

NSU SCHOLARSHIP TOURNAMENT RULES

Halmos College of Natural Sciences and Oceanography, Nova Southeastern University
November 16-18, 2017

1. Tournament Rules:

A. General Rules: International Game Fish Association (IGFA) Rules shall apply to the Nova Southeastern University (NSU) Scholarship Fishing Tournament (the Tournament), except where they are inconsistent with the rules that follow, in which case these Tournament rules shall apply. Anglers, crews, and captains are expected to be familiar with the IGFA Rules. To count for points, a registered angler must hook, fight, and bring the fish to the vessel unaided by any other person. No one other than the angler may touch the rod prior to the fish counting as a release or capture.

B. Licensing: All registered anglers and vessels must comply with all applicable U.S. federal and Florida laws regarding fishing licenses, permits, size limits, bag limits, etc. Infractions of any of these rules will result in disqualification. All anglers, regardless of participating in the Offshore or Backcountry Division of the Tournament, must also have a valid Florida saltwater fishing license that can be obtained at <http://www.myfwc.com>.

C. Weighmaster: The Tournament committee will appoint an official Weighmaster, who will oversee all activities at the central weigh-in location. The weigh-in location will be at Ocean Reef harbor. The Weighmaster's decision on individual fish weights and species identifications is final.

2. Communications: The official VHF channel for both the Offshore and Backcountry Divisions of the Tournament shall be channel 78; the alternate channel will be 74. The primary VHF channel shall be reserved for official Tournament announcements and participant reports of catches and releases to the Committee Boat. The alternate channel should be used for all other communications between Tournament participants. The Weighmaster will also provide a cellphone number at the Captain's Meeting that can be used if needed. Radio relays by other tournament vessels are highly encouraged if radio conditions deteriorate.

3. Tournament Rules for each division:

A. Offshore Division Rules:

1. *Permit:* The NOAA National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) Highly Migratory Species (HMS) Angling Permit can be purchased at <http://www.nmfspermits.com> or by phone at 888-872-8862. In accordance with federal fisheries regulations, the results of the Offshore Division of the Tournament will be reported directly to NMFS; registered vessels should therefore not report their catches during the Tournament. A photocopy of the NMFS HMS Angling Permit shall be required from each vessel to register for the Offshore Division.

2. Bait and tackle rules:

a. Number of Anglers and Lines – Only registered anglers may fish in the Tournament, with a maximum of six anglers per vessel. Unregistered anglers may not substitute for registered anglers during the Offshore Division. Each vessel may fish up to six lines in the water at any one time, regardless of the number of registered anglers on board.

b. Line Strength and Leaders – Lines shall not exceed 80-lb. test strength. Leaders (excluding double lines) shall not exceed fifteen feet in length.

c. Hooks – Per NOAA regulations for all billfish tournaments, vessels must use only non-offset

circle hooks when deploying natural bait or natural bait/artificial lure combinations; a list of approved circle hook models is included below. Offshore Division anglers may only deploy "J"-hooks with the use of artificial lures. Modifying these circle hooks in any manner, or using a non-approved circle hook model, may be grounds for disqualification. A photo of the hook/lure/bait combination used must be taken following the release of any billfish.

Approved hook models are: Mustad Ultra Point Demon Circle Fine Wire 39951R, Mustad Ultra Point Demon Circle Fine Wire 39951BLN, Mustad Ultra Point Demon Circle Fine Wire 39954BLN, Gamakatsu 2214, Gamakatsu 2213, Eagle Claw Lazer Sharp L2004ELF, Precision Saltwater Billfish PI70, Diaichi D84Z, and Diaichi 84Z.

d. Bait – Live bait, dead bait, and lures are permitted. Vessels must supply their own bait and/or lures. Registered anglers and crew may fish for live bait at any time during the lines-in period of the Offshore Division.

3. *Fishing hours:* There is no Bimini Start, and vessels may leave from any harbor. Vessels will call out to the Committee Boat via the official Tournament VHF channel 78 or Weighmaster's cellphone prior to starting fishing activities. The official fishing times for the Offshore Division will be from 7:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. Regardless of where the vessels started the day, all vessels must pass back through Ocean Reef harbor by 3:00 p.m. on Friday, November 17, 2017 in accordance with Rule 7. Vessels with no fish to weigh in, but billfish release cards to turn in, must visually check in to Ocean Reef harbor by 4:00 p.m. on Friday, November 17, 2017. Vessels must display their individual vessel numbers at all times during the Tournament.

No baits, teasers, or chumming with whole or cut baits are allowed in the water before the official start of the fishing day. Official announcements of "lines in the water" for the beginning of the fishing day and "lines out of the water" for the end of the fishing day will be issued on the official Tournament VHF channel 78.

All registered anglers on any vessel with lines in the water other than during the official times will be disqualified from the Offshore Division, with the exception of an angler fighting a billfish that has been reported and registered with the Committee Boat prior to the "lines out" time.

4. *Boundaries:* The fishing limits of the Tournament shall be the territorial waters of the United States, but no more than 25 nautical miles offshore. Registered anglers may fish as far north or south as they wish, but any vessel with fish to be weighed in must be checked into Ocean Reef harbor by 3:00 p.m. on Friday, November 17, 2017 in accordance with Rule 7. Vessels with no fish to weigh in, but billfish release cards to turn in, must visually check in to Ocean Reef harbor by 4:00 p.m. on Friday, November 17, 2017. There will be a tournament official at the Ocean Reef harbor docks that will take delivery of the release cards. Vessels that are fighting a billfish after the "lines out" time must still adhere to the 3:00 p.m. check-in rule if they also have non-billfish fish to weigh for points.

5. *Billfish reporting and release rules:* All billfish fishing in the Offshore Division will be catch-and-release only. Any vessel retaining a billfish will be disqualified from the Tournament.

Reporting - As soon as possible after hooking a billfish, the captain will notify the Committee Boat and report both the species and name of the angler. All hookups must be acknowledged by the Committee Boat to be eligible for Offshore Division points. The Committee Boat will provide you with a release number. If you cannot communicate with the Committee Boat by radio on the primary channel, ask another vessel to relay the information for you. Alternatively, vessels can call the Weighmaster directly with the cellphone number to be provided at the Captains meeting.

Release - To be eligible for release points, the captain must obtain an official release number from the Committee Boat after the hookup. In accordance with IGFA Rules, and notwithstanding the release rules detailed below, a billfish shall count as a release if the swivel attaching the leader to the line touches the tip of the rod or a member of the crew touches the leader.

To score an official release, the official time, species, control number, and angler name must be written on each catch report affidavit, which will then be signed by the registered angler and the vessel

captain. At the end of the day's fishing, the catch report affidavit must be brought to the official scoring station by 4:00 p.m. for verification of the official release points. Failure to do so will result in disqualification of the catch and no points will be awarded.

An eligible release also requires that the billfish remains in the water at all times, although the head may be brought out of the water to facilitate removal of the hook prior to release. Any billfish that is removed from the water for display purposes or brought into the vessel for any reason will be disqualified from the Tournament.

6. *Awards:* Offshore Division awards will be presented in the Individual Angler and Team categories. Additional awards will be given to the first and second teams with the highest number of points and for the female angler with the highest number of points. In the context of Offshore Division awards, "largest" means "heaviest weight" and "tuna" means solely either yellowfin or blackfin tuna.

Junior and Pee-Wee Divisions: Any participant who is between their 11th and 17th birthday at the start of the tournament is eligible to compete in the Junior Division. Any participant who has not reached their 11th birthday by at the start of the Tournament is eligible to compete in the Pee-Wee Division. Any participant competing within the Junior or Pee-Wee Divisions must remain within their respective division for the length of the Tournament. The tackle requirements for both Junior or Pee-Wee Divisions remain the same as for the adult line class and categories. Junior anglers may not be assisted and Junior angler points will count towards overall vessel points and releases. Pee-Wee anglers may be assisted, but Pee-Wee angler points only count towards Pee-Wee awards.

Billfish:

Highest Points First Place Team
Highest Points Second Place Team
Highest Points Third Place Team
Highest Point Individual Male Angler Billfish Division
Highest Point Individual Female Angler Billfish Division
Highest Point Individual Junior Angler Billfish Division
Highest Point Individual Pee-Wee Angler Billfish

Fun Fish:

Top Vessel – Fun Fish Division
Largest Individual Fun Fish Junior Angler
Largest Individual Fun Fish Pee-Wee Angler
Largest Individual Dolphin, King Mackerel, Wahoo, Tuna, and Cobia

7. *Weigh-in.* All vessels with fish to be weighed must proceed directly to the weigh station at the end of the fishing day. The scales will open at 2:00 p.m. Registered vessels with fish to be weighed must be checked in through Ocean Reef harbor by 3:00 p.m. on Friday for the fish to count towards the Offshore Division awards. In case of a tie involving two or more vessels in the tournament after the day of fishing, the vessel with the highest number of points in the billfish category will be the winner. If two or more of the tied vessels in the Offshore Division have the same score within the billfish category, then the vessel with earliest catch time wins.

a. Billfish — Each eligible billfish in the Offshore Division must be registered with the Committee Boat as described above. Points will be awarded for the successful release of each fish by the following values for each species:

- * Blue marlin: 400 points
- * White marlin and longbill or roundscale spearfish: 200 points
- * Sailfish: 100 points

b. *Individual Bluewater Fun Fish* – One point per pound will be awarded to any registered vessel landing the following species (10-pound minimum per fish, with each fish weighed to the nearest half pound): cobia, dolphin, king mackerel, wahoo, blackfin and yellowfin tuna. Fun Fish may be called in to

the Committee Boat when boated with the name of angler and species, but such reporting is not required. However, in case of a tie, the earliest boated fish will be the winner.

c. Any mutilated fish will not be counted in the Offshore Division scoring. "Mutilation" does not include the normal wear-and-tear involved in captures with high-speed trolling or gaffing. Any fish that has been tampered with to increase the weight shall be disqualified and the vessel removed from the Tournament.

d. No more than four individual fish per species per vessel can be weighed in to be counted towards the Offshore Division award point totals. A maximum of 12 fish per vessel can be weighed in. All vessels must adhere to current Florida recreational fishing bag limits. To view current bag limits for each species, please visit <http://www.myFWC.com>.

B. Backcountry Division Rules:

1. Bait and tackle rules:

a. Number of Anglers and Lines – Only registered anglers may fish in the Tournament, with a maximum of three anglers per vessel. Unregistered anglers may not substitute for registered anglers during the Backcountry Division. Each vessel may fish up to three lines in the water at any one time, but no more than one line per registered angler.

b. Line Strength and Leaders – Inshore line class is limited to 12 lb. stated manufacturer test. Braided line can be used.

c. Chumming – **NO CHUMMING IS ALLOWED**

d. Bait – Live bait, dead bait, and lures are permitted. Vessels must supply their own bait and/or lures. Registered anglers and crew may fish for live bait at any time during the lines-in period of the Backcountry Division.

e. Vessels – All vessels must be 24-ft. LOA or less. Trolling motors are allowed.

2. Fishing hours and boundaries: The official fishing times for the Backcountry Division will be from 7:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m on Saturday, November 18, 2017. Vessels must return to Ocean Reef harbor marina by 3:00 p.m. on Saturday, November 18, 2017 for scoring.

3. Boundaries: Fishing boundaries for the Backcountry Division are restricted to those waters landward of the Florida Keys, including the Everglades National Park, Biscayne National Park, Card Sound, Barnes Sound, and natural tributary creeks and waterways. Participants cannot fish any man-made canals or other waterways.

4. Reporting and release rules: The eligible species in the Backcountry Division are Spotted Seatrout, Redfish (red drum), and Snook. **This is a CATCH-and-RELEASE only division.**

5. Awards: To keep the tradition of inshore tournaments, there will be **NO PRIZE MONEY** or **CALCUTTAS**; instead, winners will receive trophies. The "Longest Trout", "Longest Redfish", "Longest Snook", and "Top Inshore Angler" are awarded to individual anglers based on the length of a single fish per species. The "Grand Slam" award is determined by the total length of all three species (one of each) **combined by all anglers on a boat** (Trout, Snook and Redfish). To win the "Grand Slam" anglers must have all three species to win.

Longest Trout

Longest Redfish

Longest Snook

Top Inshore Angler

Grand Slam

6. **Scoring:** Each Backcountry Division angler will be given a score sheet, measuring device, and poker chips at registration, Friday, November 16, 2017 at the Kick-Off Party/Registration. Species are to be measured on provided measuring boards with poker chip. All fish must be photographed (must have quality readable picture) and released alive. Anglers **must** return score sheets, measuring devices, poker chips and photos to the NSU committee at Ocean Reef harbor marina by 3:00 p.m. on Saturday, November 18, 2017. **No exceptions.** Scoring is determined by the length of each fish. All fish must be measured with closed mouth and pinched tail in accordance with Florida state fisheries regulations. Anglers are able to count only one fish of each species.

4. Honor System and Official Protests: The Tournament will be conducted on the Honor System. However, protest forms will be available in case of complaints. All protest forms must be signed by the team captain and filed with the Weighmaster by 4:00 p.m. on Friday, November 17, 2017 for the Offshore Division and by 4:00 p.m. on Saturday, November 18, 2017 for the Backcountry Division. All protests will be considered by the Tournament Committee, whose decisions are final.

5. Weather: The Tournament Committee may cancel any tournament day if, in its best judgment, unsafe conditions exist at sea for the average registered boat. Notice of cancellation for the day will be broadcast on the Tournament VHF channel 78 at 6:30 a.m. However, the decision of the Tournament to allow fishing for the day shall not be interpreted as any assurance that the conditions are safe for any registered boat or angler. Registered participants must at all times make their own judgments regarding personal safety based on their boat, experience, seamanship skills, and any other relevant factors.

6. Liability: It is understood that all participants enter the Tournament at their own risk and that they, individually and collectively, thereby assume all risks which may be involved in participating, particularly those hazards due to weather or at-sea conditions. Participants fully understand that they may, at any time, elect not to continue participating when they deem the hazards too great. The Tournament Committee, sponsors, organizers, and anyone else directly connected with the Tournament shall be exempt and is hereby released from any liability for loss, damage, negligence, harm, or injury suffered by any participant, entrant, sports angler, their companions, boat captains, crew members, vessels, and equipment which may occur during the tournament.

7. Registration Fees: Registration fees will not be refunded for any reason.

8. Promotional Release: By your presence at this event, you are granting your permission to use your name and any and all photographs/video taken of you, your family, or your boat for the promotional use of the Tournament and/or Nova Southeastern University without compensation or restriction.

NSU Scholarship Fishing Tournament rules: 10 August 2007; as amended on 25 September 2009, 25 October 2011, 23 January 2013, 13 December 2013, 29 January 2015, and 29 August 2017.

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