

# MEGADOCK BILLFISHING TOURNAMENT

## OFFICIAL RULES - 2018

**1. REGISTRATION** - All registered boats must be checked-in with the Tournament Committee and entry fee paid by 7:00p.m., July 11, 2018 to qualify for prizes and trophies. Any boat entered in the Megadock Tournament shall not be entered in another tournament simultaneously. The Tournament reserves the right to deny entry to anyone. All registered boats and anglers must be in compliance with Federal and State Regulations regarding recreational and/or charter fishing as well as SC Governor's Cup Tournament Series Regulations.

**2. RULES MEETING** - At least one person from each boat should be present at the Captain's Meeting for the Tournament and is responsible for knowing the Tournament rules including any changes that may take place at the meeting on the Wednesday evening prior to the first day of fishing. Regardless, all participants in the Tournament are responsible for knowing all Tournament rules, including any changes to the rules that may take place at the Captain's Meeting.

**3. FISHING TIME AND LAY DAYS** - No lines or teasers in the water before official fishing hours each day. Official time will be GPS time. Fishing days for all eligible boats shall be any two out of the available three days. One day of fishing constitutes a tournament. Fishing times and scale hours will be announced at the Captain's Meeting. In the event the National Weather Service recommends that a small craft should exercise caution, boats may fish. Should the National Weather Service institute a Small Craft Advisory, boats may not fish. A weather call will be made each morning no later than 6:00a.m. It is understood that the safety of a participating vessel is ultimately the responsibility of the Captain. Lay Day must be reported to Tournament Director on the official Lay Day form prior to 8:00a.m. on the day declared as a non-fishing day. Forms will be available at Captain's Meeting and [www.megadocktournament.com](http://www.megadocktournament.com). The form must be signed by a member of the fishing team or the boat's crew. If a boat does not declare a day as non-fishing, the Tournament Committee will automatically count the day to be a fishing day for the boat. **Forms may be emailed, hand delivered, or sent by text to Tournament Director or Governor's Cup Series Director. Call-ins will not be accepted. EMAIL: [mhutaff@megadock.us](mailto:mhutaff@megadock.us) or [dukesa@dnr.sc.gov](mailto:dukesa@dnr.sc.gov) Text: 843-412-3350 or 843-209-9053**

**4. ROD & REEL RULES** - This is a rod and reel, hook and line tournament. Double line and leader combined may not exceed 40 ft; neither of which may exceed 30 ft. The following practices are illegal in this tournament: a) use of handline or rope attached to the line or leader, b) shooting, harpooning, or lancing and c) no participant may transfer from one boat to another during a fishing day.

**5. MANDATORY HOOK REQUIREMENTS** - Non-offset circle hooks are mandatory when deploying natural bait or natural bait/artificial lures. "J" hooks are allowed on artificial lures only.

**6. QUALIFYING FISH** - Fish must be caught in accordance with all State and Federal laws, and IGFA Rules with the exception of passing the rod, to qualify to earn SC Governor's Cup points or awards. After a fish strikes, the rod may be passed to one angler, one time, immediately. All anglers, including Youth Anglers (under sixteen years of age on April 1 of the current tournament year) and Lady Anglers (over 16 years of age on April 1 of the current tournament year), may have the rod passed one time to them. After the rod has been passed, only the angler is allowed to touch the rod/reel/mainline. Once the leader is brought within the grasp of the crew member, or is wound to the rod tip, then the angler may have assistance to catch and release or boat the

fish. **VIOLATIONS OF STATE OR FEDERAL LAW WILL LEAD TO DISQUALIFICATION OF ALL FISH CAUGHT ON THAT FISHING DAY, AND THE DAY WILL BE COUNTED AS AN ELIGIBLE FISH DAY FOR THE TOURNAMENT.**

**7. CATCH AND RELEASE** - White Marlin, Spearfish, and Sailfish are for release points only. Blue Marlin may also qualify for release points. A billfish may not be brought into the boat unless it is to be brought to the dock for weighing. **A PENALTY OF 600 POINTS WILL BE ASSESSED AGAINST A BOAT FOR EACH BILLFISH BOATED IF IT IS DETERMINED THAT THE FISH WAS SUBSEQUENTLY RELEASED.** All billfish must be fought to the boat according to the following guidelines to qualify for catch and release points: 1) the leader is grasped by the mate or the leader is wound to the rod tip; 2) the billfish is positively identified through digital photography/videography; and 3) the fish is released in healthy condition. A billfish is considered caught and points will be awarded when **ALL** of the above have occurred.

**8. BLUE MARLIN CATCH** - The minimum size for a landed Blue Marlin is 105 inches measured in a curved line along the body from the fork of the tail to the tip of the lower jaw. Boats may earn one point per pound and fraction of a pound for their single heaviest Blue Marlin. No points are awarded for any additional Blue Marlin weighed. A 600 point penalty will be assessed against a boat for each Blue Marlin brought to the dock not meeting the minimum SC Governor's Cup Series Guidelines. **ANY BLUE MARLIN GAFFED, HARPOONED OR OTHERWISE INJURED IN AN ATTEMPT TO BOAT THE FISH WILL NOT QUALIFY FOR CATCH AND RELEASE POINTS. ADDITIONALLY, IF THE GAFF CROSSES THE VERTICAL PLANE OF THE BOAT IN AN ATTEMPT TO LAND A BLUE MARLIN, YET IS UNSUCCESSFUL, THE FISH WILL NOT QUALIFY FOR CATCH AND RELEASE POINTS.**

### LANDED BLUE MARLIN MUST BE WEIGHED-IN AT CHARLESTON CITY MARINA.

In the event a Blue Marlin is hooked during fishing hours and due to an extended fight is not back to the scales prior to their close, the scales will remain open and the fish will be weighed.

**9. REPORTING** - All Blue Marlin, White Marlin, Spearfish, and Sailfish must be reported to committee boats/tournament headquarters when hooked, lost, boated or released. The tournament VHF channel will be announced at the Captain's Meeting. Fish hooked prior to or after fishing hours are not eligible. All released billfish must be clearly photographed or videoed with a digital camera provided by each boat. The photography must include a time and date stamp that corresponds to the time of the release recorded by the Tournament designated committee boat. Photography must be provided on a removable storage device. Each boat is required to keep their billfish photograph on their camera until Friday, July 20, 2018. ALL boats are subject to random photography checks throughout the tournament. Fish verification will be at the sole discretion of the Tournament Committee. Every person aboard the vessel, 18 years of age or older, must sign an official Governor's Cup Released or Tagged and Released Billfish Affidavit or Landed Billfish Affidavit swearing that all rules and regulations were observed in reference to the described fish. Failure of any person to sign the affidavit, for any reason, disqualifies the fish. Polygraph test will be administered if the Tournament Committee deems it necessary.

**AFFIDAVITS AND PHOTOS/VIDEOS MUST BE SUBMITTED TO DNR STAFF OR DESIGNATED TOURNAMENT REPRESENTATIVE BY THE CLOSE OF THE WEIGHING SCALES ON THE DAY THE FISH WAS CAUGHT. A DNR CHECK STATION WILL BE LOCATED AT THE WEIGH-IN ON THE MEGADOCK AT CHARLESTON CITY MARINA. IF FISHING OUT OF AN ALTERNATE MARINA, AFFIDAVITS AND PHOTOS/VIDEO MUST BE DELIVERED TO THE DNR CHECK STATION, OR MAY BE SUBMITTED BY EMAIL TO [DUKESA@DNR.SC.GOV](mailto:DUKESA@DNR.SC.GOV). NO CALL-INS OR TEXT MESSAGES WILL BE ACCEPTED. ADDITIONALLY, THE ORIGINAL AFFIDAVITS AND PHOTOS/VIDEOS MUST BE SUBMITTED BY THE CLOSE OF WEIGHING SCALES ON THE FINAL FISHING DAY FOR THE CATCH TO BE ELIGIBLE FOR ANY TOURNAMENT AWARDS OR PRIZES.**

**10. RELEASE POINTS** - Scoring for billfish released in good condition will be as follows:

Blue Marlin - 600 points  
White Marlin/Spearfish - 300 points  
Sailfish - 200 points

Boat points are awarded at the time of release or landing of the fish. Ties between points are broken by the time of release/landing. The date of the release/landing is based on the boat's fishing day (day 1 or 2) as opposed to the tournament fishing day (day 1, 2, 3).

**11. GAME FISH** - Winning game fish (Tuna, Dolphin, Wahoo) will be determined by weight. Fish must be in fresh, edible condition and fit for human consumption. In the event of a tie, the winner will be the first fish weighed-in. All game fish must be weighed the same day they are caught and by the close of scales. Fish must be delivered to the weigh-master by the person that landed the fish. The tuna category includes yellowfin, bluefin, blackfin, and bigeye.

### ALL GAME FISH MUST BE WEIGHED-IN AT CHARLESTON CITY MARINA.

**12. PRIZE PAYOUT** - All prize money will be distributed within 15 days of the Tournament's conclusion provided there are no outstanding appeals or disputes. Payouts will be made payable to the person or entity so indicated on the respective registration form and W-9 of the winning boat. W-9 must accompany registration to receive payout.

**13. PROTEST** - Any dispute must be submitted, in writing, to the Tournament Director, no later than one hour after the scales have closed on the day of the disputed fish and within thirty minutes of the scales close on the last day of fishing. All protest must be accompanied by a nonrefundable fee of \$300. The dispute will be considered by the Tournament Committee whose ruling is final.

**14. TOURNAMENT COMMITTEE** - Any participant in violation of any Tournament Rule may be disqualified. By participating in the Tournament, all participants acknowledge that all Tournament Rules are material and that disqualification is permitted and appropriate sanction for any violation of any Tournament Rules. Decisions regarding the interpretation of Rules, violation of Rules, penalties, and the suspension of any Rules or penalties will be made by the Tournament Committee in their sole and absolute discretion. All decisions by the Tournament Committee are final.