

Bahamas Billfish Championship Angling Rules

All anglers and crewmembers are expected to be familiar with the IGFA Salt Water Angling Rules. The angler must hook, fight and bring the fish to gaff or the point of release unaided by any other person. No one other than the angler may touch the rod. IGFA Salt Water Angling Rules apply at all Bahamas Billfish Championship tournaments with the following exceptions:

- ◆ All boats participating in the Bahamas Billfish Championship tournaments must have a valid Bahamas Fishing Permit with a Bahamas Fisheries sticker affixed thereto.
- ◆ All boats participating in the Bahamas Billfish Championship tournaments will depart from and fish within a 60-mile radius of the host resort in Bahamian waters.
- ◆ Teams fishing the Bahamas Billfish Championship may not include any individual who has been paid to be a captain or crew, fish a rod, feed fish and/or bring a fish to the boat in the last three (3) years.
- ◆ The Committee Boat monitors VHF channel 71 and Bahamian telephones (phone numbers announced at each tournament).
- ◆ A maximum of six rods per boat may be fished.
- ◆ Maximum line strength shall not exceed that of manufacturer's stated, 100-pound (45.36 kg.) test. The tournament committee reserves the right to take line samples for testing or request labels from line spools. No bonus points will be awarded for using line lighter than 100-pound test.
- ◆ No live bait permitted. Should a non-qualifying species take a lure and/or bait, and subsequently be itself taken by a billfish, the hook-up would not be considered as using "live bait." **The use of non-offset circle hooks is optional.**
- ◆ Fish must be hooked, fought and, if boated, off loaded at the tournament's designated weigh station on the same boat.
- ◆ Lines in the water at 8:00 am – Lines out of the water at 4:00 on all fishing days. No early weigh-ins.
- ◆ An angler may fight a fish until it is lost, released or boated so long as it was hooked and reported to the Committee Boat prior to "lines out of the water." A confirmed hook-up that results in a boated fish on the last day of the tournament must be brought to the weigh station by twelve midnight. A billfish caught after 12:00 midnight will count as a release or capture for the day it was hooked-up. A 'Billfish Capture Affidavit' must be completed and presented to the Weigh Master at the time the fish is weighed.
- ◆ To qualify as a "released fish" the leader must be brought within the grasp of the mate or the end of the leader must be wound to the rod tip. A 'Billfish Release Affidavit' must be completed for each billfish released and presented to the Committee Boat between the hours of 5:00 pm and 7:00 pm on the same day the fish is caught. These hours can be extended if a team was fighting a fish and reported to the Committee Boat prior to "lines out of the water."
- ◆ The 'Billfish Release Affidavit' must be accompanied by a time and date-stamped digital image of the fish (still image or video) that clearly shows the billfish species reported and the colored ribbon for that day. The billfish must be photographed within thirty (30) feet (leader length) from the boat. The digital image verifies the Affidavit; therefore, no points will be awarded if the species shown in the digital image does not match the species reported on the Affidavit. The time stamp of the digital image is the official release time and must be within (plus or minus) fifteen (15) minutes of the time reported by radio to the Committee Boat.
- ◆ Release digital images and affidavits must be presented to the Committee Boat at the designated tournament location after the vessel on which the fish was released and said digital images were taken returns to the host marina.
- ◆ Anyone that submits a billfish capture or release affidavit understands that attesting to a false catch will constitute aiding and abetting an act of fraud.
- ◆ Each individual tournament's rules committee is composed of at least three Bahamas Billfish Championship anglers or Steering Committee Members.
- ◆ Protests must be filed in writing and presented to the Committee Boat prior to 7:00 pm on the same day as the alleged violation.
- ◆ Flagrant disregard for Bahamas Billfish Championship rules will result in disqualification of the angler and/or team and removal from the tournament with no refund of monies paid.

Points & Scoring

Points are awarded on a basis of 100 points for released sailfish, 200 points for released white marlin or spearfish, 600 points for released blue marlin, and *one point per pound* for eligible blue marlin boated in excess of the benchmark minimum length. The benchmark minimum length for blue marlin is 115 inches as measured from the tip of the lower jaw to the fork of the tail. The benchmark at each tournament remains 115 inches until two (2) fish over 115 inches have been weighed in that tournament. The following day's benchmark minimum will then be the length of the longest fish. When a fish exceeding the length of the new benchmark is boated, the benchmark will increase to the length of the longest fish for the following day.

The top three teams at each 2012 Bahamas Billfish Championship tournament will receive bonus points as follows:

1st Place – Highest point total + 600 bonus points

2nd Place – 2nd highest point total + 500 bonus points

3rd Place – 3rd highest point total + 400 bonus points

GRAND SLAM BONUS – 700 bonus points will be awarded to a team catching a sailfish, white marlin (or spearfish) and blue marlin in one (1) day during the tournament. At the conclusion of the tournament, the Grand Slam Bonus points are added to the team's overall score for that tournament. The Grand Slam Bonus points are not considered in the team's daily point total.

No fish will be "weighed-in" that does not meet the benchmark minimum length. Should a fish be boated and/or brought to the dock which measures less than the benchmark minimum length, the Team will be penalized 600 points.

One hundred (100) points are awarded as participation points to each team for each tournament fished during the series. In the event of a tie in total points between two or more teams for the same award, the team that first achieved the point total shall be the winner.