



2025 Rules & Regulations

Contact

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for clarification & questions.

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For dockage reservations at Pirate's Cove Marina call 252-473-3906 and to reserve a home for Tournament Week contact Pirate's Cove Realty at 252-473-6800.

2025 Rules Changes

All 2025 changes are in **Pink**

1. **Registration** – will be held on Saturday, August 9, 2025, from 5:30 P.M. to 9:00 P.M. at Pirate's Cove Pavilion. The Captains Meeting will be at 7:00 P.M. A representative from each team should attend the Captains Meeting as each team is responsible for knowing the rules including any clarifications made during the Captain's Meeting. All boats must be registered and all entry fees paid for teams to qualify for prizes and trophies. No Refunds on the Jackpots unless the tournament is cancelled! Substitute boats are permissible due to the breakdown of the original boat; any substitute boat

must be registered with the Tournament Director prior to fishing. No entries or upgrades will be accepted after Saturday evening after the close of registration. Note: If weather creates a situation where fishing is questionable teams may register on Sunday morning between 5AM and 7AM under the Pavilion.

2. **Fishing Day** – This is a one-day tournament on Sunday, August 10, 2025, Fishing hours are from 8:30 A.M. to 3:00 PM. No lines or teasers in the water prior to Lines In. Any fish hooked and reported prior to Lines Out may be played until released. **No "Omni Directional" Sonar to be deployed prior to Lines In.**

3. **Tackle & Etiquette** – All I.G.F.A. rules apply with the exception that ANY registered angler, captain, or mate may hook a billfish. **You may make one pass of the rod in the cockpit and two passes from the bridge to a registered female angler. The rod may be passed between registered female anglers as many times as needed to bring a billfish to release for full points or a gamefish to gaff. The mate can assist registered female anglers by helping hand the rod and immediately passing to another registered female angler in the transition from registered female angler to registered female angler the mate cannot turn the handle.** The Top Lady Angler Award shall be presented to the angler with the most points who has hooked her own fish. This is a trolling tournament; unconventional non-trolling techniques are strictly prohibited.

4. **Boundaries** –All fish must be hooked within tournament boundaries which is 75 nautical miles from the Oregon Inlet Sea Buoy; fish can then be played outside boundaries until released. Boats may

fish out of Hatteras Inlet as well as Oregon Inlet.

5. **Releases** – In order to qualify a billfish as a release one of the following conditions must be met: the leader is touched by a team member or the swivel or connection between the double line and the leader (if double line is used, the connection between the double line and the LEADER qualifies) touches the rod tip or the connection between the leader and the main line/double line passes through the rod tip.

6. **Anglers & Crew** –There is no limit to the number of eligible anglers per boat, however all anglers must be registered with Tournament Control prior to fishing. A maximum of six angler bags and six official T-shirts will be presented per boat. Professional crew members may hook and pass the rod. Each team is limited to two professional mates and one professional or non pro captain driving the boat. The pro captain may not be substituted for an additional mate. A fish hooked by a professional must be handed off to an eligible angler in a timely manner. A Professional is a person who has been compensated (whether full or part time) as a mate or Captain aboard a Sportfishing boat in the past 12 months. Contact the Tournament Director with questions regarding eligibility.

7. **Reporting Catch** – All billfish releases must be reported to Radio Control on VHF Radio channel 78. Radio Control will respond with the time of release. If Radio Control cannot be raised confirmation of the GPS time including fractions of a second should be made with another registered tournament boat; boat name should be noted on the scorecard.

8. Points System – All billfish must be released to earn points. As more boats are sonar equipped, we now allow the use of Sonar's in this tournament. Obviously, Sonar can be an advantage in certain conditions, so in order to level the playing field, there will be a points handicap for all Sonar equipped boats in the Tournament.

For 2025, our Billfish Points will be scored as follows:

White Marlin, Sailfish, Spearfish, and unverified Blue Marlin Release
100 pts non-sonar | 75 pts sonar equipped

Blue Marlin (with video verification)
300 pts non-sonar | 225 pts sonar equipped

Boats with a sonar installed will need to declare at registration if they plan to use it during this tournament. There will NOT be separate Sonar/Non-Sonar categories for Billfish Points in Daily's or Overall Points, and all teams will be scored based on the points schedule listed above.

9. Scoring – All scorecards must include the species, time of release, angler name and special designation (Top Lady eligible or Jr Angler). The Captain must sign the scorecard. If the angler hooks her own fish, this must be noted on the scorecard for the points to qualify for the Top Angler award. Junior Anglers are 15 and under as of lines in. Scorecards must be turned in to scoring/weigh station by 7:00 PM on Sunday, August 11.

10. Weighing Fish & Polygraph Testing – Any fish weighed will be entered on a scorecard by the Weighmaster. If anyone wants a fish reweighed it must be done while the fish is still hanging. The Tournament Scales will close at 7:00 PM. The

Captain of the Top Boat registered in the Billfish Jackpot must report to the Pirate's Cove Pavilion before 7PM for polygraph testing. You must speak with the Tournament Director to propose a substitute for testing, and this person must be sober.

11. Meatfish – A trophy will be awarded to the heaviest Dolphin, Wahoo, and Yellowfin Tuna. If two or more entries have the same weight, then the largest combination of length and girth shall determine the winner. In the event that this is also a tie, the earlier time of weigh in shall determine the winner. Meatfish may be transported to the scales over land by car.

12. Trophy Awards – Trophies will be awarded to the Top Female Junior Angler and (2) Top Lady Angler (IGFA). Total points for the Top Lady Angler will be calculated on fish she hooked herself and or passed to her must be noted on the scorecard. Juniors may accept a pass. Ties will be broken by time of release. Six angler trophies will be presented to the top five boats.

13. Protest – Any protest must be submitted to the Tournament Director in writing by 7:00 PM on Sunday, August 10. The decision of the Judging Committee is final.

14. Prize Money – The Billfish and Top Dolphin Jackpot Prizes will be mailed within two weeks of receipt of W-9 forms designating prize money payees.

15. Cancellation Policy – If weather and/or other conditions exist where no registered boats can fish, the entry fee minus 15% management fee will be refunded, at the team's request, by mail within four weeks to the designated Team Contact.

16. Pre-Registration – Will take place on Friday, August 9 from 5:00 PM to 7:00PM. Only teams that have registered their boat and all anglers and have paid all their entry fees may come to pre-registration. All fees must be received by the tournament by 5:00PM on Thursday, August 8. There will also be a "preregistered" line at Saturday registration to expedite the teams that have registered their boat and anglers.

17. Hold Harmless Agreement – All participants, vessel owners and pro hoc owners' consent and agree that the federal and state courts for Dare County, North Carolina, shall serve as the sole venue for any and all litigation arising out of participation in the Alice Kelly Memorial Ladies Only Billfish Tournament. In no way shall any participant distressed by any ruling of the tournament recover from the Alice Kelly Memorial Ladies Only Billfish Tournament, Pirate's Cove Billfish Tournament, Inc. or its officers, employees, volunteers or sponsors any sum exceeding his/her registration fee. It is expressly understood that all participants participate at their own risk and hereby release, discharge and hold harmless Pirate's Cove Billfish Tournament, Inc. and its officers, directors, volunteers, sponsors and employees from liability for loss, damage, costs, harm, injury, damage or death suffered by any participant, crew member, observer, vessel or equipment which may occur during this tournament including, but not limited to, any fishing activity, meeting, meal, ceremony or other tournament related event or activity occurring between August 6 and August 21, 2025. The rules and release shall also be binding on my heirs, executors, administrator or assigns. **By paying the entry fees,**

**my team and I acknowledge that we
have read the rules and release and
are bound by the same.**