

THE NEW ORLEANS INVITATIONAL BILLFISH TOURNAMENT
2017 Tournament Rules

*Rules are Subject to Change. The final instructions/rules will be given at the Captains' Meeting,
2:00 PM, Thursday, August 10, 2017 at Cypress Cove Marina*

1. Dates and Times: Tournament fishing begins after the mandatory Captains meeting at 2:00 PM, Thursday August 10, and continues through Friday August 11 and Saturday August 12 (boats must be passed the split of Grand Pass/Tiger Pass –big crane on West side + checked in via VHF radio prior to 8:00 PM, either Friday, August 11, or Saturday, August 12, 2017. All participating boats with eligible fish to be weighed or BSC's and video images (see section 11) must be passed the check point –see above- and checked in with Tournament Headquarters via radio prior to 8:00 PM, Saturday, August 12, 2017. A weigh-in order number will be issued via radio upon your check in-this is your position in line to weigh in. Please refer to "Weigh-In" section for weigh station times.

2. Registration: Registration will be held at the Tournament Headquarters, located at Cypress Cove Marina, Wednesday, August 9, 2017 from 4:00 PM until 10:00 PM and Thursday, August 10, 2017 from 9:00 AM until 12 Noon. All anglers must be registered to be eligible for tournament awards or prizes. Wristbands will be issued and **MUST** be worn at all times for admission to events and be visible in your digital images for Tag Points.

3. Departures/Boundaries: Boats must depart from Cypress Cove Marina only after the Mandatory Captains Meeting, Thursday, August 10, and check out via radio. There are no tournament boundaries. ALL eligible fish, along with Billfish Score Cards, completed Tag cards, and digital images must be brought to Cypress Cove Marina; just be in on time, and please use safe judgment with regards to fuel capacity and range.

4. Tackle: The official I.G.F.A. saltwater rules are the applicable rules for the New Orleans Invitational Billfish Tournament. For a complete listing of the I.G.F.A. saltwater equipment and angling rules, please go to <http://www.igfa.org/Fish/INTERNATIONAL-ANGLING-RULES.aspx>. The only exception to this is that the Mate may set the hook and assist the registered angler to the chair during the first 2 minutes after the hook up; this may occur only once during the initial hook up and not while fighting the fish. Maximum line class is 130 lb. test. NOBGFC boats will receive line class bonus for annual club awards, but not tournament awards.

5. Official Times: The official tournament time will be announced at the Captains' Meeting, 2:00 PM, Thursday, August 10, 2017. The official tournament clock will be posted at the weigh station.

6. Entry Fees: The base entry fee is \$1,600.00 before July 21, 2017, then \$1800 thereafter. The base entry fee covers: 1 Boat with 1 Captain, 1 Mate, and 4 Anglers-registered Captain and Mate are included as anglers. Cash, certified funds **ONLY** will be accepted at tournament headquarters. NOBGFC members may pay by check. Payment of the base entry fee and signing of the entry form constitutes that each participant has read and wholly understands the tournament rules and release of liability. Additionally, the participants further agree to abide by the tournament rules and the decisions of the Tournament Committee. The decisions of the Tournament Committee are **FINAL**, inclusive of the Weigh Master and Tournament Rules Committee. Additional angler entry fees are \$150 per person. Participants must fish the boat that is registered. **Changing of boats is not allowed after the close of the Captains' Meeting which is scheduled for 2:00 pm on Thursday, August 10, 2017.**

7. Sportsmanship: The New Orleans Invitational Billfish Tournament is located in Venice, Louisiana, also known to many as the "Sportsman's Paradise." All participants hereby agree to abide by our basic tournament philosophy: "Treat fellow sportsmen and fishermen the way you would like them to treat you in return." Poor sportsmanship may be grounds for tournament disqualification at the discretion of the Tournament Committee.

8. Permits/Licenses: All anglers desiring to weigh in an eligible fish are required to possess and display a current Louisiana Saltwater Fishing License (1-888-765-2602, or <http://www.wlf.louisiana.gov/licenses/fishing/recreational>) Additionally, a current NMFS permit must be presented prior to the weighing in of any Billfish or Tuna (<https://hmspermits.noaa.gov/InitialOrRenew.asp> 1-888-872-8862). All tournament participants are to comply with all Federal, state of Louisiana, and Plaquemines Parish laws regarding boating, fishing licenses, size and bag limits, along with any other laws that may apply. **Additionally, Louisiana Wildlife and Fisheries requires a Recreational Offshore Landings Permit per angler for the landing of yellowfin tuna, billfish, swordfish, amberjack, dolphin, grouper and snapper. There is NO CHARGE for this permit. The Recreational Offshore Landing Permit can be only be obtained online at <http://www.wlf.la.gov/rolp> or via the Apple app store or Android app store.**

NOTE: As of January 1, 2008, the National Marine Fisheries/Federal Government requires the use of non-offset circle hooks in billfish tournaments when using natural baits (either dead or live) or natural baits in combination with lures or skirts.

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9. Polygraph Testing: All registered participants may be subject to polygraph testing, prior to the issuing of any tournament winnings or prizes. The Tournament Committee may consider the results of any such polygraph test prior to the determination of any tournament prize money or award winner.

10. Captains' Meeting: The Captains' Meeting is scheduled for 2:00 PM, Thursday, August 10, 2017; ALL boats must be registered before 12:00 Noon, Thursday, August 10, 2017. Attendance is MANDATORY and a boat representative must sign out at the close of the Captains Meeting.

11. Billfish Score Cards: Billfish Score Cards will be distributed at the Captains' Meeting. The BSC is the registered Team's log for every Billfish that is hooked and either released, tagged or boated. Teams must present completed and signed BSC's (signed by all Team members), along with Video Images and **completed tag cards (only for club annual points)**, checked in via radio passed the checkpoint-see Item 1, no later than 8:00 PM, Saturday, August 12, 2017 in order to either weigh-in an eligible Blue Marlin or qualify for Release Points. BSC's will be compared to the Tournament Committee Boats radio log. See rule #15 & #16 for additional video requirements. Video images and BSC's and Tag cards must be presented at the Weigh Station via the registered boat and cannot be transferred to another boat.

12. Weigh-In: Tournament scales are located at Cypress Cove Marina. The weigh station hours are from 8:00 AM until 8:00 PM, Friday, August 11, 2017 and 8:00 AM until 8:00 PM, on Saturday, August 12, 2017. **All fish must be brought to the weigh-station by the boat from which it was caught-do not go to your slip with fish; boats with no fish but with videos may go to their slip.** Only registered tournament anglers are allowed to weigh in an eligible fish (see Rule #11). **Eligible fish/BSC's must be presented at the weigh-station by the angler that caught the fish, via his/her Teams registered boat. Eligible fish/BSC must not leave the registered boat from which it was originally caught, except for the weigh-in at Cypress Cove Marina.** The angler must remain with his/her fish throughout the complete weigh in procedure and sign the certified weight-slip to verify the weight and time prior to the fish becoming an Official Fish, eligible for prizes and/or awards. Weigh-in times will be recorded to the minute.

13. Eligible Fish: The following species are eligible as described below:

<u>Species</u>	<u>Tag & Release Awards</u>	<u>Min. Size to Weigh</u>	<u>Allowable Per Team to Weigh</u>	<u>Points/Weight Points (1/10th lb.)</u>
Blue Marlin	Yes	106 inches LJFL	1 per Team/per day	500/1 point per lb
White Marlin	Yes	NO	0	200
Sailfish	Yes	NO	0	100
Spearfish	Yes	NO	0	100
Dolphin	NO	20 lb. Min.	3/day/per Team	1 point per lb.
Swordfish*1	NO	60 inch LJFL	3/day/per Team	1 point per lb.
Tuna*2	NO	27" CFL	3/day/per Team	1 point per lb.
Wahoo	NO	20 lb. Min.	3/day/per Team	1 point per lb.

*1: **Swordfish are not eligible for Tournament Release Awards**
 *2: **Allowable species are Yellowfin tuna, Big eye tuna, and Blackfin tuna only**

13. Eligible Fish continued: No mutilated, cut, frozen, or questionable fish, as determined by the Tournament weigh master and Tournament Committee, will be weighed. The decision of the Tournament Weigh master and Tournament Committee is FINAL. Any angler or team in possession of illegal fish will result in entire Team disqualification and all entry fees and optional entry fees are forfeited.

14. Reporting of Billfish: All billfish released or boated must be reported to a Tournament Committee Boat or tournament headquarters via VHF, or telephone. Committee Boats, frequencies and telephone numbers will be announced at the Captains' Meeting, 2:00 PM, Thursday, August 10, 2017. Upon releasing or boating of a Blue Marlin, you must report to a Tournament Committee Boat or HQ to receive a confirmation number. Do not boat or remove from the water any billfish for release, **it will be disqualified**). Upon the releasing, tagging, or boating (106" minimum lower jaw to fork length for Blue Marlin) of any eligible Blue Marlin, the entire Team must complete their BSC and report the following information:

- A. Name of Boat
- B. Name of Angler-whether male, female, or youth (please)
- C. Species of Billfish
- D. Whether or not Tagged, Released or Boated
- E. Lower Jaw to Fork Length (LJFL), if Boated, measurement should be within 2 inches LJFL

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14. Reporting of Billfish continued: The Tournament Committee Boat will issue a confirmation number and time for your released or boated billfish. Please make certain that the Committee Boat has confirmed your data, including time of release or boating of billfish. If a Tournament Committee Boat cannot be contacted, then a verifiable report must be given to another Tournament boat; boat name must be noted on the Billfish Score Card (BSC's will be provided at the Captains' Meeting). This is the same procedure for each billfish. Release points are based on GPS date/time in your video and will be compared to the full minute recorded by the Tournament Committee Boat; please confirm your times and confirmation numbers.

15. Release/Tagging: The New Orleans Invitational Billfish Tournament does not require that a tag be inserted in a Billfish for the release to qualify for release points. We encourage tagging of all billfish to further continue the research efforts of The Billfish Foundation (www.billfish.org). Tagged billfish will qualify for annual club points. 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, along with the complete video image requirements and proper tag placement that are required (see Rule #16).

16. Video Images: To obtain release points, in addition to the communications with the Committee Boat and the corresponding confirmation number, the New Orleans Invitational Billfish Tournament requires completed Billfish Score Cards (BSC's-see Sect. #11) and video images with GPS date and time stamps must be provided. The video image must contain the following:

- a. The angler fighting the fish showing the tournament issued wristband or identifier.
- b. Clear identification of the species of Billfish.
- c. Mate with leader in hand and tournament wristband or identifier, wiring, tagging and releasing the fish.
- d. Wiring and release of fish, followed by an immediate and complete pan of the cockpit showing no other lines in the water. **If you have a double hook-up, please show it on your video.**
- e. After the pan of the cockpit, record a legible shot of the boats GPS showing both date and time
- f. The camera must NOT stop recording during the wiring, release and complete pan of the cockpit and filming the GPS. **This is imperative.**
- g. If the mate has the leader in hand and the hook pulls or the leader breaks, the fish still qualifies if all other rules are satisfied, but if the fish is only identifiable as a billfish, the fish will score the minimum points==100 points. Please do not stop your video. **Do not bring any billfish out of the water that you are going to release; it will be disqualified.**
- h. No cell phone, iPad, or single CD/DVD video will be accepted; please bring appropriate cables to connect camera to a video monitor/laptop for judging review. One person from each team, capable of operating their camera, must present completed BSC's and supporting video camera to video judge. Please have camera set at your first fish ready for review.

17. Protests: A tournament participant must register any protest with the Tournament Committee within thirty minutes of the weigh in closing time (8:00 PM) on Saturday, August 12, 2017. The protest must be written and accompanied by \$1000.00 cash, along with evidence/materials for the protest and must be presented to the Tournament Rules Committee prior to 8:30 PM, Saturday, August 12, 2017. The Tournament Rules Committee will make every effort possible to determine the validity of the protest within two hours (10:30 PM). The decision of the Tournament Rules Committee is final.

17a. Binding Arbitration: In the event the Tournament Organizers/Rules Committee cannot render or refuses to render a final and binding decision with respect to any dispute, protest, claim, difference, or controversy under review, the matter shall be resolved by binding arbitration under the commercial arbitration rules of the American Arbitration Association. The decision rendered in arbitration shall be in writing and shall be final and binding upon all parties. The parties shall have no further recourse, except as provided for by the commercial rules of the American Arbitration Association. Once the decision is rendered, it will produce the effect of "res-judicata" and the parties shall fully comply with the decision without delay. The Participants hereby specifically waive any right to a trial by judge or jury.

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18. Prizes from Base Entry Fee: The Base Entry Fee for the New Orleans Invitational Billfish Tournament covers all events, trophies, and captain's bags/give aways. The Base Entry Fee is exactly that, an Entry Fee that allows the registered team to participate in this event. There are no payouts from the Base Entry Fee. Winners or their representatives **MUST BE PRESENT** at the awards ceremony or they waive their award.

<u>Species</u>	<u>1st Place</u>	<u>2nd Place</u>	<u>3rd Place</u>
Blue Marlin	Trophy	Trophy	Trophy
Release	Trophy	Trophy	Trophy
Dolphin	Trophy	Trophy	Trophy
Swordfish	Trophy	Trophy	Trophy
Tuna	Trophy	Trophy	Trophy
Wahoo	Trophy	Trophy	Trophy
Top Female Angler	Trophy		
Top Youth Angler	Trophy		
Top Billfish Boat (overall points)	Trophy	Trophy	Trophy
Top Release Angler	Perez Cup	Trophy	Trophy
White Marlin Release	Trophy		

Release: Based on total billfish release points; ties broken by release times to the full minute; the first team to reach the highest number of total points will be declared the winner.
 Weighed fish prizes are based on individual fish weight; not on cumulative weight/points.

19. Tie Breakers: Ties between the weights of two or more fish are broken by the time the earliest fish was weighed in, as recorded by the Tournament Official Weigh Master. A tie on total release points will be broken by the Team that reaches the highest total number of release points first.

20. Optional Entry Categories: The Optional Entry Levels are exactly that, Optional, and are not required or included in the base entry fee. The entry into the Optional Entry Levels is not required to be eligible for base entry fee trophies. Boats/anglers must be registered in the Optional Entry Categories to be eligible for the Optional Entry Levels Awards. There are 4 separate levels of Optional Entry Categories for Blue Marlin, Tag/Release, Tuna, Wahoo, Swordfish and Dolphin. Enter as many Optional Entry Categories as they desire, prior to 12 Noon, Thursday, August 10. Cash or certified funds are required to enter Optional Entry Categories on-site at the Tournament Headquarters. NOBGFC members may pay by check.

<u>Level</u>	<u>Blue Marlin</u>	<u>Release</u>	<u>Dolphin</u>	<u>Swordfish</u>	<u>Tuna</u>	<u>Wahoo</u>
<u>Optional Entry Level #4 Jackpot</u>	\$3,000	\$3,000	\$3,000	\$3,000	\$3,000	\$3,000
<u>Optional Entry Level #3 Jackpot</u>	\$2,000	\$2,000	\$2,000	\$2,000	\$2,000	\$2,000
<u>Optional Entry Level #2 Jackpot</u>	\$1,000	\$1,000	\$1,000	\$1,000	\$1,000	\$1,000
<u>Optional Entry Level #1 Jackpot</u>	\$500	\$500	\$500	\$500	\$500	\$500

Total Across the Board \$39,000.00 plus Entry Fee

90% PAYBACK ON ALL OPTIONAL ENTRY CATEGORIES; 10% ADMINISTRATIVE FEE DEDUCTED

20.a. Optional Entry Level # 1-Level # 4 Payouts:

<u>3 Winners</u>		<u>2 Winners</u>		<u>1 Winner</u>	
1 st Place	50%	1 st Place	60%	1 st Place	100%
2 nd Place	30%	2 nd Place	40%		
3 rd Place	20%				

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21. Optional Entry Refunds: If there are no winners in a specific category Optional Entry Jackpot, the Jackpot for that specific category will be refunded (less 10% Administration Fee) by NOBGFC to the Team Leader listed on the Entry Form within seven (7) days following the New Orleans Invitational Billfish Tournament.

22. All Payouts: All checks for tournament winnings will be made payable to the "Make Check Payable To" entity indicated on the Entry Form. A Social Security # or Federal Tax Identification # must be provided. NOBGFC will issue a Federal Tax Form 1099 for all monetary awards to the entity for whom the check is made payable. Winning payout checks will be mailed within seven (7) days following the completion of the New Orleans Invitational Billfish Tournament.

23. Cancellation: The New Orleans Invitational Billfish Tournament is scheduled August 10-12, 2017. In the case of inclement weather, the tournament will be completed on the first day to be declared fishable by the Tournament Committee. Six hours of fishing by one third of registered boats constitutes a completed tournament. If weather and/or conditions beyond the control of the Tournament Committee require that the tournament be cancelled, refunds will be made, less tournament expenses, as solely determined by Tournament Committee.

24. Use of photographs, audio & video recordings: All participants hereby grant the New Orleans Invitational Billfish Tournament, New Orleans Big Game Fishing Club, and comefishLa.com, Inc. their full and unlimited consent for the use of any photograph, video and or audio recording, taken or recorded in relation to the New Orleans Invitational Billfish Tournament, in which they, or their voice and or likeness may appear. New Orleans Big Game Fishing Club and comefishLa.com, Inc. may use said photographs, video or audio recordings for any purpose it deems, including, but not limited to, advertising and marketing, promotion, resale, or the like without compensation or any restrictions.

25. Liability Release: Participants agree to the maximum extent permitted by law that they are entering and participating at their own risk. By entering and/or registering for the New Orleans Invitational Billfish Tournament (hereinafter referred to as "NOIBT") all participants, including, but not limited to all registered anglers, Captains, mates and guests (hereinafter referred to as "Participants"), agree, to the maximum extent permitted by law, to hold the NOIBT, NOBGFC, comefishLa.com, Inc., Cypress Cove Marina and Cypress Cove Peninsula Townhomes, together with all persons or entities involved with/associated with the NOIBT, along with their respective employees, officers, directors, volunteers, agents, committee members, partners, sponsors, advisors, and subcontractors (hereinafter referred to as "the NOIBT group") harmless from any and all claims, demands, or liability of any kind whatsoever relating to the NOIBT, including but not limited to any claims for any act or omission, excluding, however, any claims for any intentional or gross fault by any member of the NOIBT group, and for any claims for physical injury caused by any member of the NOIBT group.