



# 2026 RULES, POLICIES AND SCORING

## LONE STAR SHOOTOUT

July 21 – 26, 2026

Rev. 4.7.26

### Dates and Times:

- Tournament fishing days are Thursday, July 23, Friday, July 24, and Saturday, July 25, 2026.
- Boats MAY ONLY depart from Port O'Connor, Little Jetties no earlier than 11:00am on Thursday, July 23, 2026. The Lone Star Shootout Tournament Committee & Director reserve the right to release the tournament fleet prior to 11:00am for any reason deemed necessary.
- Tournament fishing begins no earlier than 11:00am on July 23, 2026. No tournament lines are allowed in the water before 11:00am.
- Fishing ends at 3:00pm on Saturday, July 25, 2026. All lines must be out of the water at that time. A fish hooked prior to the 3:00pm lines out time may be fought to landing or release and qualify provided that:
  - (1) The hook up was reported prior to 3:00pm and the release or catch report is verifiable per the reporting requirements.
  - (2) The boat makes the 6:00pm weigh station deadline as specified in these rules and all other qualifying requirements are met.
- The weigh station will be open from 7:00pm – midnight on Friday, July 24, 2026 and from 4:00pm - 6:00pm on Saturday, July 25, 2026. *The weigh station is not open on Thursday, July 23, 2026.*
- Weigh station will open to weigh Blue Marlin on Friday. If you are weighing a Blue Marlin Friday, your meat fish can also be weighed. Notify tournament officials and provide fish length and ETA in advance for a Friday weigh-in.
- All boats must come to Port O'Connor to weigh fish and turn in video release verifications. Boats must be within the Port O'Connor little jetties and be verified by Tournament Control by 6:00pm, Saturday, July 25, 2026. NO EXCEPTIONS.

Entry & Registration: Entry forms and Online Entry options are available on [www.thelonestارشootout.com](http://www.thelonestارشootout.com). Entry is not complete until payment of entry fee by check, credit card or Reel Time App is received. Online registration will close on Friday, July 17, 2026 at 10:00pm. After Friday, July 17, 2026, entry forms and fees will be accepted during registration at the Tournament headquarters between the hours of 1:00pm – 4:00pm on Wednesday, July 22, 2026 in the Lone Star Shootout office at the POC Community Center.

Each entry will receive boat gifts that include a custom (if entry is received by June 1, 2026) gift, 6 caps/visors, and 6 t-shirts. Tournament gifts may be picked up on completion of registration at the Lone Star Shootout Office upon completion of your registration. Each entry will also receive 6 wristbands and 6 dinner tickets to all events. Additional dinner tickets and wristbands can be purchased with your Shootout entry form or at the tournament registration on July 21, 2026. Extra tickets are limited so you are encouraged to purchase your additional tickets in advance with your tournament entry.

Each tournament entry must be submitted by a current HBGFC member or a confirmed current member of a recognized fishing club based on the Gulf Coast. You can become a member of HBGFC with the Tournament entry form.



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MANDATORY Captain's Meeting: The Captain's Meeting is scheduled for 8:00am on Thursday, July 23, 2026 at the Lone Star Shootout Office. A representative for each Tournament boat must attend the Captain's Meeting. There will be a roll call and a sign-in sheet.

## Awards:

- A 1<sup>st</sup> place trophy, and 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> place plaques will be awarded for the overall Shootout Tournament Points leaders. The winning boat receives a Tournament Champion trophy and a plaque to be installed on the beautiful Perpetual Trophy in Honor of Randy O. Bright. The trophy is displayed at the Club office and events.
- A 1<sup>st</sup> place trophy, and 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> place plaques will be awarded to the three boats in points for overall Blue Marlin Division.
- Top Male Angler will be awarded the Wayne Timmermann Memorial Top Angler Award based on total tournament points.
- Trophies will be awarded to the Top Female Angler and Top Junior Angler. Award winners will be determined based on total tournament points. If no tournament points, then the largest of any Tuna, Wahoo or Dorado weighed by a woman angler or junior angler will determine the winner(s).
- 1<sup>st</sup> place trophies, and 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> place plaques will be awarded for largest Blue Marlin, Tuna, Wahoo and Dorado. These trophies and plaques are awarded to the angler. All trophies and plaques will be handed out Saturday night, winning amounts will be announced at the pay out Sunday morning after final audit.

## Scoring: The Tournament Champion is determined by Total Tournament Points.

*Tournament Points are awarded as follows: Released Billfish: Blue Marlin = 500 points, White Marlin = 150 points, Sailfish = 100 points. Weighed Blue Marlin = 1 point per pound + 900 bonus points for 600 lbs and up. "Spearfish or misidentified billfish will receive sailfish points after video review and at the discretion of the video reviewer. This does not include roundscale spearfish, which are impossible to distinguish from white marlin in video and therefore count as white marlin."*

*Example: if a boat brings a release video with a verification form identifying a fish as a Blue Marlin but it is identified as a White Marlin by video reviewer, it will only count for 100 Sailfish points.*

Billfish Scoring is the same as Total Tournament Points: Released Billfish: Blue Marlin = 500 points, White Marlin = 150 points, and Sailfish = 100 points. Weighed Blue Marlin = 1 point per pound + 900 bonus points for 600 lbs and up.

Blue Marlin Scoring is: 500 points for released Blue Marlin and weighed Blue Marlin receive 1 point per pound + 900 bonus points for 600 lbs and up.

## Scoring Examples:

1. *Catch and release 2 blue marlin = 1000 total tournament points, 1000 billfish points, and 1000 blue marlin points.*
2. *Catch and release 1 blue marlin and boat 1 blue marlin weighing 600lbs = 2000 total tournament points, 2000 billfish points, and 2000 blue marlin points.*



# 2026 RULES, POLICIES AND SCORING

**Tie Breakers:** First to the total: time for the tie breaker is based on the verified release time. In the event of a tie in total points in either the Billfish Pots, the Blue Marlin pots, or the Non-Sonar Pots: if a boat has a weighed Blue Marlin, that boat will be the winner; if the tie is based solely on release points, the first boat achieving that point total will win, based on last release time.

**Billfish Release:** To obtain release points, each release must:

1. Be reported and verified as set out in the Reporting of Fish section.
2. Be documented by the completion of an HBGFC "SHOOTOUT" Verification form.
3. Be verified by the tournament video review. (See video rules).
- Very important: Do not pull any billfish into the boat. Video showing billfish pulled over the gunnel, into a tuna door or otherwise brought into the boat will be disqualified.

**Reporting of Fish:** When a billfish has been boated or released, *you must notify* a Tournament Committee Boat or designated land based official immediately. The name of boat, name of angler, species of fish and release or boated time must be reported. If contact with a Committee boat or land-based official can't be made, you must report the catch to another Tournament boat. For verification purposes, please make note on your Catch Report form of the name of the boat and the radio operator that took your report and the time of the report. See laminated Committee Boats & Communication sheet for more details. All billfish must be reported as soon as is possible after the catch to qualify for points. It is the responsibility of the captain and/or owner to do whatever is necessary to report your catches as soon as possible after the catch. Note that text message reporting to the land-based contact numbers is encouraged. Use your Catch Report Form.

**Tackle and Angling Rules:** All applicable federal and state regulations apply as Tournament rules. This includes the rule to use circle hooks if bait, of any kind, is used when targeting billfish. It is the responsibility of all participants to be familiar with IGFA rules, and all applicable federal and state regulations. All IGFA saltwater angling and tackle rules apply with the following exceptions:

1. An angler may receive assistance getting the rod to the chair or harness immediately after hookup. The angler must then fight the fish unassisted.
2. An angler or mate may set the hook and pass the rod to another angler after hookup. This may occur one time only immediately after hookup.

**Fishing Line Requirements:** Any line (monofilament, Dacron or braided line) with a manufacturer's stated breaking strength of 100 pounds or less; also accepted is any line labeled as "IGFA-rated or Tournament-rated" with a breaking strength of 130 pounds or less. Backing of ANY SIZE is permitted as long as the top shot does not exceed 130lb. test IGFA or 100lb manufacturers stated. *IGFA Top Shot & backing rule.*

**Eligible Waters:** Tournament fishing of any kind is restricted to waters north of the 26-degree latitude line, U.S. waters only.

**Weighed Fish Minimum Lengths and Weights:** Weighed Blue Marlin must meet a minimum of 106 inches long, measured by lower jaw fork length. Tuna and Wahoo must meet a minimum weight of 25 pounds, and Dorado must meet a minimum weight of 20 lbs. All weighed fish must be in fresh, edible condition. No mutilated, cut, frozen or questionable fish, as determined by the weighmaster and Tournament Committee, will be weighed. Any decision of the Weighmaster and the Tournament Committee is final. The tie breaker for weighed fish is longest length.



# 2026 RULES, POLICIES AND SCORING

Video Release Rules: To obtain release points the video must clearly show the following in continuous, unedited video:

- Angler fighting the fish
- Object of the day
- Identification of the fish
- Mate with leader in hand
- Catch and release of the fish by clearly showing at least one of the following events;
  1. Fish swimming away following its release.
  2. The hook being removed or leader being cut.
  3. The hook pulling free or leader breaking while leader is in hand.
- The correct time immediately following the release. Video device time and date stamp is strongly preferred. The time on a GPS shown clearly in the video will be accepted. Note that the verified video release time is a possible tie breaker.

To obtain release points the video must be:

1. Recorded continuously on a single video device from a time starting prior to the leader being in hand until clearly showing the time of the release. If the identification of the fish is prior to the above starting point, then the video must be continuous starting from the time of identification of the fish.
2. Presented for review unedited and in the device that it was recorded on and with standard connections or memory card enabling playback on a tablet or computer monitor. Please have your video play back set up at the start of your first released fish.

Video Review Policy: No more than 1 team member may accompany the video in the review process. In the event the decision of a video reviewer is disputed, a request can be made to put the video to further review. After further review, as determined by the tournament committee, a final decision supported by a majority of the reviewers will be the final decision and may not be disputed or protested. If uncertainty remains to prevent a final decision as to species identification, points will be awarded at the least value of billfish release points. Example: if there remains uncertainty that a released fish is a blue marlin or a white marlin, points will be awarded for a sailfish and the final decision and awarding of points may not be disputed or protested. The Tournament Committee will determine the video reviewers at its sole, complete and absolute discretion.

Weigh in procedures and requirements: Weigh in for 2026 is at the POC Fishing Center weigh station on the ICW just west of the fuel dock. All boats that desire to weigh fish or submit videos must radio (VHF Channel 68) tournament control, upon entering (not before) the POC **little** jetties. You will be acknowledged and placed in the weigh station or video review que at that time. If you only have video, please state so to receive further instructions. For weighing fish, only 1 boat will be allowed at the weigh station at a time. You must have your weighed fish forms filled out and ready to hand over prior to entering the weigh station slip.



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Slips/Dockage: The base entry fee does NOT include slip/dockage rental fees. Slips will be assigned by the Tournament Committee on a first paid, first served basis determined by receipt of entry fee, size of vessel and availability of slips. Your slip will not be confirmed without paid entry.

Rule Changes: The tournament committee, at its sole discretion, may add, change, modify or clarify any rule up to 8:00 am on Thursday, July 23, 2026. Any last-minute rule changes will be communicated to participants by text and/or email.

Protests: Any protest must be submitted by the registered Member of the boat before 7:30 pm, or not later than 30 minutes after the weigh station is closed (whichever is later) on Saturday, July 25, 2026. The protest, in written form, accompanied by \$1,000.00 cash and any evidence/materials supporting the protest must be presented to the Tournament Committee by the protesting registered member. The Tournament Committee will use all best efforts and methods to resolve and rule on any protest in a prompt manner, but may, at its discretion, withhold the payment or awarding of any prize or payout until such time as any protest is resolved. If the protest is deemed valid, the \$1,000.00 will be returned to the team leader. Any decision of the Tournament Committee regarding protests or any other matter is final.

By participating in the Tournament, all Tournament participants grant the Tournament Committee sole, complete, absolute and uncontrolled discretion in interpreting and applying these Tournament Rules, the IGFA rules, and all federal and state regulations as applied to this Tournament and the Tournament participants. Because the Tournament and its participants all benefit from a prompt *and final* resolution of any disputes or protests, each Tournament participant expressly authorizes, empowers and directs the Tournament Committee to fully and finally resolve any and all protests and disputes, based on whatever evidence the Tournament Committee deems sufficient in the Tournament Committee's sole, absolute and uncontrolled discretion.

Each Tournament participant agrees and understands that there is no appeal from the final ruling of the Tournament Committee, and any legal proceedings or other effort to undermine, dispute or circumvent the final ruling of the Tournament Committee will result in automatic disqualification from the Tournament, with no refund. Each tournament participant hereby exculpates and releases the Houston Big Game Fishing Club and its board of directors and committee members and the Lone Star Shootout Tournament and the tournament committee members and staff from any and all liability whatsoever in connection with the Tournament Committee's exercise of its powers and duties under these rules, including conduct attributable to the negligence or gross negligence of any one or more Tournament Committee members.

Polygraph: By participating in the Tournament, each Tournament participant agrees to submit to a polygraph examination if the Tournament Committee determines, in its sole, complete, absolute and uncontrolled discretion, that one or more polygraph examinations would be helpful to the Tournament Committee's decision. Any Tournament participant who refuses to submit to a polygraph examination will be disqualified from the Tournament. The Tournament Committee is free to use or disregard some or all of any polygraph test results in the Tournament Committee's sole, complete, absolute and uncontrolled discretion.



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Entry Cancellation Policy: Entry cancellations received on or before July 15, 2026 will receive a full boat pool refund and full tournament entry fee refund minus the cost of tournament gifts. Entry cancellations after July 15, 2026 and before the close of registration will receive a refund of boat pools only or as otherwise determined by the tournament committee.

Cancellation due to weather or events beyond Tournament Control: The 2026 Tournament is scheduled for three days of fishing, July 23, 24, and 25, 2026. In the event weather concerns exist on or after July 22, 2026 the Tournament Committee will submit the weather concerns to a Weather Committee comprised of all members of the Tournament Committee, the President of the Houston Big Game Fishing Club and 3 members from registered teams selected at the discretion of the Tournament Committee. The Weather Committee will use all available forecast and weather data to make a determination regarding fishing, postponement or cancellation of fishing. The options that may be made are to proceed with fishing as scheduled, postpone the departure time, change the Tournament to one day of fishing, reschedule or cancel Tournament fishing days altogether. If the Tournament is canceled due to weather or events beyond the control of the Tournament, The HBGFC Board of Directors will make the decision for any reimbursement amount within 30 days after the cancellation.