lady Angler). It is the responsibility of the angler to identify a catch as eligible for the Youth Angler award.