

# Wine, Women & Fishing Ladies-Only Catch and Release Billfish Tournament

## 2023 TOURNAMENT RULES

Rules are subject to change. Final instructions are given at the Captain's Meeting Saturday, August 19.

All participants must adhere to Federal and State regulations.

### **1. Rules Acceptance**

It is the responsibility of the captain, crew and anglers to understand and abide by the Tournament's rules, including any special instructions or changes that may be announced during the Captain's Meeting. The Captain's Meeting takes place Saturday, August 19 at 7:00pm. At least one representative from each team must be present.

### **2. Permits & Licenses**

Registered boats and anglers must comply with all Federal and State laws regarding fishing licenses, size limits, bag limits and any other regulations that may apply. For information regarding Federal HMS Permits refer to [www.NMFSpermits.com](http://www.NMFSpermits.com) or call 888-872-8862. For information regarding Virginia state saltwater fishing licenses refer to [www.mrc.state.va.us/mrc-permits.shtml](http://www.mrc.state.va.us/mrc-permits.shtml) or call 800-986-2628. If you wish to be eligible for a Virginia Citation, you must have a Virginia Saltwater Fishing License. For information regarding the Virginia Citation program call 757-491-5160 or visit [www.mrc.state.va.us/vswft/index.shtml](http://www.mrc.state.va.us/vswft/index.shtml).

### **3. Fishing Dates and Times**

Tournament fishing day is Sunday August 20. Fishing hours are 8:30am to 3:00pm. No lines or teasers may be in the water before the official start or after the official end of tournament fishing. Billfish hooked and reported to the Committee Boat prior to lines out may be fought until caught or released. Any team wishing to weigh a fish must be within Rudee Inlet by 6:45pm.

### **4. Tournament Communications**

The channels being monitored during the tournament will be announced by Tournament Officials at the Captains' Meeting.

### **5. Official Clock**

Official tournament time is continuous GPS time and starts at 8:30am August 20. Times are recorded to the full minute.

### **6. Weather and Cancellation Policy**

Weather related decisions are at the sole discretion of each Captain. The Tournament Committee does not declare a "weather" day in the event of severe weather conditions.

### **7. Boundaries**

Boundaries are 100 nautical miles from the Rudee Inlet Sea Buoy. Fish must be hooked within these boundaries, but may be fought outside of the boundaries once hooked.

## 8. Equipment and Angling Rules

IGFA Saltwater Equipment and Angling rules apply with the exception of any special instructions given in these rules, and any instructions or changes that may be given during the Captain's Meeting. Copies of IGFA rules are available during Registration.

The WWF is a Boat tournament—any member of the crew may set the hook, but a registered angler must then fight the fish unassisted. Unconventional non-trolling techniques are strictly prohibited. No backing into schools, casting, use of casting tackle, use of live bait or live bait teasers.

## 9. Mechanical Failures

Fish must be brought to the scales on the boat on which they were caught. Should a situation arise where a boat cannot make it back by the deadline, the fish and angler with scorecards may be transferred to another tournament boat, after consulting with WWF Officials.

If a boat becomes completely disabled, another boat may be substituted. Substitute boats must be registered with the Tournament Director prior to fishing.

## 10. Reporting Billfish and Catch Forms

The Catch Form is the Team's record of fish hooked and subsequently released, tagged, lost or boated. Affirmations are compared to the Committee Boat radio logs for verification. Fish should be recorded as caught to ensure accuracy. If you caught a fish you must turn in a Catch Form. Catch Forms are distributed during Registration.

As soon as you release or boat a billfish, call a Committee Boat and report Boat Name, Species, and Status (Released or Boated). In addition, billfish hooked within the last hour of fishing, and billfish still being fought at lines out must be reported to a Committee Boat. If a Committee Boat cannot be raised, a verifiable report must be given to another tournament boat and the boat name noted on the Catch Form. Committee Boats are announced during the Captain's Meeting.

*Lost billfish should not be reported to a Committee Boat but should be recorded on the Catch Form for statistical purposes. The same applies to recording the time the billfish was hooked and whether it was tagged.*

Before turning in your Catch Form be sure it's filled in. If you used a Circle Hook place a checkmark under the Circle Hook column.

The boat Captain and all anglers who caught billfish and meat fish must print their name and sign the Catch Form indicating they affirm the information as recorded. Do not turn in a Catch Form if no fish are caught.

**Turn in the Catch Form to the Scoring Table by 7:00pm or your team will not be considered for tournament placement.**

## 11. Official Billfish Release

A billfish is considered officially released when the leader connection is wound to the tip of the rod, or the mate or other crew member touches the leader. Tagging is not required for tournament points, but is encouraged if the billfish is under control and the tag can be placed without injury to the fish. If a gaff breaks the plane of the cockpit covering boards, the team has committed to a capture and the billfish will

not count as a release whether or not it is subsequently captured.

## **12. Weighing Fish**

All fish must be weighed at the official Weigh Station at Southside Marina at Rudee Inlet. The scales are open until 7:00pm.

- Boats are lined up to weigh in the order in which they arrive.
- Fish must arrive at the dock in edible condition.
- Mutilated fish are not weighed. In this case, "mutilation" is defined as any damage that would impair the fighting ability of the fish.
- All fish are weighed to the tenth of a pound.
- If anyone wishes to have a fish re-weighed, it must be done while the fish is still hanging.
- The angler must remain with the fish throughout the weigh-in process, and before leaving the scales must sign the Weigh-In form.

The Weighmaster and WWF Officials reserve the right to refuse to weigh any fish that does not meet tournament requirements.

## **13. Scoring**

Scoring closes Sunday at 7:00pm. Catch Forms must be filled in completely and signed by the boat captain, all anglers who caught billfish and the observer if one was assigned. Weigh-In forms must be signed by both the Weighmaster and a member of the team. The location of the Scoring Table is announced at the Captain's Meeting.

## **14. Breaking Ties**

Ties between the weight of two or more fish are broken by the time the fish was weighed. Ties between Release Points are broken by the time of release. The Rules Committee may consult Committee Boat Logs to reach decisions on release time or sequence of releases.

## **15. Protests**

Registered participants may submit a protest against any fish entered. Protests must be submitted in writing to the Tournament Director by 8:00pm on Sunday, August 20. The Rules Committee at their discretion may use a polygraph examination to reach a decision. All participants agree to the final decision of the Rules Committee.